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PAIDEIA AND EROTIC SEDUCTION IN "ALCIBIADES"

Ștefan VLĂDUȚESCU¹

Abstract: *The present paper is a philosophematic lecture of the dialogue "Alcibiades" by Plato. The method used represents a combination among the meta-analytical, the comparative and the hermeneutical procedures. Overall, the method is associated with the philosophical hermeneutics. First of all, a relative convergence related to the dialogue comprehension can be noticed after having studied the previous interpretations. Well-known specialists, such as A. Koyré, A. Posescu, V. Muscă, J. Brun, Y. Brès, E. R. Dodds, R. M. Hare and N. Denyer interpret "Alcibiades" as illustrating the dialogue experience of becoming aware of the imperative according to which the political man should be primarily educated, learned and then rich. Professor Gheorghe Vlăduțescu suggests a different type of comprehension. He considers "Alcibiades" a "dialogue on self-knowledge," where the interpretation is based on the philosopheme "gnôthi seauton" ("know yourself"). A third paradigm of comprehension is shown by Michel Foucault, who establishes the philosopheme "epimeleia heauton" ("be preoccupied with yourself") as a framework of interpretation. In relation to these three positions, our article analyzes the dialogue under discussion, according to a synthesizing idea. Our thesis lies on the fact that "Alcibiades" represents a paideic seduction, structured argumentatively on the sophistic recurrence to two philosophemes: "gnôthi seauton" ("know yourself") and "epimeleia heauton" ("be preoccupied with yourself"). According to the initial remark, Socrates organizes, reshapes erotically Alcibiades' ambitions to accede to accede to the high-level political power. As a conclusion, the amorous Socrates sets an erotic trap for Alcibiades. Consequently, in the communicational situation developed within the dialogue, we can clearly notice the intricate functioning of both a paideic and erotic situation. The complexity imposed by the process of dialogue decodification originates in the absence of a clear assumption concerning the double relation in progress: apart from the paideic relation, there takes shape, by means of seduction, an erotic relation. By seduction exercised by Socrates, Alcibiades appears both as the object of a paideia and as an erotic object. Paideia (the transformation of cultural acts into life acts) takes place, in the case of Alcibiades, as a pedagogy within a life of spirit: the passage of culture into nonexistence (the paideic instruction) takes place on a seductive, erotic curve.*

Keywords: *Platon, paideia, seduction, gnôthi seauton, epimeleia heauton.*

I. Ethics – the beginning of philosophy

If Philosophy has a message, then this message cannot have to do with itself, it does not speak about itself. Philosophy does not philosophize on itself, except as supplement of thinking about anything. The beginning of philosophy cannot be the cogitation on oneself. It

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cannot be so, as before the beginning, there is no beginning, there is not even the “object,” whose source to designate. Consequently, the message of philosophy fundamentally represents an utterance about anything else, but not about itself. The message of philosophy is about any thing in the universe, including nothingness, the void and silence. The sensation is that philosophy has finished its initial major energies in an amorphous, viscous and irrelevant matter. These remain valid until philosophy is conceived as a wise knowledge about everything. There is nothing outside wisdom, not even the love for wisdom. Consequently, philosophy missed its “object.” Its beginnings are not clear, which is also visible in the inaccuracy of its initial message. If we were to judge things from a broader perspective, we should mention that the message of philosophy is on the one hand about the reality. On the other hand, it is linguistic, the philosophematic message par excellence, as a way of human communication.

Before shaping into a complex of wisdom with different roots, philosophy represented a wise reflection on each of them. The Ontology, Ethics¹ and Gnoseology, as roots, represented, separately, decisive pieces of wisdom².

The first piece of wisdom seems to have been the Ethics. We must mention that Emmanuel Lévinas still considers Ethics to be the primary philosophy³. The pre-Socratic ancients knew exactly the meanings of the terms “knowledge” and “spirituality”⁴ what an event of knowledge or a spiritual event meant⁵. Taking into account the fact that in Plato’s times the scientific knowledge had a reduced perimeter, we should have in view the fact that it represented a small part of the cogitative capacity specific to the epistemic subject.

II. Plato: the ethics of dialogues

A lecture of Plato’s dialogues makes us realize that the objects of

¹ Smith, N. D. (2016). Moral Psychology as the Focus of Early Greek Ethics. *Philosophical Inquiry*, 40(1/2), 58-73.

² Friedlander, P. (2015). *Plato: An Introduction*. Princeton University Press.

³ Lévinas, E. (1999). *Totalitate și infinit. Eseu despre exterioritate*. Traducere, glosar și bibliografie de Marius Lăzurcă, Postfață de Virgil Ciomoș, Iași, Polirom.

⁴ Irwin, T. (1995). *Plato’s ethics*. Oxford University Press.

⁵ Ghită, C. (2016). *Oriental Europei romantice. Alteritatea ca exotism în poezia engleză, franceză și română*. Tracus Arte.

philosophy always have an ethical side and a core of spirituality. Some dialogues stand for real spiritual exercises. One thing is sure: philosophy divides between the strictly philosophical knowledge and a certain practical spirituality. Philosophy means theoretical knowledge and spiritual practice.

Plato analyzes in the dialogue “Charmides” the relation between the theoretical and the practical knowledge, between the moral and the functional pieces of knowledge determined by the mundane existence. “Sophrosyne,” (the theoretical knowledge) represents a moral-conceptual thinking and it does not have an immediate applicative-useful character, (“Charmides” - 175e). The useful pieces of knowledge have a mediated theoretical character. Practice differs from the theoretical wisdom. The theoretical knowledge represents “the knowledge of the pieces of knowledge (...)” (personal translation in Engl.) (“Charmides”, 166c). The theoretical knowledge is the knowledge of the theoretical and practical pieces of knowledge, but also a self-knowledge. The main object of the theoretical wisdom is represented by general principles, such as the good, the truth and the beautiful, as the pragmatic Idea of what is good¹, true and beautiful. Knowledge has an absolute character. However, the pieces of knowledge are relative. This is how the possibility of the existence of some theoretical pieces of knowledge in parallel with practical pieces of knowledge is explained.

Pierre Hadot² starts from the idea that at Plato, knowledge is less a purely theoretical knowledge. It is a great skill, this means that life comprehension prevails over the theoretical knowledge. For Plato, philosophy would be “the art of talking correctly and living in good conditions”³. To live wisely implies an intellectual and spiritual life. In the VIIth Letter, Plato shows that if we do not live our life in wisdom, then life is not worth living. Those who really philosophize are only those people that experience their philosophical ideas. The wise existence is immediate and true. However, in order to live wisely, we need spiritual exercises. Plato’s philosophy mainly deals with the arts and the technique of living.

¹ Ionescu, A. (2016). Étude comparative des évolutions sémantiques et pragmatiques des adverbes bien en français et bine en roumain. *Analele Universității din Craiova. Seria Științe Filologice. Lingvistică*, (1-2), 195-214.

² Hadot, P. (1997). *Ce este filosofia antică*. Iasi: Editura Polirom.

³ Hadot, P. (1997). *Ce este filosofia antică*. Iasi: Editura Polirom, p. 82.

The spiritual practice specific to the initial philosophy prevails over the theoretical knowledge. The message has an extended pedagogical component; it instructs within the practical wisdom, without disregarding the theoretical wisdom. Philosophy aims at and succeeds in shaping a pedagogy of the spirit, too. It trains the subject for the penetration into a world philosophically built. The spiritual element is described according to an order based on several moral elements: the good, the beautiful, the truth and justice. Cogitative aspects are moral. Theoretical knowledge is welcomed by the moral aspects¹. Socratic order is moral order. Essence of the message is ethical. Moral dimension is more important than the theoretical dimension. Plato's dialogues are moral. The moral aspect represents the "primary philosophy." E. Lévinas² will bring numberless arguments, expanding this thesis to the level of the whole philosophy: "Ethics is not a branch of philosophy, it is primary philosophy".

III. The paideic message

The generic message of Plato's philosophy is fundamentally a paideic, moral-spiritual message. If the instruction (education, paideia) confer a certain power, then Plato's dialogues stand for messages of the paideic power. Desire for different forms of power is in the nature of man: the intellectual power, (knowledge), the moral power (virtue), the physical power, the power of self-control, etc.

The paideic relation is a psychological and cogitative power relation.

IV. Paideia, pure self-knowledge or paidetic seduction

This is how this type of relation is configured in one of Socrates' replies, in the dialogue "Alcibiades": "The loving person finds it hard to address a man that does not let himself conquered by the ones that love him (...). Now I will divulge some other thoughts that you foster into your mind (...). After having demonstrated the Athenians that you are (worthy of honours), you will have gained full, absolute power (s.n.) in the fortress and you will thus reign over the other Greeks (...). You will

¹ Neacșu, A. (1992). Problema binelui în filozofia antică greacă. *Analele Universității București: Filosofie*, 41.

² Lévinas, E. (1999). *Totalitate și infinit. Eseu despre exterioritate*. Traducere, glosar și bibliografie de Marius Lăzurcă, Postfață de Virgil Ciomoș, Iași, Polirom, p. 271.

be able to bring to an end all these plans of yours without my help; this is the level of power I myself believe I have on your plans, as well as on you (...). No other man is capable of giving you the power you are craving for" (Alcibiades 105a, b, c, d, e) (personal translation in Engl.).

In love with Alcibiades, Socrates finds it difficult to address a familiar man that does not let himself convinced. Love is described as a power relation: the act of sharing love turns into a form of defeat. By answering an erotic initiative, the beloved gives up his or her indifference. Socrates stands for the *erastes*, more precisely an old man that is in love with a young man, who could be his student. Alcibiades is the *eromenos*, that is a young male, without a solid life experience, that lets himself guided by the *erastes*. Love proves to be in this case a constituent of the paideic relation: the *erastes* focuses his erotic and paideic power on an adolescent; this *erastes* had long desired for and that he had kept an eye on sagaciously.

Let us put an end to the reasoning, in order to notice that the oddity of the indecent proposal, (that Socrates suggests to Alcibiades, in relation to the erotic component of the planned paideia), is part of the normality associated with the expectancy of the hermeneut, as contemporary to the drat.

The erotic proposal is frustrating for the contemporary hermeneut of this maieutic dialogue. This is how we can explain the fact that some of the interpreters of the "Alcibiades' dialogue," such as A. Koyré (1945)¹, A. Posescu (1971)², V. Muscă (1994)³, J. Brun (1983)⁴, Y. Brès (1973)⁵, E. R. Dodds (1971)⁶, R. M. Hare (1982)⁷, N. Denyer (2001)⁸ abandon the erotic scenario of the dialogue with a perspective to put in relief the dialogue experience of the realization by Alcibiades of the political man's necessity to be not only rich, but also educated. This hermeneutical paradigm relies on the theoretical need of education and

¹ Koyré, A. (1945). *Discovering Plato*, trans. Leonora Cohen Rosenfield. New York, 3.

² Posescu, A. (1971). *Platon. Filosofia dialogurilor*. București: Editura Științifică.

³ Muscă, V. (1994). *Introducere în filosofia lui Platon*. Editura Dacia.

⁴ Brun, J. (1983). « *Platon et l'Âme du Monde* », *Sophia et l'Âme du Monde*. Paris, Albin Michel.

⁵ Brès, Y. (1973). *La psychologie de Platon* (Vol. 4). Presses Universitaires de France.

⁶ Dodds, E. R. (1971). *Plato and the irrational soul*. In *Plato* (pp. 206-229). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

⁷ Hare, R. M. (1982). *Plato*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

⁸ Denyer, N. (2001). *Plato: Alcibiades*. Cambridge University Press.

elides the persuasive, seductive dimension. The explanatory axis becomes part of the paideia and the interpretation remains unilateral.

A different type of comprehension in hermeneutical terms is initiated by professor Gheorghe Vlăduțescu, who considers “Alcibiades” a “dialogue on self-knowledge”¹; the interpretation lies on the philosopheme “gnôthi seauton” (“know yourself”)². In his turn, M. Foucault³ establishes the starting point of his interpretation within the limits of the philosopheme “epimeleia heauton,” (“be preoccupied with yourself”).

The dialogue is a paideic seduction, structured argumentatively according to the sophistic recurrence to two philosophemes, namely: “gnôthi seauton,” (“know yourself”) and “epimeleia heauton,” (“be preoccupied with yourself”). This is our thesis. However, as seduction aims at the persuasion concerned with the act of instilling opinions and ideas in people, (apart from lie, joke, manipulation, disinformation, influence, collusion, rumour), and not at conviction, we can say that the eromenos Alcibiades falls victim to a sophism of paideic seduction. Socrates organizes erotically Alcibiade’s ambitions to accede to the political power. The desire for power is mapped to the force of the paideic power. Alcibiades craves for the political power. Relying on this, Socrates sets him an erotic trap.

The dialogue begins with a paideic situation presided by an erotic interest. Furthermore, the dialogue shapes a philosophical scenario concerned with the realization of the effects produced by the open situation. The aim is to convey a philosophical message: the power of love for wisdom prevails over the love for power, deprived of wisdom; any kind of power is inferior to wisdom. We have to do here with a paideic situation.

Unlike other peoples, subjugated to the cult of Zeuse, the ancient Greeks, as Werner Jaeger⁴ shows, are anthropocentric and have a vocation for the human. The Greek man is the product of education.

¹ Vlăduțescu, G. (2005). *Ontologie și metafizică la greci: Platon*. București: Editura Academiei Române, p. 174.

² Vlăduțescu, G. (2013). *Ontology and Metaphysics: Whether They Are One*. *Balkan Journal of Philosophy*, (1), 73-74.

³ Foucault, M. (2004). *Hermeneutica subiectului*. Iași: Polirom, pp. 45-69.

⁴ Jaeger, W. (1986). *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture: II. In Search of the Divine Centre* (Vol. 2). Oxford University Press on Demand.

Instruction represents the procedures necessary for the education of mankind, for a cultural reproduction. The instances that coordinate the cultural reproduction are the state, the community, the family, the individual¹. The shaping in the spirit of tradition is achieved by agents that act in a social or personal interest, or both. The method of instilling traditional values consists in the creation by the educational agent of an ideal image impregnated with social or personal interests, as well as in the educational guidance of the subject towards the achievement of the educational process by different means.

The paideic process relies on a predetermined image. First of all, to the educational subject is induced an ideal. Then, the subject is guided towards the instaurated image. Once the ideal has been shaped, the paideic direction has been established. The final step is to allocate the energy necessary to penetrate into the model. The educational subject² should realize that his ideal, that must coincide with the system of values managed socially, can only be achieved by the known educational agent³. The paideic power manifests itself by the acceptance of an ideal. Once the aspiration has been mentioned, the paideic road becomes inevitable. It all depends on the way the subject succeeds in becoming responsible. Responsibility represents one of the fundamental achievements of the Greek philosophy. The subject must become responsible for the aspiration of making up for his insufficiency. He must not perceive the lack as deprivation. He must, as P. Hadot states, think about himself as being “poor:” “philosophy is defined by what it lacks”; Plato’s philosophy is essentially “the art of living”⁴.

Education propagates the wise life; it reproduces the art of living⁵. Paideia represents the training of spiritual life, the transformation of cultural acts into life acts. Paideia is the passage of culture into existence. In Lewis Mumford’s opinion, paideia stands for the education as

¹ Archie, A. (2015). *Instances of Decision Theory in Plato’s Alcibiades Major and Minor, and in Xenophon’s Memorabilia*. In *Politics in Socrates’ Alcibiades* (pp. 69-84). Springer International Publishing.

² Dypedokk Johnsen, H. (2016). *Erôs and Education: Socratic Seduction in Three Platonic Dialogues* (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University).

³ Stan, C. (2014). Idei despre educație în opera lui Platon. *Astra Salvensis-revista de istorie si cultura*, (4), 175-179.

⁴ Hadot, P. (1997). *Ce este filosofia antică*. Iași: Editura Polirom, p. 75 and p. 82.

⁵ De Marzio, D. M. (2006). The care of the self: Alcibiades I, Socratic teaching and ethics education. *The journal of education*, 187(3), 103-127.

transformation, throughout the existence of the human personality, where each aspect of life plays a part. Paideia is not limited to the process of conscious training, or to the initiation of young men in the social heritage of the community. It is the task that consists in the animation of the act of living: treating each life occasion as a way of shaping oneself¹.

Plato's philosophy is based on the art of living. Paideia gives life to the act of living wisely.

In order to avoid the discovery of wisdom on our own, we need paideia. Consequently, paideia does not start from the individual. The meaning of paideia is wisdom, whereas wisdom is an idea. As Werner Jaeger² shows, paideia "does not start from the individual, but from the idea" and it deals with man as an idea. Paideia is not any instruction. It is that continuous spiritual training, a plenitude in the life of spirit under two aspects: theoretical, (as far as the appropriation of theoretical knowledge is concerned) and spiritual, (related to the spiritual exercises necessary to the consolidation of the theoretical knowledge or to the development of a practice based on the assimilated theoretical notions). In Socrates' times, paideia referred to the training of the young men in the political issues of the city government. Politics turns thus into an inculcated ideal, a desired model. Paideia is also concerned with the training that aims at the settlement of the most important civic issues, especially the access to power. Paideia forces us to notice, together with Mumford³, that education and breeding cannot be separated. Consequently, Alcibiades wants to become the leader of the city. At the same time, shaped in paideic terms, he learns that in order to become well-known, we must assume our responsibility for the training necessary to become what we want to become. Neither knowledge nor training represent an ideal for him. They represent an ideal if they lead to the achievement of the aim⁴.

In love with Alcibiades for a long time, Socrates finds the decisive element of his seductive reasoning: the young man's desire for power. Taking advantage of the aspiration for power and the paideic

¹ Mumford, L. (1957). *The transformations of man*. London, England: Allen and Unwin.

² Jaeger, W. (1986). Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture: II. In Search of the Divine Centre (Vol. 2). Oxford University Press on Demand.

³ Mumford, L. (1957). *The transformations of man*. London, England: Allen and Unwin.

⁴ Braicovich, R. S. (2014). Conocimiento de sí y paideia política en el Alcibiades I de Platón. *Cuadernos de Filología Clásica. Estudios griegos e indoeuropeos*, 24, 111.

consciousness of an Alcibiades that has already finished an erotic paideic school, Socrates approaches him in the same inflamed regime related to the exercise of power.

The Socratic scenario is sustained by the common aspiration to power. Socrates wants to have an erotic power over Alcibiades. He makes the most of, he exploits Alcibiades' desire for power over the city, as well as the inertia of the paideic consciousness of the young man. One of the arguments of the paideic scenario is represented by the philosophemes concerned with self-knowledge, self-preoccupation and the consciousness of ignorance. The energetic device of the scenario is embodied by the eroto-paideic relation between the erastes and the eromenos.

If the "Banquet," (The Symposium) describes "philosophy (...) as a love experience"¹, in "Alcibiades" philosophy is the art of seduction in the paideic field.

Alcibiades²³ is the object of a double seduction: erotic seduction and paideic seduction. The exigency of seduction is represented by the presence. Socrates imposes Alcibiades argumentatively the idea according to which the power over the people of the city must be paid with an erotic defeat. Dominated by his ambition, Alcibiades admits Socrates' communicative presence. He accepts the arguments and decides to turn into his companion. Socrates makes Alcibiades believe that "it is not the tyrannical power" that he must search for, but "the virtue" (Alcibiades, 135b), as anyone should "let himself guided by the one better than him" (135b)⁴. Seduced, Alcibiades lets himself guided by Socrates towards virtue, similar to a slave, as he has no virtue, whereas "the lack of virtue is proper to a slave" (135c) (personal translation in Engl.).

The presence takes the shape of companionship. Seduction is ratified, the paideic hierarchy reverses the erotic hierarchy. From a humble man in love, Socrates becomes the one that teaches notions of

¹ Hadot, P. (1997). *Ce este filosofia antică*. Iasi: Editura Polirom, p. 75.

² Platon, *Opere*, III, ediție îngrijită de Petru Creția și Constantin Noica. Studiu introductiv de Ion Banu, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978.

³ Ambury, J. M. (2013). The Failed Seduction. *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 17(2), 257-274.

⁴ Benitez, E. (2013). *Authenticity, Experiment or Development: The Alcibiades I on Virtue and Courage*. Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator, 119.

virtue and then the erotic and paideic master. If at the beginning Socrates was not accepted within the relational circle of Alcibiades, he finally comes to dominate him: the paideic relation overturns the erotic relation. “Staring from today, I will follow you everywhere; I will be your companion, such as an educator supervises his child and the one accompanied similar to a child is you” (135d) (personal translation in Engl.). This is what Socrates should say, but it is Alcibiades’ reply. Seduction is complete, the seduced eromenos asks for roles reversal: Alcibiades is conquered both erotically and paideically. The scenario shows him while he promises to take care immediately of “the sense of justice” (135e) (personal translation in Engl.).

From the erotic helplessness, Socrates comes to promise Alcibiades the power over the citadel, by the education of virtue. The last reply of the dialogue is: “I would like to see you insist on justice; however, I feel myself seized with a big fear – not because I do not trust you, your character, but because of the power present in the citadel – lest it should conquer both me and you.” Seduction is complete, Socrates promises Alcibiades the power over the citadel.

The power of seduction is more powerful than the pride of the eromenos.

The Socratic relational strategy relies on the conveyance of virtue by the simple presence. The superior degree of presence is represented by the company (bearing company). Bearing company is not in the case of Plato an accidental meeting or an ordinary coexistence, but the only efficient way to generate honest virtue. The forms of bearing company are: the filial, the paideic, the erotic, the social relation, (citizen-fellow countryman). These forms impose a certain trust: none of them could exist in the absence of trust.

In the paideic situation of “Alcibiades,” Socrates induces first of all the trust, the respect and the admiration for the eromenos, he obtains the copresence and then the company^{1,2,3}. The sense of the relation between

¹ Dias, A. C. D. S. P. (2015). Alcibiades primeiro de Platão: estudo e tradução (Doctoral dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo).

² Gordon, J. (2003). Eros and Philosophical Seduction in Alcibiades I. *Ancient Philosophy*, 23(1), 11-30.

³ Kang, C. U. (2008). Socratic Eros and Self-Knowledge in Plato’s Alcibiades. *서양고전학연구*, 32(단일호), 79-102.

the erastes and the eromenos, as Emil Stan argues¹, is “the initiation of the eromenos in the essential habits and institutions of men: the politics, the fight, the hunt, the banquet, etc.”

I.- H. Marrou shows that the love between men has been generated by the long wars and it has been established as an order of homosexuality in all the spheres that excluded women. In the case of the company between the erastes and the eromenos; the passionate relation, emphasizes Marrou, implies the desire to reach perfection, an ideal value, *areté*². Alcibiades conveys a philosophical thought on the love that educates. Love develops on the interval of the presence and company. Yvon Brès wonders, not without reason: Is homosexuality the one that forbids Plato to have in view the sexual relations between a man and a woman as taking place within an affectionate climate, dominated by mutual confidence?³

A paideic love is also present in Plato’s work entitled “Phaidros,” where love and pleasure appear as separate notions. The failure of the erotic relation that is annexed to the paideic relation is provided only in the case of looking for pleasure. In this sense, Emil Stan mentions makes clear the fact that in “Alcibiades” “love focuses on the aspiration to the good”⁴. We could add that the aspiration to the good represents a case of the aspiration to virtue. The strictly sexual orientation excludes virtue. Alcibiades lives a huge fear⁵ of not being smart enough to understand and evaluate the arguments made by Socrates.

The dialogue “Alcibiades” illustrates how we can establish an erotic relation by means of the paideic seduction. In other words, both an erotic and paideic situation function within the open communication situation. Complexity springs from the assumption of a double relation: one erotic and another paideic relation.

The factors of the erotic relation are the erastes and the eromenos, those of the paideic relation are the master and the neophyte, (the beginner) and not the disciple. The relation between the master and the

¹ Stan, E. (2004). *Spațiul public și educația la vechii greci*. Iași: Institutul european, p. 131.

² Marrou, H. I. (1956). *A history of education in antiquity*. Univ of Wisconsin Press.

³ Brès, Y. (1973). *La psychologie de Platon* (Vol. 4). Presses Universitaires de France.

⁴ Stan, E. (2004). *Spațiul public și educația la vechii greci*. Institutul european, Iași, p. 136.

⁵ Ozen Kutanis, R., Ardic, K., Uslu, O., & Karakiraz, A. (2014). Emotional intelligence, fear based silence and trust to manager: a case study. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 10.

neophyte also stands for a relation of presence and company^{1,2}. If the role of the erastes is to initiate the eromenos at the sexual and spiritual levels, the role of the master consists in the training and education of theoretical wisdom by spiritual exercises. We come to the conclusion that in “Alcibiades” one aspect of the erotic relation is also paideic, apart from the paideic element contained by the paideic relation. The paideic element prevails over the erotic element.

The erotic aspect of the philosophical message is established seductively under the crushing pressure of the paideic element.

V. The sophistic seduction in two philosophemes: “gnôthi seauton” (“know yourself”) and “epimeleia heauton” (“be preoccupied with yourself”)

In “Alcibiades,” the paideic is used with an erotic aim. However, the relation master-neophyte follows Plato’s model. The master instils a certain self dissatisfaction, it reshapes it as anxiety and invests it as paideic aspiration. Socrates, as a teacher, not as an erastes, asks the ambitious Alcibiades if he is enabled with the wisdom necessary to a leader, as long as he had not shown to have any kind of knowledge in this field. On the other hand, Socrates is a master and runs deeply involved a hard work³ to distort the reality in a sophistic mode.

Maieutically speaking, Alcibiades is forced to confess that has no such knowledge. Socrates makes him admit that in the absence of these pieces of knowledge, he has no knowledge at all. More precisely, not only that he is ignorant in the field of the practical wisdom, but he is not initiated in the field of the theoretical knowledge, either. Furthermore, he does not even know that he is ignorant. Socrates introduces himself as somebody that knows he does not know anything, but that follows responsibly the road of self-knowledge^{4,5}. In this context, Alcibiades

¹ Johnson, M., & Tarrant, H. (Eds.). (2012). *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-educator*. Bristol Classical.

² Altman, W. H. (2016). *The Guardians in Action: Plato the Teacher and the Post-Republic Dialogues from Timaeus to Theaetetus*. Lexington Books.

³ Frankovsky, M., Birknerova, Z., & Zbihlejova, L. (2015). Possibilities of identification of predictors of occurrence of cognitive distortions in managerial work. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 12(2).

⁴ Jooisse, A. (2014). Dialectic and Who We Are in the Alcibiades. *Phronesis*, 59(1), 1-21.

⁵ Moore, C. (2015). *Socrates and Self-knowledge*. Cambridge University Press.

consents that he is an ignorant, he accepts the fact that he is not aware of his ignorance and that he had had no impulse to filter his ignorance by knowledge so far. In Socrates' opinion, Alcibiades' ignorance should be sanctioned, as he is late in remaining the prisoner of the most blamable types of ignorance: the one that is not able to recognize and control itself as ignorance. The fact that it does not recognize itself is reprehensible, but the fact that it is not preoccupied with itself is blamable¹.

Alcibiades is forced to admit the following thing: "I had been long lying to myself, hiding the fact that I am deplorable" (127d). Once he is convinced by Socrates that missed an accessible ideal, Alcibiades experiences a therapy necessary to get over the depression: encouragement. Then Socrates explains Alcibiades the possibilities concerned with correction: "You must never be discouraged! If you had experienced all this in your fifties, you would have found it difficult to be preoccupied with yourself. Nevertheless, your present age allows you to realize the real state of things" (127d).

Alcibiades studies together with Socrates what self-preoccupation means. He is convinced by Socrates that the art of being preoccupied with himself is not the same with the art "that is concerned with the things that belong to him" (128c). Being preoccupied with ourselves does not mean to maintain one of our things in the best conditions, but "the way we ourselves do our best to become better than we are" (128e).

In order to become better, we need self-knowledge, we need a language of self-knowledge². The urge on the frontispiece of the Temple of Python is a fundamental philosopheme of philosophy. He associates the philosopheme of self-preoccupation to the philosophical message of the dialogue "Alcibiades." If we do not know ourselves, we cannot be preoccupied with ourselves.

On the other hand, due to the fact that we do not know what self-preoccupation means, we are not capable to show any kind of preoccupation towards the others, that is towards the citadel. If we have no power over ourselves, we have no power over the others, either. Alcibiades notices that his personal power helps him to make official decisions. Nevertheless, the power related to beauty, richness and

¹ Renaud, F., & Tarrant, H. (2015). *The Platonic Alcibiades I: The Dialogue and Its Ancient Reception*. Cambridge University Press.

² Vlăduțescu, Ș. (2014). Imposing the communication situation through language. *Analele Universitatii din Craiova - Seria Stiinte Filologice, Lingvistica*, 36 (1-2), pp. 336-343.

celebrity cannot automatically turn into a social governing power. The way the transformation of the personal privileges into a political principle could be possible, as Socrates shows, is represented by self-preoccupation, especially learning and seeing things through the eyes of the other. Self-knowledge is wisdom (133c). How could somebody inject wisdom into the others when he himself lacks it? Alcibiades must learn virtue. It is not the tyrannical power that must be searched for, but virtue (135c).

The educational deficiency is interpreted as a form of a poor self-preoccupation, that is included not only as an overflow in the political project, but also as a pedagogical deficiency.

Self-preoccupation is “epimeleia heauton.” This philosopheme, as M. Foucault notices¹, is to be found in Plato’s “Socrates’ Defence,” (Apology), as a general function of the whole existence and in “Alcibiades,” as a necessary moment and place² for the education of the disciple³. Self-preoccupation, on the other hand, also appears in “Alcibiades” as a paideic imperative: 127c, being the base of Plato’s theory of self-preoccupation. Most of the dialogue focuses on the definition of the philosopheme concerned with self-preoccupation, as well as of the way its elements are structured.

We must specify that the two philosophemes mentioned are debated and made actional within a strategy of seduction relying on the paideia. In “Alcibiades,” there is no relation of insubordination, as far as the discourse of the person guided is concerned, due to the fact that she is not asked to make any judgements on the teacher’s discourse. The neophyte does not negatively cling to something from the flow of questions, in order to try and form an opinion, different from the reasoning established by the questionnaires. The disciple cannot acquire an autonomy for his own discourse. There is no function that goes against the correct guidance in the discourse of the one guided. Principally speaking, his role is to answer the questions according to the orientation established by the question itself. Actually, the one guided keeps silent, whereas the discourse by which he speaks out, (discourse

¹ Foucault, M. (2004). *Hermeneutica subiectului*. Iași: Polirom, p. 48.

² Gioroceanu, A. (2015). A Relevant Circumstance: The Procedural Place. *Analele Universității din Craiova. Seria Științe Filologice. Lingvistică*, (1-2), 304-309.

³ Fuiorea, M. L. (2016). Michel Foucault and the Concept of Parrhesia. *Annals of the University of Bucharest-Philosophy Series*, 63(2).

which is stimulated and consolidated by means of questionnaires), is only a way of making clear the fact that the whole truth belongs to the master. The mentioned philosophemes are part of an erotic paideia. The message, as we know, cannot exist in the absence of language¹ and communication. In order to provide the efficiency of the seductive strategy, Socrates introduces into the message a reflection on communication itself. Communication is the process of sharing, by knowledge and interaction. Socrates evokes directly the community agreement, being aware of the fact that he will succeed in illustrating in his discourse Alcibiades' non autonomous discourse. Socrates' ascertainties are nothing else but conclusions. Alcibiades' answers are approvals. Socrates comes to the following conclusion: "I share my knowledge with him and vice versa, using words" (130d). Furthermore, the master also makes a resume. He says: "Socrates addresses Alcibiades himself, his soul, making use of words" (130d). The evocation of the essence of communication is here part of the strategy marked by the scenario, whereas the message includes it. Socrates addresses Alcibiades' soul and then agrees on the fact that self-preoccupation is to take care of one's own soul. The communication between Socrates and Alcibiades is thus directed to the level of the self².

The two philosophemes that lie at the basis of the sophism, namely "gnôthi seauton" (know yourself, self-knowledge) and "epimeleia heauton" (self-preoccupation), are built on the power of the self: know ourselves means self-knowledge. Self-preoccupation and self-knowledge help to the definition of the self. Self is a commitment and a duty³. In Socrates' view, the self is equivalent with the soul, only as a seductive strategy. He wants and manages to leave the body aside, that is the main material object of the erotic relation. "Self-preoccupation" as M. Foucault shows, helps us involuntarily. It means here to be preoccupied with yourself as the "subject" of a series of things: "the subject of instrumental actions, of the relations to the others, of the general behaviour, but also as

¹ Voinea, D. V., Negrea, X., & Teodorescu, B. (2016). Journalistic Language as a Part of Romanian Language. *Analele Universității din Craiova. Seria Științe Filologice. Lingvistică*, (1-2), 284-291.

² Werner, D. (2013). The Self-Seeing Soul in the Alcibiades I. *Ancient Philosophy*, 33(2), 307-331.

³ Budica, I., Busu, O. V., Dumitru, A., & Purcaru, M. L. (2015). Waste management as commitment and duty of citizens. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 11.

the subject of the relation to oneself"¹. Socrates wants to embed virtue there where Alcibiades noticed a lack, a deficiency. It is the virtue of soul that Alcibiades accepts he is deficient in. Virtue is everything, Socrates tells him: consequently, Alcibiades has nothing and he must let himself in care of Socrates, he must trust him. He is made to believe that self-preoccupation is to be taken care of by somebody else. Socrates' strategy functions perfectly. The master is interested in the self-preoccupation of his disciple. M. Foucault sees this as something innocent²: that is the master "sees in the love that he feels for his disciple the possibility to be preoccupied with the preoccupation that he manifests towards himself"³. Socrates' preoccupation with the Alcibiades' self-preoccupation is not innocent and natural, but a deliberate, calculated act, in a strategy of seduction. Actually, both views can be valid, according to the elements they make reference to. From the perspective of a homosexual lecturer, as M. Foucault used to be, the homosexual behaviour manifested by Socrates is innocent. However, from the heterosexual perspective, the gesture is not that innocent and if it is not spontaneous, it is deliberate. Foucault argues that Socrates loves Alcibiades "disinterestedly" and "embodies the principle and the model concerned with the preoccupation that the boy must manifest towards himself as subject"⁴. Seduction a bigger effort of self-preoccupation than disinterest. As far as the "principle" of self-preoccupation is concerned, once it has been accepted as a principle, the process of getting established is not necessary anymore, no matter whether it is persuasive in the seductive sense. In our opinion, Socrates could have taught Alcibiades disinterestedly his model outside the erotic relation. He could have trained Alcibiades, without seducing him, as *paideia* does not include an erotic connection between the teacher and the student. Plato's *logos* embodies a knowledge that is subordinate to it. Moreover, Plato's *logos* means rationality and universality. It is the notion of *logos* that knowledge focuses on. Socrates' important achievement is to be found at the level of the *logos* used by seduction.

¹ Foucault, M. (2004). *Hermeneutica subiectului*. Iași: Polirom, p. 66.

² Neacșu, A. (2015). Michel Foucault on the care for oneself in the Neoplatonists. *Analele Universitatii din Craiova, Seria Filozofie*, 35, 1, 2015, 20-42.

³ Foucault, M. (2004). *Hermeneutica subiectului*. Iași: Polirom, p. 67.

⁴ Foucault, M. (2004). *Hermeneutica subiectului*. Iași: Polirom, p. 67.

VI. Conclusion

Beyond the philosophical scenario, where the dialogue describes a philosophical message. We must notice, at the level of philosophy, the form, the way of philosophizing. In Plato's work, the spiritual dimension of philosophy prevails over the theoretical dimension. From the point of view of the practical wisdom, Plato's works aim at a pedagogy of the spirit, they offer the training necessary to penetrate into a world built philosophically. Plato's paideic aspect is always present, he never describes a purely theoretical philosophy.

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THE WAYS OF KNOWING THE FIRST PRINCIPLE IN PLATONISM

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Abstract: In the *Didaskalikós* of Alcinoos, the supreme God is an Intellect, and the Forms are his Thoughts. The First God is unmoved and everlastingly active toward the Second God, or Intellect of the World-Soul. God is intelligible and can be grasped in three ways, all established by Plato: dimensional reduction (*aphairesis*), analogy, and analysis according to the “preeminence”. The first way of conceiving God is “by abstraction” of attributes, just as we form the conception of a point by abstraction from sensible phenomena, conceiving first a surface, then a line, and finally a point. The second method is based on the Platonic comparison from the Republic dialogue which values the metaphor of the sun. The third way, mentioned in chap. X of *Didaskalikós*, is the *via eminentiae* and is based on Diotima’s method in the Symposium of Plato.

Keywords: Alcinoos, the *Didaskalikós*, the First God, knowledge of God, *via negationis*, *aphairesis*.

Alcinoos devoted an entire chapter² of his handbook³ to the problem of the Platonic “first God”. Alcinoos regarded it as a principle transcending the world and as an intellect (*νοῦς*). In the beginning, he simply designated

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² Chapter X of *Didaskalikós* – the most popular section of the entire work – was translated and commented by A.-J. Festugière, in *La Révélation d’Hermès Trismégiste*, vol. IV: *Le Dieu Inconnu et la Gnose*, Librairie Lecoq, Paris, 1954, p. 95-102. John Whittaker published, in 1990, a critical edition to the text: *Alcinoos: enseignement des doctrines de Plato*, introd., com. John Whittaker, trans. Pierre Louis, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, lxxii, 213 p. The latest edition in English is the one of John Dillon: *Alcinoos, The Handbook of Platonism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002².

³ In his work *The Middle Platonists* (Duckworth, London, 1977, p. 267-307), John Dillon accepted the argument made by J. Freudenthal in 1879 that “Alcinoos” was actually the more well-known Middle Platonist Albinus, student of the philosopher Gaius and teacher of Galen, mid II century A.D. In the “Introduction” to *Alcinoos: The Handbook of Platonism* (p. ix-xiii), Dillon explains the reason for his change of mind regarding the identity of the author of *Didaskalikós*: “we would then be obliged to assume that the *Didaskalikós* is a piece of hack-work composed by a sophist who had Stoic sympathies, but who suppressed them sufficiently to compose a thoroughly sympathetic (Peripateticizing, if anything) account of Platonic philosophy. See also J. Whittaker, “Introduction”, in *Alcinoos. Enseignement des doctrines de Plato*, p. vii-xxxi.

it as θεός and νοῦς¹. Subsequently, after terms such as the soul and the *nous* of the cosmos have been introduced, the highest principle was made known by ὁ πρῶτος θεός² (the First God) or ὁ πρῶτος νοῦς³ (the First Intellect), to avoid confusion⁴.

The ways of knowing “The First God”

Alongside Matter and Forms, it is said that Plato had proposed a third ἀρχή⁵, which he considered – or so claims Alcinous, starting from the famous passage of *Timaeus* 28c⁶ – as “all but ineffable” (μικροῦ δεῖν καὶ ἄρρητον)⁷. After he provides two proofs regarding its existence⁸, Alcinous defines its ontological status and the relation to the subordinate levels of reality (*viz.* the demiurgic Intellect and the Soul). This supreme principle is identified with the Aristotelian first cause⁹: an unmoved (ἀκίνητος¹⁰) mover – the final cause of all creation (ὡς τὸ ὀρεκτὸν κινεῖ τὴν ὄρεξιν)¹¹ – and the First Intellect¹², “everlastingly engaged in thinking of itself and its

¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 9.3.2 (163.4, ed. J. Whittaker and P. Louis, *Alcinoos: enseignement des doctrines de Plato*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1990).

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.2.4 (164.22 Whittaker/ Louis).

³ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.7 (165.22 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁴ Cf. J.H.M.M. Loenen, “Albinus’ Metaphysics: An Attempt at Rehabilitation: I. The Inner Consistency and the Original Character of Albinus’ Interpretation of Plato”, *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, vol. 9, no. 4, 1956, p. 298.

⁵ The supreme God is an Intellect, and the Forms (paradigms of what is in nature) are its Thoughts. The First God is *unmoved* (ἀκίνητος) and everlastingly active toward the Second God, or Intellect of the World-Soul which – as consequence – is everlastingly active itself. This distinction reminds us of the one made by Eudorus between First *Hen* (Highest God) and Second *Hen* (Monad), with the essential difference that Alcinous does not talk of Ones, but of Intellects. Cf. J. Mansfeld, “Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek et alii, Brill, Leiden/ New York, 1988, p. 107-108.

⁶ Plato, *Timaeus* 28c3-5: “Now to find the maker and father of this universe [*to pan*] is hard enough, and even if I succeeded, to declare him to everyone is impossible” – τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὐρόντα εἰς πάντα ἀδύνατον λέγειν (trans. D.J. Zeyl, in Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. J.M. Cooper, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis/ Cambridge, 1997, p. 1235).

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.1.2 (164.8 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁸ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.1-2 (164.9-27 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁹ Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 1072a19-1075a10.

¹⁰ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.2.5 (164.23 Whittaker/ Louis).

¹¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.2.7 (164.25 Whittaker/ Louis).

¹² Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 1072b19-20: “And thought thinks itself because it shares the nature of the object of thought” – αὐτὸν δὲ νοεῖ ὁ νοῦς κατὰ μετάληψιν τοῦ νοητοῦ (trans.

own thoughts” (ἐαυτὸν ἄν οὖν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ νοήματα ἀεὶ νοοίη)¹. Alcinous afterwards displays a series of specific positive epithets, predicates of the supreme God². The new section opens with the key statement – adapted from *Epistle VII* (341c5) and the *Phaedrus* dialogue (247c7-8) of Plato – that God is “ineffable and graspable only by intellect” (ἄρρητος δ' ἐστὶ καὶ νῶ μόνῳ ληπτός)³. The remainder of this section focuses on the notion of “ineffable”: God refuses all predicates, including the universal categories of quantity and quality (*via oppositionis*). The following two sections⁴ are designed to clarify the second part of the key statement cited above⁵, namely that “God is graspable only by the intellect”.

Indeed, God is intelligible and can be grasped in three ways, all established by Plato: dimensional reduction (κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν), analogy (κατὰ ἀναλογίαν), and analysis according to the “preeminence” (κατὰ διὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ τιμίῳ ὑπεροχήν)⁶, i.e., *via remotionis*, *via analogiae* and *via eminentiae*.

There is a problem, visible even from this brief presentation of Alcinous’ theology, which apparently has puzzled researchers. If the First God is “ineffable”, then why does Alcinous – immediately after engaging in a detailed demonstration of this statement – attach a sum of positive attributes?

The primary god (πρῶτος θεός), then, is eternal (ἀίδιός), ineffable (ἄρρητος), ‘self-perfect’ (αὐτοτελής) (that is, deficient in no respect), ‘ever-perfect’ (ἀειτελής) (that is, always perfect), and ‘all-perfect’ (παντελής) (that is, perfect in all respects); divinity (θειότης), essentiality (οὐσιότης), truth, commensurability, (beauty), good. I am not listing these terms as being distinct from one another, but on the assumption that one single thing

W.D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, The Revised Oxford Translation, vol. II, ed. Jonathan Barnes, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1991, p. 176).

¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.2-3 (164.28-29 Whittaker/ Louis). Cf. Z. Plešè, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, Brill, Leiden/ Boston, 2006, p. 83.

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3 (164.31 sq. Whittaker/ Louis). Alcinous’ transcendent God is indeed an Aristotelian νοῦς ἀκίνητος, possessing the qualities of Plato’s Forms of the Good and the Beauty. Cf. J.H. Loenen, “Albinus’ Metaphysics: An Attempt at Rehabilitation: I. The Inner Consistency and the Original Character of Albinus’ Interpretation of Plato”, p. 298.

³ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.4 (165.5 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁴ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10 (165.16-34 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.4 (165.5 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁶ See Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 165.16-34 Whittaker/ Louis.

is being denoted by all of them. He is the Good (ἀγαθόν), because he benefits all things according to their capacities, being the cause of all good (παντὸς ἀγαθοῦ αἴτιος ὢν). He is the Beautiful (καλόν), because he himself by his own nature is perfect and commensurable (αὐτὸς τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει τέλει ἐστι καὶ σύμμετρον); Truth (ἀλήθεια), because he is the origin of all truth (πάσης ἀληθείας ἀρχὴ ὑπάρχει), as the sun is of all light; he is Father (πατήρ) through being the cause of all things (τῶ αἴτιος εἶναι πάντων)¹.

There were, among scholars, several attempts to decipher the logic of Alcinous. According to the common opinion², positive attributes do not describe God's *essence*, but express its *causal priority*: e.g., God is not *essentially*, but *causally* good, in that It confers the good. The fact that Alcinous makes such a distinction only in the case of three out of the eleven positive epithets which he associates to the first principle (*viz.*, Good, Truth, Father), does not seem to have bothered the advocates of this theory. They claimed that the remaining epithets also prove the relation of God to its creation. But, as noted by Z. Pleš, this vision does not seem to cover all cases. More specifically, Alcinous calls God "the Beautiful" not because "It is bestowing beauty but because It is perfect and commensurable by his own nature". And he also states that the first principle is God not because it creates gods, or Essence – in the sense of transmitting the essence –, or Perfection – on the grounds that it would create perfection in all its creation. Instead, Alcinous applies to the first principle terms such as: "Divinity" (θειότης), "Essentiality" (ουσιότης), "All-" (παντ-), "Ever-" (ἀει-) or "Self-Perfection" (αὐτοτελής) which announce the *absolute transcendence* of God rather than his causal primacy³.

J. Mansfeld⁴ ingeniously relates the list of attributes – both the positive and the negative ones⁵ – regarding God with the immediate

¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.4-14 (164.31-165.4 Whittaker/ Louis) (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 18).

² See H.A. Wolfson, "Albinus and Plotinus on Divine Attributes", *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 44, no. 2, 1952, p. 115-130; A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, IV, p. 95-102.

³ Cf. Z. Pleš, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 85.

⁴ See J. Mansfeld, "Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception", in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek et alii, p. 107 sq.

⁵ The famous illustration of negative theology in Alcinous is presented in *Didaskalikós* 10.4.1-11 (165.5-15 Whittaker/ Louis): "God is ineffable and graspable only by the intellect, as we have said, since he is neither genus, nor species, nor differentia, nor does he possess any

following section of Alcinous' *Didaskalikós*, in which the three ways of conceiving the First God are discussed.

The "way of *aphairesis*"

"The first way of conceiving God is by abstraction (κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν)¹ of these attributes, just as we form the conception of a point by abstraction from sensible phenomena, conceiving first a surface, then a line, and finally a point."² When he denies all attributes to his first ineffable God (ἄρρητος), Alcinous sets aside – in the sense of Mansfeld – "the first and the *highest* form of knowledge": *aphairesis*. Plešė warns us however that the geometric example used by Alcinous to describe this way – "an abstraction from a solid body to a mathematical point" – hardly has anything in common with "negative method" (οὔτε ... οὔτε), exploited in the section devoted to the ineffability of the First God³.

attributes, neither bad (for it is improper to utter such a thought), nor good (for he would be thus by participation in something, to wit, goodness), nor indifferent (for neither is this in accordance with the concept we have of him), nor yet qualified (for he is not endowed with quality, nor is his peculiar perfection due to qualification) nor unqualified (for he is not deprived of any quality which might accrue to him). Further, he is not a part of anything, nor is he in the position of being a whole which has parts, nor is he the same as anything or different from anything; for no attribute is proper to him, in virtue of which he could be distinguished from other things. Also, he neither moves anything, nor is he himself moved" – Ἄρρητος δ' ἐστὶ καὶ νῶ μόνῳ ληπτός, ὡς εἴρηται, ἐπεὶ οὔτε γένος ἐστὶν οὔτε εἶδος οὔτε διαφορὰ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ συμβέβηκε τι αὐτῶ, οὔτε κακόν ..., οὔτε ἀγαθόν ..., οὔτε ἀδιάφορον ..., οὔτε ποιόν ..., οὔτε ἄποιον ...· οὔτε μέρος τινός, οὔτε ὡς ὅλον ἔχον τινὰ μέρη, οὔτε ὥστε ταυτόν τι εἶναι ἢ ἕτερον· οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶ συμβέβηκε, καθ' ὃ δύναται τῶν ἄλλων χωρισθῆναι· οὔτε κινεῖ οὔτε κινεῖται (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 18). Cf. J. Mansfeld, "Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception", in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, R. van den Broek et alii, p. 108; P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, J.C. Gieben, Amsterdam, 1992, p. 185.

¹ More precisely, "by reduction" or "by separation/ by negation" – and not "by abstraction", in the sense of Aristotelian abstraction. Cf. A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, vol. IV, p. 314. Cf. also Ph. Merlan, "Abstraction and Metaphysics in St. Thomas' *Summa*", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1953, p. 288, n. 13: "kat' *aphairesin*" = *ablatio, remotio*.

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.1-4 (256.16-19 Whittaker/ Louis): Ἦσται δὴ πρώτη μὲν αὐτοῦ νόησις ἢ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τούτων, ὅπως καὶ σημείον ἐνοήσαμεν κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ, ἐπιφάνειαν νοήσαντες, εἶτα γραμμὴν, καὶ τελευταῖον τὸ σημείον (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 18).

³ Z. Plešė, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 86.

The *via negativa* works by negative predications followed by an adversative relative clause (which points towards the absolute superlative): either *triple negation* (“it is neither X nor Y nor Z, but it is something superior”) or *double, antithetical negation* (“it is neither X nor non-X, but it is something superior”) or just a *single negation* (“it is not X but it is superior to X”). The “but” clause is always positive and relative, referring to “something else” *beyond, superior to* the previously negated predications. Thus negation initiates the mind to upward to a new, more eminent, level of insight¹.

In *Didaskalikós*, the *via oppositionis* seems to have little in common with *aphairesis*: more precisely, it denotes the fact that the first principle is not susceptible of any definition (by genus, species, and differentia) and cannot be attained by discursive reasoning; in short, the method postulates the fact that God is *ineffable* (ἄρρητος). By contrast, the Alcinous’ presentation on *aphairesis* (*via subtractionis, reductionis, abstractionis*) certifies the fact that “God is graspable by intellect (νοητός)” by a kind of abstraction, legitimately used in the field of mathematics. This method leads not to the *negation* of all predicates (ἀπόφασις), but to the *subtraction* of the features which are less worthy of the first principle (ἀφαίρεσις, *viz.* from body to surface, from surface to line, and from line to point)².

On God, it is said that it is ἄρρητος (but graspable by Intellect³), because it is not a *genus, diaphora, etc.*; in short, any category is denied to it. The way of negation does not provide any knowledge concerning God. The only way to reach it is by the intellect. Only then does Alcinous resort to the method of ἀφαίρεσις, followed by ways of analogy and eminence⁴.

The method of ἀφαίρεσις in Alcinous consists thus in the ontological *removal* from God of what has previously been rejected by negation (ἀφαίρεσιν τούτων). While the *via negationis* deals with semantics, the *way of abstraction* concerns the ontological part of the problem. ἀφαίρεσις is a procedure used mainly in the field of mathematics⁵. It is obvious that abstraction (“ontological removing”) is not the same as negation, which is

¹ Cf. J.D. Turner, “The Gnostic Sethians and Middle Platonism: Interpretations of the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*”, *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2006, p. 42, n. 58.

² Z. Pleše, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 86.

³ *Didaskalikós* 10.4.1 (165.5 Whittaker/ Louis): καὶ νῶ μόνῳ ληπτός.

⁴ *Didaskalikós* 10.5-6 (165.16-34 Whittaker/ Louis). Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One* (*Enneads* VI, 9). *An analytical Commentary*, p. 184.

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.

in the field of categorical predication, although the two methods have something in common: “whatever one can negate, one can ontologically remove by abstraction, and vice versa”¹.

God is ἄρρητος because it escapes the categories, but there is a grasping of It by the detachment (ἀφαίρεσις) of any ontological property belonging to the spectrum of being (αὐτοῦ νόησις ἢ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τούτων) – which is elucidated by the example of the isolation of the mathematical point².

Therefore, Alcinous discusses negative theology in terms of abstraction – a concept associated with both the Aristotelian theory and Euclidean geometry. Abstractive theology can be seen as an effort to discern the nature of the first principle: it is an important theological technique for clarifying the absolute character of the “First God” by *removing* concepts in order to focus on the first unity³.

In addition, further explains Alcinous, we can prove by gradual dimensional subtraction the fact that God is without parts (ἄμερῆ), in the sense that It represents primary part (μέρος πρότερόν) out of which (τὸ ἐξ οὗ) things having part are composed⁴:

God is partless, by reason of the fact that there is nothing prior to him. For the part, and that out of which a thing is composed, exists prior to that of which it is a part; plane, for instance, is prior to body, and line is prior to plane – Ἀμερῆ τε διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι πρότερόν τι αὐτοῦ· τὸ γὰρ μέρος καὶ τὸ

¹ P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 185.

² We can agree with P.E. Meijer, when asserting that J. Whittaker (“Neo-pythagoreanism and Negative Theology”, *Symbolae Osloenses*, vol. 44, 1969, p. 123) went too far when introducing a too severe separation between negation and ἀφαίρεσις, claiming that “there is thus no good reason to suppose that in Alcinous the phrase κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν has anything to do with negation as such. In the passage in question Alcinous is concerned purely with the problem of forming a conception of God. The matter of negative statements lies outside the scope of his exposition.” This presentation does not match the fact that paragraph 5 from chap. X of *Didaskalikós* follows immediately after it was negated in paragraph 4. More than that, J. Whittaker seems to neglect the term τούτων in the sentence “by abstraction of these attributes” – αὐτοῦ νόησις ἢ κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν τούτων (*Didaskalikós* 10.5.1-2; 165.16-17 Whittaker/ Louis), because τούτων (“these”) refers to all that *was previously negated* to God. Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 184, n. 536.

³ Cf. J.P. Kenney, *Mystical Monotheism*, Brown University Press, Hanover/ London, 1991, p. 84-85.

⁴ Cf. Z. Pleše, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 86.

ἔξ οὗ, πρότερον ὑπάρχει τούτου, οὗ μέρος· καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἐπίπεδον πρότερον ἢ τὸ σῶμα, καὶ ἡ γραμμὴ πρότερον ἢ τὸ ἐπίπεδον¹.

The way of analogy and the way of eminence

The second method (κατὰ ἀναλογίαν²) is based on the Platonic comparison from the *Republic* dialogue which values the metaphor of the sun³. As the sun is not in itself the seeing, but the one that provides seeing to sight and visibility to objects, so “the first intellect (πρῶτος νοῦς) is not intellection (νόησις) itself, but confers the intelligizing capacity (τὸ νοεῖν) on the soul and intelligibility (τὸ νοεῖσθαι) on its objects”. This may represent a justification for the prior use of some positive appellatives such as: Good, Father, or Truth, about the First God (e.g., the fact that it is the Good (ἀγαθόν) – in the sense that It represents the cause of all good⁴). In other words, God can be grasped “intuitively” (νοητός) by analogous interpretations. However, all these analogies must not be confused with God’s essence, which remains ineffable (ἄρρητος)⁵.

The third way, mentioned by Alcinous in chap. X, is the *via eminentiae*⁶ (ὑπεροχὴν)⁷ and is based on Diotima’s method in the

¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.7.1-4 (165.34-37 Whittaker/ Louis) (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The handbook of Platonism*, p. 19).

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.4-10 (165.20 Whittaker/ Louis): “The second way of conceiving him is that of analogy, as follows: the sun is to vision and to visible objects (it is not itself sight, but provides vision to sight and visibility to its objects) as the primal intellect is to the power of intellection in the soul and to its objects; for it is not the power of intellection itself, but provides intellection to it and intelligibility to its objects, illuminating the truth contained” – Δευτέρᾳ δὲ ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ νόησις ἢ κατὰ ἀναλογίαν οὕτω πως· ὄν γὰρ ἔχει λόγον ὁ ἥλιος πρὸς τὴν ὄρασιν καὶ τὰ ὀρώμενα, οὐκ ὦν αὐτὸς ὄψις, παρέχων δὲ τῇ μὲν τὸ ὄραν, τοῖς δὲ τὸ ὀράσθαι, τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν λόγον ὁ πρῶτος νοῦς πρὸς τὴν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ νόησιν καὶ τὰ νοούμενα· οὐ γὰρ ὦν ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἡ νόησις, παρέχει αὐτῇ τὸ νοεῖν καὶ τοῖς νοητοῖς τὸ νοεῖσθαι, φωτίζων τὴν περὶ αὐτὰ ἀλήθειαν (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The handbook of Platonism*, p. 18-19).

³ Cf. Plato, *Respublica* VI, 508b9-c2.

⁴ Alcinous however neglects to refer to the fact that, as the sun is not only the cause of the being seen, but also of the being of the things on the visible realm, also the Good is the cause not only of the being known, but also of the being of the things in the intelligible sphere, i.e. is not merely epistemic but also ontic. Cf. J. Mansfeld, “An Echo of Middle Platonist Theology in Alexander *De Fato* ch. 34”, *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 43, no. 1, 1989, p. 88.

⁵ Cf. Z. Pleš, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 86.

⁶ Also named *anagogical way* or *anagogical method*, it involves the upward movement of the mind towards the intelligible realm. Cf. J.P. Kenney, *Mystical Monotheism*, p. 84.

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.6.1-7 (165.27 sq. Whittaker/ Louis).

*Symposium*¹ of Plato: it starts from the contemplation of beauty which lies in bodies, then rises to the one in the soul, from there to the beauty of customs and laws, so that we then move towards “great sea of Beauty”², after which one gains an intuition of the Good itself and the final object of love³ and striving⁴, like a light appearing and, as it were, shining out to the soul⁵ which ascends in this way⁶.

According to Pleš, if Alcinous had implemented a categorical analysis of the type of abstraction from sensible beautiful things to the intelligible form of beauty as a model for positive predication, he would have probably named the first principle: “the Beautiful Itself”⁷, “the Good Itself”, “the Substance Itself”, “the God Itself”. Instead, he assigns to the first principle abstract epithets such as: Divinity (θειότης) and Essentiality (ουσιότης), suggesting that the supreme principle transcends even the level of the universal Forms (*beyond* God, *beyond* Being) and, this way, cannot be reached by the kind of comparison characteristic to the third “way”⁸. Consequently, Pleš concludes, “Alcinous’s abstract nouns seem neither recommended nor justified by the third method of cognition. They do not express the positive idea in the most eminent way”⁹. More correctly, they are positive expressions of a negative idea¹⁰: *neither* Being *nor* Essence are

¹ Plato, *Symposium* 211c1-d1.

² Plato, *Symposium* 210d4.

³ Plato, *Symposium* 204c4.

⁴ Plato, *Philebus* 20d8. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 1072a26; *Physica* 192a17 sq.

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.6.3-6 (165.30-33 Whittaker/ Louis): εἶτα ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαιγος τοῦ καλοῦ, μεθ’ ὃ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν νοεῖ καὶ τὸ ἐραστὸν καὶ ἐφετὸν ὥσπερ φῶς φανέν καὶ οἶον ἐκλάμψαν τῇ οὕτως ἀνιούσῃ ψυχῇ (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The handbook of Platonism*, p. 19). Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* 1.7.3.2-3: “the revelation/appearance of the Logos that shone in us which is from the beginning and pre-existed” – ἡ ἐπιφάνεια ἢ νῦν ἐκλάμψασα ἐν ἡμῖν τοῦ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὄντος καὶ προόντος λόγου (trans. C. Mondésert, in Clement d’Alexandrie, *Le Protreptique*, Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1949², p. 61).

⁶ Cf. Plato, *Epistulae* VII, 341c-d.

⁷ As he did it in the previous reference to Diotima’s speech on *Beauty* (cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 5.5.5).

⁸ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.6.6-7 (165.34 Whittaker/ Louis): διὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ τιμίῳ ὑπεροχὴν (“pre-eminence in honour”, trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 19).

⁹ Cf. J. Mansfeld, “Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek et alii, p. 110.

¹⁰ For the superiority “beyond comparison” of a negative idea, see Theophrastus, *Metaphysica* 5a5-13: “Now up to these [arguments], the account has all its parts in place, so to speak: it both posits a single first principle for all [things] and provides [its] actualized state

covered, nor anything comparable to Being and Essence, but something that is *beyond* Being and Essence, *i.e.*, *Essentiality* – just as, in his own Alcinous' explanation, the term “self-perfect” (αὐτοτελής¹) is nothing else than a positive correlative of “non-deficient” (ἀπροσδεής)².

It seems that the mixture of positive and negative terms³ present in his descriptive theology is the one that puts Alcinous in the position of being accused of inconsistency⁴. How could the ineffability (ἄρρητος) of God be reconciled with the long list of divine attributes? God is called αὐτοτελής, ἀειτελής, τέλειος, παντελής – attributes which could be justified in that they indicate a certain type of perfection (a type of ὑπεροχή). Nevertheless, other attributes are present, such as divinity, essentiality, truth, symmetry, and good (θειότης, οὐσιότης, ἀλήθεια, συμμετρία, ἀγαθόν)⁵.

and essence, and it further says that it is neither something divisible nor quantifiable, but exalts it in an absolute sense to some better and more divine rank (for it is better that one should provide such an account rather than that one should remove [from it] divisibility and partitionability, because those who make the negative statement [above make it] in an argument that is at the same time loftier and closer to truth) – Μέχρι μὲν δὴ τούτων οἶον ἄρρητος ὁ λόγος, ἀρχὴν τε ποιῶν μίαν πάντων καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ἀποδιδούς, ἔτι δὲ μὴ διαιετὸν μηδὲ ποσόν τι λέγων ἀλλ' ἀπλῶς ἐξαιρῶν εἰς κρείττω τινὰ μερίδα καὶ θειοτέραν· οὕτω γὰρ μᾶλλον ἀποδοτέον ἢ τὸ διαιετὸν καὶ μεριστὸν ἀφαιρετέον. ἅμα γὰρ ἐν ὑψηλοτέρῳ τε καὶ ἀληθινωτέρῳ λόγῳ τοῖς λέγουσιν ἢ ἀπόφασις (trans. D. Gutas, in Theophrastus, *On First Principle [Metaphysics]*, Brill, Leiden/Boston, 2010, p. 117).

¹ Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 32d2-3, 34b7-8; Plutarch, *de Tuenda Sanitate* 122e; Calcidius, in *Timaeum* 186.204.8-9. Cf. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 104.

² Cf. Z. Pleše, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 88.

³ A.H. Armstrong (“The Escape of the One. An investigation of some possibilities of apophatic theology imperfectly realised in the West”, in *Plotinian and Christian Studies*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1979, p. 77) points out “the mixture of apophatic and cataphatic theology”, encountered in some Middle Platonic authors (*e.g.*, Albinus), which has not been sufficiently emphasized. This “apophatic-kataphatic mixture” – a combination of theological affirmations and negations –, which is the mark of Middle Platonism, appears in sharp contrast with “the more radical and austere apophatic theology” encountered in later Hellenic Neoplatonism. Cf. J.P. Kenney, “The Critical Value of Negative Theology”, *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 86, no. 4, 1993, p. 443.

⁴ Cf. J. Mansfeld, “Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek *et alii*, p. 110.

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.6-7 (164.33 Whittaker/ Louis). Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 184-185.

The project of Alcinous could become intelligible if we regarded it, as done by Meijer¹, without taking into account any “destructive conflict” between ἄρρητος and the other attributes, *i.e.* as if ἄρρητος were nothing more than a “harmless” part of an enumeration (eternal, ineffable, perfect in itself – ἀϊδιός ἄρρητος, αὐτοτελής²) and that, in fact, there can be no inconsistency in terms of qualifications and statements subsequent to ἄρρητος, as long as they do not compromise the first principle with predicates from the level of existence.

A plausible reading could be the one of Mansfeld³, who accepts the two “descriptions” as two *valid* and *complementary* models, although with different meanings⁴. According to the first “way” of knowledge, *viz.* the negative theology, God is “neither good nor bad nor indifferent”⁵, while, according to the third one, It is “the Good itself”⁶. In these circumstances, Alcinous can take the liberty to state that God is “eternal, ineffable, self-perfect (*i.e.* needing nothing), ever-perfect (*i.e.* always perfect), wholly-perfect (*i.e.* everywhere perfect), Godness, Beingness, Truth, Symmetry, Good”⁷, even though the epithet “ineffable” might come into conflict with all these. Similarly, the First Intellect – which thanks to the *via analogiae* is an Unmoved Mover⁸ – is described, from the perspective of negative theology, as being “neither a cause of motion nor itself in motion”⁹.

The apparent incongruencies seem to reconcile also in light of the theory of Pleš¹⁰, which reads the central part of the Alcinous’ description

¹ See P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 185.

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.4-5 (164.31-32 Whittaker/ Louis).

³ See J. Mansfeld, “Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek *et alii*, p. 110 *sq.*

⁴ J. Mansfeld (“Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek *et alii*, p. 109) claims that Alcinous “knew what he was doing, and that the *little chaos* scholars have believed his theology to be is merely apparent.”

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 165.6-9 (Whittaker/ Louis).

⁶ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 165.27 (Whittaker/ Louis).

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 164.30-33 (Whittaker/ Louis).

⁸ Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.2.5-8 (164.23-26 Whittaker/ Louis): “It acts on this while remaining itself unmoved, ..., while remaining motionless itself” – ...ἀκίνητος, ... κινεῖ ... ἀκίνητον ὑπάρχον (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 17).

⁹ Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.4.11 (165.16 Whittaker/ Louis): οὔτε κινεῖ οὔτε κινεῖται.

¹⁰ Cf. Z. Pleš, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 88.

on the First God¹ as an elaboration of his key statement according to which “God is ineffable and graspable only by intellect”². Therefore, the first section (God is ineffable) of his statement is explained in paragraphs 164.31-165.15: “God transcends discursive reasoning and refuses univocal definitions”. “Positive epithets” – even when they are applied to God – “say nothing about his essence, but simply emphasize God’s absolute transcendence and ontological priority”. For instance, God is not essentially good but only confers good, is not Being but *beyond* Being (οὐσιότης)³, and is Self-Perfect in the sense that he is *non*-deficient, etc. All these point to Its total superiority and independence from the rest of creation⁴. The methods by which Alcinous proves God’s ineffability include a simple negation (by ἄλλα ἀποφατικόν), a simultaneous negation of contradictory terms (*via oppositionis*), then the argument from other-directed causality (not X, but causing x; for instance, “not the Good, but causing the good”) and, finally, the argument from *superiority beyond comparison* (not x, and not even X, but X-ness; for example, not good and not even Good, but Goodness)⁵.

The last two sections of the central part of Alcinous’ demonstration⁶ can be judged as an argumentation intended for the second part of his key statement⁷: *viz.* that God – although ineffable and not susceptible to any definition – is still graspable by *intellection* (νόησις).

Alcinous seems to make use here of the Aristotelian principles⁸ introduced in the *Posterior Analytics*¹ – where it is stated that there cannot

¹ Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10 (164.31-165.34 Whittaker/ Louis).

² Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.4.1 (165.5 Whittaker/ Louis): Ἄσρητος δ’ ἐστὶ καὶ νῶ μόνῳ ληπτός (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 18).

³ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.7 (164.34 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁴ Cf. also J. Dillon, “Monotheism in the Gnostic Tradition”, in *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*, eds. Polymnia Athanassiadi and M. Frede, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, p. 73.

⁵ Cf. Z. Pleš, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 88.

⁶ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 165.16-34 Whittaker/ Louis.

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.4.1 (165.5 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁸ The commentators translate *nous* by “intuition”. The word “intuition” is a term of art; when it has a determinate sense, it implies a sort of mental vision: intuition is mental sight; intuited truths are just “seen” to be true. However, as argued by J. Barnes (“Commentary” [*Analytica Posteriora* 19, 100b5], in Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2002², p. 267 sq.), Aristotle, most probably, had no intention to express by *nous* intuitive knowledge, but a sort of perception. Therefore, Barnes abandons the term *intuiton* and instead prefers the word “comprehension”. In *Didaskalikós* 10.4, Alcinous will decipher the Aristotelian thought as referring to a distinct capacity, one that could correspond to what

be a “scientific knowledge” (ἐπιστήμη) of the first principles, but only an “intuitive knowledge” (νοῦς) –, which Alcinous takes over and applies in the case of God².

This process of intuition of God can be achieved, in the view of Alcinous, by various types of reductive explanations: dimensional (*aphairesis*), analogical (*analogia*), or categorial (*hyperochê*³). None of these models leads to a precise knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). All lead us to an “intuitive insight”, stating just the fact *that* God is, but not *what* it is. In other words, Alcinous creates two distinct types of methodological procedures – one for each side of his assumption according to which God is: 1) „ineffable” and 2) “graspable only by the intellect”⁴:

	“Ineffable” (ἄρρητος)	“Graspable only by intellect” (νοητός)
<i>General Method</i>	Negation	Abstraction (Reduction)
<i>Specific Methods</i>	<i>Via Oppositionis</i>	
	<i>Via Negationis</i>	<i>Aphairesis</i> (Dimensional Reduction)
	Other-Related Causality	<i>Analogy</i> (Analogical Translation)
	Incompatibility of Power	<i>Hyperochê</i> (Categorial Analysis)

The order of the three “ways”

The three “ways” by which one can gain knowledge of what is essentially *ineffable* (ἄρρητος), the *via remotionis*, the *via analogiae* and the *via eminentiae* (ὑπεροχή)⁵, find an extended and paradigmatic formulation¹ – the oldest that we know² – in Alcinous³.

Plato would have envisaged by *nous*. Cf. J. Dillon, “Commentary”, *Didaskalikós* 10.4, in Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, p. 107.

¹ Cf. Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora* 2.19.

² On the types of reasoning associated with the types of knowledge in Alcinous, see L.P. Schrenk, “Faculties of Judgment in the *Didaskalikós*”, *Mnemosyne*, vol. 44, no. 3-4, 1991, p. 347-363.

³ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 5.4.2 (157.12 Whittaker/ Louis): ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ ἄνοδος.

⁴ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 165.5 (Whittaker/ Louis). Cf. Z. Pleš, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 89.

⁵ Cf. R.E. Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1937, p. 132: *viae negationis, causalitatis, eminentiae*; E.F. Osborn, “Negative

J. Mansfeld⁴ establishes a classification of the three ways based on “the order of importance”: Πρώτη⁵ should be understood as “the most important”, Δευτέρα⁶ as “the second-best” and Τρίτη⁷ as “the third-best”.

theology and apologetic”, in *The Via Negativa*, Supplement to *Prudentia*, eds. R. Mortley and D. Dockrill, Auckland, 1981, p. 53: “by negation (*via negativa*), as in the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides*, by analogy (*via analogiae*), as in the allegory of the Sun in *Republic* vi, and by *anagoge* (*via eminentiae*), as in the passage from the *Symposium*”; R.T. Wallis, “The spiritual importance of not knowing”, in *Classical mediterranean spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman*, ed. A.H. Armstrong, Crossroad, New York, 1986, p. 466: Analogy (*kat’analogian*, illustrated by the *Republic*’s comparison of the Good to the Sun), Negation (*kat’aphairesin*, as a geometrical point is reached by abstraction) and Eminence (*kath’hyperochēn*, represented by the *Symposium*’s ascent through successive levels of beauty); P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI.9)*, p. 183: the *via remotionis* (ἀφαίρεσις), the *via analogiae* (ἀναλογία) and the *via eminentiae* (ὕπεροχη).

¹ According to E.R. Dodds (“The Unknown God in Neoplatonism”, in Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. Idem, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1963², p. 312), the three “ways” (the *way of analogy*, the *way of negation* and the *way of ecstasy*) are part of the Platonic tradition that acquires clear representation in Albinus and which will be found – albeit in a different order – in Neoplatonic authors such as Plotinus and Proclus. Cf. also H.A. Wolfson, “Albinus and Plotinus on Divine Attributes”, *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 45, no. 2, 1952, p. 117 sq. Chapter X from *Didaskalikós* plays a dominant role in the history of the modern description of the three “ways”, as well as the use of these methods in Antiquity after Albinus. The methodological complex that it contains has exerted an obvious impact on the Plotinian methods of thinking about the One. Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 185-186.

² Other two Middle Platonists, Maximus of Tyre and Celsus, also mention the threefold way, although their terminology and order are different. Maximus ranks *hyperochē* first, then *the analogy* and, finally, *aphairesis*. Celsus uses *analysis* for *aphairesis*, and *synthesis* for *hyperochē*, and his sequence is: *synthesis*, *analysis*, *analogia*. The three authors do not agree on the third position, where Alcinous places *hyperochē*, Maximus – *aphairesis* and Celsus – *the analogy*. Of particular interest is the use by Celsus of the term *synthesis* to represent the way of preeminence and, also, the fact that both (Maximus and Celsus) place it on the first place. Cf. G.P. Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the interplay of positive and negative theology*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2004, p. 11, n. 15. Cf. also A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d’Hermès Trismégiste*, p. 136.

³ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5 (165.16-34 Whittaker/ Louis). See P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 185 sq.

⁴ Cf. J. Mansfeld, “Compatible alternatives: Middle Platonist theology and the Xenophanes Reception”, in *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. R. van den Broek et alii, p. 109.

⁵ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.1 (157.15 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁶ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.5.4 (157.20 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.6.1 (157.27 Whittaker/ Louis).

Thus, the first way, negative theology¹, “clearly the most abstract”, is “the first and the most important”; the *via eminentiae* is “the third way and the most concrete”, while the *via analogiae* falls second in importance².

P.E. Meijer³ proposes a different order, in the case of Alcinous, starting from the hypothesis that the two ways – the *via analogiae* and the *via eminentiae* – are positive in the knowledge of the first principle, while negation reflects the quality of being ἄρρητος of God⁴. This vision, Meijer justifies, would be based on the words of Alcinous himself. Plato, states the Middle Platonist, “considers the God (as *arche*) to be almost inexpressible (μικροῦ δεῖν καὶ ἄρρητον), but we gain some knowledge about him in the following manner: via analogical procedures⁵ he comes to ascent to the God as νοῦς⁶ and πρῶτος νοῦς⁷ (paragraph 2 and 3).”⁸

Alcinous opens paragraph 3 with a qualification (νοῦς κάλλιστος)⁹ – which could be done through *via eminentiae*. Ultimately, he gradually inserts a list of attributes, starting with αἰδιός, then “eternal, ineffable, self-perfect (*i.e.* needing nothing), ever-perfect (*i.e.* always perfect), wholly-perfect (*i.e.* everywhere perfect), Godness, Beingness, Truth, Symmetry, Good” – ἄρρητος, αὐτοτελής τουτέστιν ἀπροσδεής, ἀειτελής τουτέστιν

¹ The *via negationis*, as noticed by P.E. Meijer (*Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 190), does not appear very clearly bounded from the *via apophantica*, in the scheme of J. Mansfeld.

² See also Z. Pleše, *Narrative and Cosmology in the Apocryphon of John*, p. 86.

³ See P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An Analytical Commentary*, p. 190-191. In the view of P.E. Meijer, the *method of negation* and the *way of abstraction* prepare the way of knowing God, and the *way of analogy* (“the way of obtaining knowledge by inferiors”) and the *way of eminence* have the privilege of providing some learning about God. While the *way of abstraction* may play a certain role throughout the actual ascent of the soul, the others cannot.

⁴ Starting from the case of Plotinus, who attaches equal importance to all three “ways” and uses them indiscriminately, P.E. Meijer (*Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 190) extrapolates the analysis and righteously applies it in the case of Albinus.

⁵ Without explicitly mentioning the term *analogy*.

⁶ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.2.1 (164.18 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁷ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.1 (164.21 Whittaker/ Louis).

⁸ Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.1.1-3 (164.7-9): Ἐξῆς δὲ περὶ τῆς τρίτης ἀρχῆς ποιητέον τὸν λόγον, ἦν μικροῦ δεῖν καὶ ἄρρητον ἡγεῖται ὁ Πλάτων· ἐπαχθείμεν δ' ἂν περὶ αὐτῆς τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον.

⁹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.1 (164.27-28 Whittaker/ Louis): “supremement beau” (trans. P. Louis, in Alcinous, *Enseignement des doctrines de Platon*, p. 23); “supremely fine” (trans. J. Dillon, in Alcinous, *The handbook of Platonism*, p. 17).

ἀεὶ τέλειος, παντελής τουτέστι πάντη τέλειος· θειότης, οὐσιότης, ἀλήθεια, συμμετρία, ἀγαθόν¹.

Meijer takes notice that many attributes on this list indicate “stages of superiority”², while others do not express them at all or suggest them only to a small extent³. Moreover, some of them can be explained “from the *arche-and-aitios*-character of the God⁴, not from God’s superiority”⁵.

The thread of Alcinous’ logic would maybe disengage itself from ambiguity if we accepted Meijer’s reasoning, according to which it is first necessary to postulate the existence of a Supreme Entity, *i.e.* a God with certain properties because only afterwards we can talk about the *eminence* of this God. Alcinous’ order becomes coherent when we take into account the aporetic situation from an epistemological perspective: “God is almost ineffable”⁶. If this point of view is a correct one, then we do not have so much to do with a “sequence of importance”, as Mansfeld believes, but more with a “sequence of functioning”, as Meijer⁷ labels it.

Moreover, it seems significant that, despite Dörrie⁸ and Mansfeld’s argument that the *via negationis* is “the most important”, yet Alcinous himself does not mention the *via negationis* at all in the first three paragraphs from chapter X of the *Didaskalikós*: the only “methods” or “ways” he appeals to in this part of the chapter is the *via analogiae* and – in a form somewhat covered – the *via eminentia*⁹.

¹ Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 10.3.4-7 (164.7 Whittaker/ Louis).

² Eminence: αὐτοτελής, ἀειτελής, τέλειος, παντελής.

³ θειότης, οὐσιότης, ἀλήθεια, συμμετρία, ἀγαθόν.

⁴ ἀλήθεια, συμμετρία, ἀγαθόν.

⁵ As the *via eminentiae* would require.

⁶ P.E. Meijer explains that Albinus acted “in a retrograde manner” and that ἄρρητος was the last remaining attribute about which Albinus wanted to give a complete explanation. So that, in the sequence of the attributes it deals with, the comment on ἄρρητος “comes at an entirely natural moment”. “The timing of this comment therefore has nothing to do with *importance* (as J. Mansfeld suggested), for in this case, αἰδιός would have been of more importance”.

⁷ Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 192.

⁸ H. Dörrie (“Die Frage nach dem Transzendenten im Mittelplatonismus”, in *Les Sources de Plotin*, Fondation Hardt, Vandœuvres/ Genève, 1960, p. 213) states that, “in comparison to the *via negationis*, the *via analogiae* and the *via eminentiae* have in Middle Platonism only *alternative importance*”.

⁹ Cf. P.E. Meijer, *Plotinus on the Good or the One (Enneads VI, 9). An analytical Commentary*, p. 192.

Alcinous' sources of inspiration

As for the sources of inspiration¹ of Alcinous' negative theology, they can be easily traced back to Plato and the Old Academy, or to Aristotle and Neopythagorean authors.

Diverging from the opinion of H.J. Krämer², who pleaded for spreading the theory of negation from the Old Academy *directly* to the Middle Platonic authors (e.g. Alcinous), J. Whittaker³ stresses the importance of the Neopythagorean *mediation*⁴: "when he underlines the *absolute transcendence* of God— i.e. its incognoscibility and superiority to intellect —, Albinus seems to indicate sources from the Neopythagorean register"⁵.

A.H. Armstrong had already plausibly argued the fact that a part of the section *Didaskalikós* X (viz. the one dealing with the *via negationis*) could be indirectly inspired from the First Hypothesis of the Plato's *Parmenides*⁶: "He then proceeds to the section deriving from the First Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*. In this he says that the First Νοῦς is *not* genus, species (or form), differentia, accident (again Aristotelian terminology), evil, good,

¹ See J.H. Loenen, "Albinus' Metaphysics: An Attempt at Rehabilitation: II. The Sources of Albinus's Metaphysics", p. 35-56.

² See H.J. Krämer, *Der Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Platonismus zwischen Platon und Plotin*, Grüner, Amsterdam, 1967, p. 106-107 and 115-119.

³ See J. Whittaker, "Neopythagoreanism and Negative Theology", p. 112 sq.

⁴ Cf. J. Bussanich, *The One and its relation to Intellect in Plotinus. A commentary on selected texts*, Brill, Leiden, 1988, p. 114.

⁵ For the *way of negation*, Alcinous does not cite any Platonic authority, but its illustration refers to a Neopythagorean source. E.R. Dodds expresses reticence regarding the assumption that Neopythagoreans would have discovered and extracted the "negative method" from the First Hypothesis of the Plato's *Parmenides*; nevertheless, it could be regarded as a logical result of Plato's regressive dialectic and there is no reason to identify an origin from the Oriental space. Cf. E.R. Dodds, "The Unknown God in Neoplatonism", in Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, p. 312. A.-J. Festugière formulates in the same manner when confirming that "cette connaissance par exclusion (κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν), par négation, a été déjà enseignée par Platon" and that there is no need to look for Oriental-inspired models : "*via negationis* se trouve chez ces auteurs [Albinus et Celsus] pour la bonne raison qu'elle est déjà chez Platon lui-même". See A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, IV, p. 135 and 140.

⁶ Cf. also J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, p. 284-285. The method of κατὰ ἀφαίρεσιν ("removal of attributes") may be claimed from the interpretations of the First Hypothesis of the Plato's *Parmenides* (137c-142a), passage that has become a classic example of what was later labeled as the *via negationis*.

with or without quality, part, whole, does not move, is not moved, is not the same or other.”¹

However, Armstrong reckons, we must bear in mind the fact that Alcinous regarded the *Parmenides* dialogue “simply as a logical exercise², not as containing any profound metaphysical teaching (*Didaskalikós* 6)³. He must, therefore, be held to be unconscious of the source of his *negative theology*”⁴.

Whittaker⁵ is somewhat more reserved in this debate, launching the idea that “the Middle Platonists did not, as has been frequently supposed, regard the *Parmenides* solely as a logical ‘exercise-book’⁶ without metaphysical relevance”. They can provide “incontestable proof of a pre-Plotinian theological interpretation of the First Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*.”⁷

The same vision is also shared by J.M. Rist, who admits that Alcinous might have derived – directly or indirectly – his theories on the negative theology from the *Parmenides*⁸ dialogue.

As E.R. Dodds⁹ insisted, Middle Platonic-inspired negative theologies can only be the transposition of the natural development of Plato’s doctrine

¹ A.H. Armstrong, *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1940, p. 10.

² Cf. also J.M. Rist, “The Neoplatonic One and Plato’s *Parmenides*”, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, vol. 93, 1962, p. 401.

³ Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikós* 6.

⁴ Cf. A.H. Armstrong, *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus*, p. 16, n. 3. In a different place, Armstrong seems to be even more strict in its assessments on the negative theology of Albinus, considering it only “a discordant and alien element in his system”, which remained “an undigested” chapter in the Platonic tradition up to Plotinus, “to whom it seems to have been transmitted as the standard exegesis of the *Parmenides*” (A.H. Armstrong, *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus*, p. 23).

⁵ See J. Whittaker, “ΕΠΙΕΚΕΙΝΑ ΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ”, *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1969, p. 99.

⁶ Cf. also R.E. Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism*, p. 4.

⁷ J. Whittaker, “Philological Comments on the Neoplatonic Notion of Infinity”, in *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1984, p. 158-159.

⁸ See J.M. Rist, “The Neoplatonic One and Plato’s *Parmenides*”, p. 401.

⁹ See E.R. Dodds, “The *Parmenides* of Plato and the Origin of the Neoplatonic ‘One’”, *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 3-4, 1928, p. 129-142.

of the Good “beyond being in power and dignity”¹ and of the speculations on “the non-being of the One” from the First Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*. Middle Platonic sources are based on the argument from the *Parmenides* in favour of the absolute unity of the universe and marks an innovative step towards applying this unity in the case of a God who *transcends* the universe – thus converting the dialogue in a theological treatise².

*

Negative theology – although understood in an “abstractive way” – could compete as a remarkable method for articulating the transcendence of the First God. Abstraction became a “theological portraiture”³ strategy, certifying the special status of the supreme divinity. Negative theology can thus be viewed as part of the development of the logic of Hellenic theism, one that will be systematically perfected by the subsequent thinkers, especially by Plotinus⁴.

¹ Cf. Plato, *Respublica* 509b9-10: ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρῶσβεία καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος. See Hans J. Krämer, “ΕΠΕΚΕΙΝΑ ΤΗΣ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ. Zu Platon, *Politeia* 509b”, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 51, no. 1, 1969, p. 1 -30.

² Cf. J.D. Turner, “The Gnostic Sethians and Middle Platonism: Interpretations of the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*”, *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2006, p. 43-44.

³ J.P. Kenney, “Ancient Apophatic Theology”, in *Gnosticism and Later Platonism*, eds. J.D. Turner and Ruth Majericj, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, 2000, p. 268.

⁴ Cf. J.P. Kenney, *Mystical Monotheism*, p. 85. As noted by J.P. Kenney, in *Didaskalikós* we discover perhaps the best example of negative theology in an elaborate form in all Middle Platonism and a valuable record for this kind of thinking in the period prior to Plotinus. Cf. J.P. Kenney, *Mystical Monotheism*, p. 83.

NATURA ȘI FORMELE DIVINAȚIEI LA IAMBlichOS

Adriana NEACȘU¹

Abstract: Concerned with an ethical and ontological model of man aimed at his fulfilment in divine perfection, Iamblichus criticizes the principal human forms of divination, in order to describe, as opposed to them, the authentic form of divination, namely sacred or divine divination. Its principle is the following: the knowledge of the cause and essence of becoming leads us to the knowledge of the future. The ability to make predictions about the future is only granted to the gods, because they have a universal knowledge, but the gods offer their power to men that are capable to participate in the divine. This sacred divination occurs only in theurgy, which ultimate goal is the union of the theurgist with divinity, and the authentic divination is the crowning of the theurgy.

Keywords: human divination, sacred divination, signs of the gods, natural intuition, divine enthusiasm, divine dreams, theophoria; divination by oracles, divination by light, theurgy.

Introducere

Dintotdeauna viitorul a exercitat o fascinație incontestabilă asupra oamenilor, care au dezvoltat de-a lungul timpului numeroase forme prin care au încercat să îl cunoască înainte ca el să devină prezent. Mai ales în antichitate, formele de a prezice viitorul au fost foarte variate, fiind apreciate nu numai de oamenii obișnuiți, ci și de către stat, care a instituționalizat astfel de practici. În ceea ce îi privește pe filosofii greco-romani, multă vreme aceștia nu au acordat o atenție specială practicilor divinatorii, pe care nu le socoteau foarte legate de filosofie. Numai stoicii, datorită concepției lor asupra destinului (gr. *εἰμαρμένῃ*-*eimarméne*; lat. *fatum*), credeau într-un determinism universal, al cărui mecanism putea să fie cunoscut prin intermediul diverselor practici de divinație, însă ei au fost combătuți puternic de către Cicero în lucrarea *De divinatione*.

Dar situația s-a schimbat radical începând cu primele secole după Hristos, când influența cultelor orientale a devenit atât de puternică în Imperiul Roman încât filosofii au fost în mod irezistibil atrași de posibilitatea de a combina în gândirea lor rațiunea cu iraționalul. Cei care

¹ University of Craiova, Romania.

au ilustrat în modul cel mai spectaculos această tendință au fost filosofii neoplatonici de după Plotin, începând cu Porfir, dar mai ales cu Iamblichos.

Acesta din urmă, în *Misteriile Egiptenilor* (gr. *Περὶ τῶν αἰγυπτίων μυστηρίων-Perí tón aigýptíon mysteríon*; lat. *De mysteriis*¹), se străduiește să respingă în mod sistematic reticențele pe care Porfir le exprima în *Scrisoarea către Anebon* față de cultele ritualiste ale zeilor ca mijloc de înălțare a sufletului către divin. Scopul lui Iamblichos este de a justifica, din perspectivă și cu mijloace filosofice teurgia (gr. *θεουργία-theourgía*), concepută ca un sistem complex, format dintr-un ansamblu de practici întemeiate pe o știință riguroasă, de natură divină, ca un înalt nivel de spiritualitate (dobândit într-o manieră filosofică) și ca un comportament etic exemplar. În acest context, Iamblichos consideră că cea mai înaltă dintre aceste practici, cea care întemeiază teurgia, permițându-i să își îndeplinească menirea, este arta divinației sau a manticii (gr. *μαντική τέχνη-mantiké téhne*).

Dar pentru a face credibil acest statut cu totul special al divinației, el trebuia să răstoarne concepția obișnuită asupra naturii ei și să critice modul în care era practică în cea mai mare parte a formelor sale tradiționale. În vederea acestui scop, Iamblichos stabilește că există două tipuri de mantică (gr. *ἡ μαντεία-he manteía* ori *ἡ μαντική-he mantiké*) sau divinație (lat. *divinatio*): una divină, iar cealaltă umană.

1. Divinația umană

Mantica umană (*ἀνθρώπινα μαντεία-anthrópina manteía*) are numeroase forme, care, în eforturile lor de previziune (*πρόγνωσις-prógnosis*) a viitorului (*τὸ μέλλον-tó méllon*) ajung la rezultate foarte diverse, de la cele relativ corecte până la cele total mistificatoare. În lucrarea sa, Iamblichos nu prezintă toate aceste forme, ci numai pe cele mai importante sau cele mai comune, care formează, din punctul său de vedere, principalele lor categorii.

¹ Titlul complet al cărții lui Iamblichos, stabilit de Marsilio Ficino în secolul al XV-lea, este: *De mysteriis Aegyptiorum Chaldaeorum Assyriorum*.

1.1. Divinația imperfectă

a. Divinația prin captarea semnelor divine

O primă categorie a manticii este reprezentată de observarea măruntaielor animalelor sacrificate (*ἱεροσκοπία-hieroskopía*), a zborului păsărilor (*ὄρνιθομαντεία-ornithomanteía*) și a mișcărilor corpurilor cerești (*ἀστρομαντεία-astromanteía*). Tuturor acestor practici, Iamblichos le acordă o anumită credibilitate pentru că reușește să stabilească o legătură între ele și voința (*βούλησις-boúlesis*) divină. De exemplu, examenul măruntaielor ne revelează uneori lipsa diverselor părți interne ale corpurilor, fără de care viața (*ζωή-zoé*) nu ar fi posibilă; zborul păsărilor și, mai ales, comportamentul lor ciudat sunt dirijate, într-o mare măsură, de către zei (*θεοί-theoí*); în sfârșit, mișcărilor astrelor sunt subordonate în totalitate voinței zeilor, astfel încât oamenii le pot deduce destul de ușor dacă îi acordă cerului (*οὐρανός-ouranós*) suficientă atenție, iar în felul acesta ei pot ghici unele din evenimentele viitoare.

Explicația generală pentru toate aceste reușite ale divinației umane este că zeii folosesc toate fenomenele naturale și toate ființele (*τὰ ὄντα-tá ónta*) care trăiesc pe pământ sau în aer pentru a le transmite oamenilor semne (*σημεῖα-semeía*), pornind de la care aceștia pot face deducții raționale cu un grad mai mic sau mai mare de probabilitate în ceea ce privește viitorul. Semnele divine se află peste tot în lume (*περὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον-perí pánta tón kósmov*), deci ele nu se găsesc doar în cele trei tipuri de obiecte mai sus menționate, ci până și în cele mai simple și umile lucruri ale lumii, precum „pietricelele, bețele, bucățile de lemn, grâul și făina”¹, care exprimă diverse alte modalități prin care se poate exercita mantica umană.

„... acest tip de divinație (...) recurge la anumite semne divine oferite de zei în diverse feluri. Pornind de la semnele divine și bazându-se pe afinitatea obiectelor cu indiciile menționate, arta face presupuneri și formulează preziceri, făcând deducții pe baza anumitor probabilități. Așadar zeii produc aceste semne prin intermediul naturii – al celei comune sau al celei specifice fiecărei ființe –, care se află în slujba lor pentru a da naștere fenomenelor, sau prin intermediul daimonilor generării care, aflându-se în fruntea elementelor din univers, a corpurilor particulare, a animalelor și a tot ceea ce există în lume, îndrumă cu ușurință fenomenele așa cum le place

¹ Iamblichos, *Misteriile egiptenilor*, III, 17, traducere din limba greacă, studiu introductiv, note și comentarii de Tudor Dinu, Iași, Polirom, 2003, p. 107.

zeilor. Ei revelează într-o manieră simbolică gândirea zeilor, prevestind viitorul.”¹

Forma aceasta a manticii, care face apel la semnele zeilor, percepute prin diverși intermediari, poate obține rezultate mai mult sau mai puțin importante, în funcție de capacitatea omului de a interpreta semnele sau simbolurile (*σύμβολα-sýmbola*), fără să atingă, totuși, în felul acesta, o cunoaștere (*γνώσις-gnósis*) reală, singura care garantează o previziune corectă (*ἀψευδής-apseudés*), fără nici un dubiu, a viitorului. Dar ea exprimă cea mai bună performanță pe care o poate atinge divinația umană. Toate celelalte, care fac apel în mod exclusiv la facultățile psihice și intelectuale ale oamenilor, ajung, cel mult, la rezultate extrem de relative, incerte, îndoielnice, dacă nu chiar false și mistificatoare.

b. Divinația pe baza cunoașterii teoretice și practice comune

De exemplu, există o știință umană de a prevedea viitorul în cadrul artei navigației (*κυβερνητική τέχνη-kybernetiké téchne*) și a medicinei (*ιατρική τέχνη-iatriké téchne*), ai căror specialiști pot anticipa evoluția timpului probabil, a unei boli (*νόσημα-nósema*) sau a unei vindecări, pentru că ei fac analogii și deducții ținând cont de cunoașterea oferită de meseria lor, precum și de experiența lor trecută. Nu este vorba, însă, aici, de a interpreta semnele zeilor, ci doar de a „citi” semnele naturii (*φύσις-fýsis*) sau ale corpului (*σῶμα-sóma*), iar aceste previziuni sunt întotdeauna destul de problematice, căci nu se bazează pe o cunoaștere autentică, a cauzelor (*αἰτίαι-aitíai*) reale ale fenomenelor.

„De aceea, chiar dacă în cadrul anumitor discipline ca navigația sau medicina există o știință de a prevedea viitorul, ea nu se aseamănă deloc cu prezicerile divine. Face presupuneri despre viitor prin analogie și după probabilități, îl deduce pe baza unor semne care nu sunt întotdeauna sigure și nu sunt legate în mod constant de ceea ce este anunțat și indicat prin semne. Dimpotrivă, preștiința divină a viitorului este precedată de o cunoaștere sigură, de o garanție solidă datorată cauzelor, de o înțelegere care leagă indisolubil toate fenomenele între ele, de o recunoaștere invariabilă a tuturor lucrurilor, ca și cum ar fi prezente și determinate.”²

Așadar, de vreme ce cunoașterea umană privitoare la lume este precară prin definiție, căci se realizează prin intermediul capacităților

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 15, pp. 103-104.

² *Ibidem*, III, 26, p. 119.

cognitive limitate ale omului, ea nu poate obține performanțe notabile în ceea ce privește previziunea (*πρόγνωσις-prógnosis*) sau divinația viitorului (*τοῦ μέλλοντος μαντεία-τού méllontos manteía*).

c. *Divinația prin intuiție naturală*

O altă metodă umană de a cunoaște evenimentele viitoare este cea prin intuiție (*ἐπιβολή-epibolé*) naturală, care este o calitate specială, înnăscută, a anumitor indivizi. De fapt, aceasta este o premoniție sau un presentiment înrudit cu percepția naturală a animalelor, care, din cauza acuității deosebite a simțurilor lor, pot detecta instantaneu schimbări care se petrec în locuri îndepărtate de cel în care se află ele, dar care vor produce în curând efecte și acolo.¹ În orice caz, Iamblichos ne asigură că aceste premoniții nu exprimă capacitatea umană de a sesiza așa-zisa simpatie universală (*συμπάθεια τοῦ παντός-sympátheia touó pantós*) a lucrurilor, care le-ar permite acestora să își transmită informațiile între ele.

De fapt, ele pot sesiza, cel mult, într-o manieră obscură și datorată mai mult hazardului, semnele sau imaginile cunoașterii divine, de la care își împrumută cea mai mare parte a performanței lor divinatorii. Dar aceste premoniții sunt oarbe, fără nici o precizie și aleatorii, pentru că interpretarea pe care ele o dau semnelor divine este derutantă, ajungând astfel doar la niște simulacre de adevăr (*φαντάσματα τοῦ ἀληθοῦς-fantásmata touó alethoús*). Asta înseamnă că datele naturale ale omului nu îl califică în nici un fel pentru realizarea unei divinații de calitate, care este apanajul ființelor supranaturale.

„...cine oare nu s-ar rușina să dea o importanță atât de mare naturii, care este lipsită de gândire și nu e în stare să desăvârșească ființele chemate la existență, pentru că ar fi creat în noi o anumită predispoziție pentru divinație și ne-ar fi inculcat unora mai mult, altora mai puțin din această abilitate? La oamenii care au primit de la natură stimulente pentru propria desăvârșire, anumite aptitudini preced chiar natura. În schimb, acolo unde la bază nu se află nici o acțiune omenească, și nici rezultatul nu depinde de noi, ci ne este atribuit un bine divin anterior naturii noastre, nu este cu putință să fie presupusă o predispoziție înnăscută. Căci unde există perfecțiune există și premise imperfecte. Ambele dispoziții sunt specifice oamenilor. În schimb, pentru ceea ce nu se găsește în noi ca oameni nu va

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 26, p. 118.

exista niciodată o pregătire care să provină de la natură. Așadar în noi nu există nici o sămânță a manitei divine pe care să o datorăm naturii.”¹

Este, deci, posibil să ajungem la o știință divinatorie (τὸ μέλλον μάθησις-tó méllon máthesis) umană, întemeiată pe intuiție, analogie (ἀναλογία-analogía) și probabilitate, pe capacitatea noastră de evaluare, de estimare și de deducție pornind de la o situație dată și folosind cunoștințe obținute dinainte, dar această știință nu are nici un fel de precizie. Totuși, în ciuda marii lor imperfecțiuni, aceste forme ale manticii umane prezentate mai sus, sunt capabile să anticipeze, într-o oarecare măsură, evenimentele viitoare, dar, de cele mai multe ori, reușitele lor se datorează ajutorului primit, într-o formă sau alta, din partea zeilor.

1.2. Falsa divinație

a. Divinația prin falsa invocare a zeilor

Dar există alte forme de divinație care nu fac decât să inducă în eroare oamenii, oferindu-le false previziuni. Acestea nu au nici un fundament cognitiv real, ci sunt înșelătoare și în întregime dăunătoare. Iamblichos ne spune că ele sunt „minciuni” (ψευδολογίαι-pseudologíai), realizate de către impostori, care vor să ne convingă de faptul că ei se află în relație cu zeii, dar care nu sunt capabili să își însușească și să practice arta de a intra în contact cu aceștia, cu alte cuvinte, teurgia.

„Acest tip de divinație nu poate fi lesne înțeles pe baza unei singure expuneri, deoarece mulți recurg la el într-un mod greșit. Ceea ce este la îndemâna celor mai mulți oameni și prevalează într-un mod supărător, recurgând la minciună și la o înșelătorie insuportabilă, nu beneficiază deloc de prezența vreunui zeu, ci produce o mișcare a sufletului contrară zeilor și captează aparența unei imagini obscure care, din pricina șubrezeniei sale, este de obicei tulburată de suflările daimonilor malefici. (...) Există oameni care, trecând cu vederea toată doctrina contemplativă valabilă atât pentru cel care face invocația, cât și pentru epopt, disprețuind ordinea teurgică, preasfânta și îndelungata perseverență în exerciții, respingând legile, rugăciunile și celelalte rituri, consideră că este suficient «să stea cu picioarele pe caractere» și cred că atunci când fac acest lucru pentru o singură oră, în ei pătrunde un spirit. Dar ce lucru bun sau perfect ar putea rezulta în urma acestei acțiuni?”²

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 27, p. 120.

² *Ibidem*, III, 13, pp. 100-101.

La fel de mincinoase și de nocive sunt visele (*ὄνειροι-óneiroi*) pe care le avem în timpul somnului (*ὕπνος-hýpnos*), chiar dacă ele sunt considerate de mulțime, datorită ignoranței (*ἄγνοια-ághnoia*), drept vise trimise de către zei, pentru a ne revela viitorul. În realitate, aceste vise izvorăsc din capacitățile limitate ale sufletului (*ψυχή-psyché*) uman, pentru că nu sunt decât ecouri ale activității noastre diurne, ale dorințelor, grijilor și preocupărilor noastre, care se oferă ca un material brut imaginației (*τὸ φανταστικὸν-tó fantastikón*), iar aceasta le modelează după bunul ei plac, jucându-se la nesfârșit cu ele. În consecință, visele care ne populează somnul ne informează foarte rar, și numai cu totul întâmplător despre viitor, căci, cel mai adesea, ele sunt amăgitoare (*ψευδεῖς-pseudeís*).¹

b. Divinația pe baza capacităților umane naturale

Cele două forme de divinație prezentate mai sus, cu toate că se realizează prin intermediul forțelor umane, pretind că fac apel la zei. Dar există altele care își arogă o putere reală de a cunoaște viitorul fără nici un ajutor din partea zeilor, sau care chiar au iluzia că își subordonează forțele divine. În acest sens, Iamblichos ne prezintă mai multe puncte de vedere evocate de Porfir în *Scrisoare către Anebon*, care evidențiază câteva însușiri ale sufletului și corpului nostru cu rol de posibile cauze ale unei divinații umane eficiente. Dar, în ceea ce îl privește, filosoful nostru își propune să respingă toate aceste puncte de vedere ca fiind lipsite de orice consistență.

De exemplu, una din aceste poziții teoretice afirmă că sufletul uman poate realiza cu succes o activitate de divinație în momentul în care este cuprins de pasiuni, care îl tulbură și îl pun în mișcare, obligându-l să iasă din sine, ducându-l în extaz (*ἔκστασις-ékstasis*) sau în „delirul divin” (*θεῖας παράλληλις-theías parállaxis*), pentru a vedea cu pătrundere evenimentele viitoare. Pasiunile pot fi declanșate prin intermediul unor sunete sau melodii diverse, prin mișcări de dans, dar și prin alte mijloace fizice capabile să emoționeze sufletul și să-l influențeze.² Dar Iamblichos pune în evidență faptul că pasiunea (*πάθος-páthos*) este o facultate inferioară în raport cu intelectul (*νοῦς-noús*) și rațiunea (*διάνοια-díánoia*), deci că performanțele sale sunt inferioare rezultatelor acestora; în plus, pasiunea nu poate atinge niciodată viitorul, pentru că ea rămâne mereu în prezent (*ἐν τῷ παρόντι-en tó parónti*).

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 2, p. 84.

² *Ibidem*, III, 9, pp. 93-94.

„Oare de ce sufletul, atunci când are o gândire înțeleaptă și invariabilă bazată pe cele mai bune forțe ale sale, cele intelectuale și raționale, nu știe ce se va întâmpla, dar când este supus pasiunii provocate de niște mișcări dezordonate și tumultuoase află viitorul? De ce este pasiunea adecvată contemplării existentelor? De ce nu stă în calea unei cunoașteri mai adevărate? În plus, dacă lucrurile din lume s-ar forma datorită pasiunilor, producerea unor pasiuni asemănătoare ar presupune o anumită afinitate cu ele; dacă însă ele sunt produse datorită principiilor raționale și ideilor, preștiința va fi diferită, eliberată de orice pasiune. Pe deasupra, pasiunea nu simte decât prezentul și ceea ce deja există, în vreme ce preștiința controlează și lucrurile care încă nu există. Așadar a ști dinainte este altceva decât a fi supus pasiunilor.”¹

Alte teorii susțin că extazul sau delirul, care sunt identificate cu entuziasmul (*ἐνθουσιασμός-enthousiasmós*) sufletului, pot fi provocate de diversele afecțiuni ale corpului, așadar de boli (*νοσήματα-nosémata*) precum beția (*μέθη-méthe*), melancolia (*μελαγχολία-melancholia*) sau nebunia (*μανία-manía*), care, slăbind corpul și imprimându-i o agitație comparabilă cu furia, îi permit sufletului să iasă din starea sa normală, pentru a trece în alta, excepțională. Dar Iamblichos ripostează ferm față de această idee, pentru că divinația reclamă o plenitudine a forțelor, nu slăbiciune, în vreme ce bolile conduc la o degradare a lor.² În consecință, filosoful nostru face distincție între extazul superior, care este veritabilul entuziasm, pentru că el înalță sufletul către divin, și extazul inferior, produs de condițiile precare ale vieții omului și de forțele acestuia, care îndreaptă sufletul către realitățile degradate. Prin urmare, aceste forțe umane diminuate nu pot să cunoască viitorul.³

c. *Divinația prin falsa subordonare a zeilor*

În sfârșit, o altă formă foarte influentă a manicii umane este cea practică de către vrăjitori. Aceștia își pot subordona propriei voințe câteva forțe cosmice periferice, de natură fizică, care se combină cu materia pentru a o influența într-o formă sau alta. Cu ajutorul acestor forțe și al materiei, vrăjitorii produc imagini care sunt considerate drept imagini ale zeilor, capabile fie să producă efecte în universul sensibil, fie să dezvăluie adevărul (*ἀλήθεια-alétheia*) în legătură cu viitorul. Iamblichos ne spune

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 24, p. 115.

² *Ibidem*, III, 25, p. 117.

³ *Ibidem*, III, 25, p. 116.

însă, că, de fapt, aceste imagini sunt simple simulacre (εἰδωλα-*eidola*) efemere, ca umbrele sau ca fumul, făcute din materie, care este perisabilă, fără nici o similitudine cu natura eternă a zeilor. Ca urmare, ele sunt doar niște minciuni, care ne oferă o viziune înșelătoare asupra viitorului.¹

Dar vrăjitorii pretind că pot provoca apariția nu doar a imaginilor zeilor, ci chiar a zeilor înșiși, însă acest lucru este fals. Totuși, uneori, ei reușesc să provoace apariția unor daimoni (δαίμονες-*daímones*), ființe inferioare zeilor, cu care ei se află în comuniune, și care nu sunt întotdeauna spirite binevoitoare și curate (ἄχραντα πνεύματα-*áchranta pnéumata*) ci, dimpotrivă, răuvoitoare (κακά πνεύματα-*kaká pnéumata*). De altfel, aceste spirite malefice și pasionale le apar în locul zeilor doar acelorora care nu respectă regulile cultului, subordonându-i, degradându-le personalitatea, cerându-le să facă sacrilegii și înlăturând, astfel, definitiv, posibilitatea ca ei să realizeze o divinație autentică.

„Pentru că sunt plini de patimi și de răutate, ei atrag către sine prin conaturalitate spiritele malefice și, la rândul lor, sunt împinși de către acestea la orice ticăloșie. Cresc în acest fel și unii, și alții, asemenea unui cerc care leagă începutul și sfârșitul și prezintă mereu aceeași alternanță. De aceea să nu pui niciodată pe seama manticii hieratice nelegiuitele greșeli generate de impietatea care se apropie de ritualurile sacre într-un mod dezordonat, încearcă în neorânduială ce-i vine la îndemână și, după câte se pare, scoate în procesiune un zeu în locul altuia, introducând uneori în locul acestora daimoni malefici pe care îi numește «antizei».”²

Prezentarea pe care Iamblichos o face principalelor tipuri de divinație umană practicate în vremea sa, ne demonstrează că, pentru el, această mantică este imperfectă. Ea atinge performanțe modeste în anumite cazuri, dar, în altele, este mistificatoare. Deci ea este total nesatisfăcătoare pentru a fi folosită ca un instrument eficient de cunoaștere a adevărului.

2. Originea și natura autenticei divinații

Cauza incapacității manticii umane de a-și atinge scopul declarat este chiar originea (ἀρχή-*arché*) sa: ea este o mantică strict umană. „Nici un lucru plăsmuit printr-un meșteșug omenesc nu este însă sincer și pur.”³ Or, adevărata divinație se sprijină pe ceea ce este pur (καθάρως-*katharós*),

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 28-30, pp. 121-125.

² *Ibidem*, III, 31, pp. 126-127.

³ *Ibidem*, III, 29, p. 123.

intangibil, imuabil (*ἄτρεπτος-átreptos*), impasibil (*ἀπαθής-apathés*), iar, în plus, este realizată numai de ființele care, la rândul lor, sunt pure, intangibile, imuabile și impasibile. În consecință, ea nu poate fi un act natural, ci supranatural, fiind realizată de către zei.

„...preștiința (...) nu este însă unul dintre lucrurile care aparțin devenirii, nu acționează ca o schimbare de ordin fizic și nu este un artificiu inventat ca expedient util pentru organizarea vieții. Într-un cuvânt, divinația nu este operă omenească, ci una divină, supranaturală, trimisă din înaltul cerului, nenăscută, veșnică, originară și preeminentă datorită naturii sale. Iată așadar leacul cel mai eficace împotriva tuturor problemelor de acest fel: cunoașterea originii divinației. Ea nu pornește de la corpuri, de la pasiunile corporale, de la vreo natură sau de la niște puteri naturale, de la dispozițiile omului sau de la obiceiurile lui, și nici de la vreo artă de sorginte exterioară referitoare la unul dintre aspectele vieții. Toată puterea sa ține de zei și provine de la ei.”¹

Deci, pentru Iamblichos, adevărata divinație este, de fapt, o mantică exclusiv *divină*, astfel încât toate celelalte forme ale sale, forme *umane*, practicate pe scară largă de către semenii săi, nu sunt decât, în cel mai bun caz, imperfecte și relative, dar, cel mai adesea, false, sau *pseudo-divinații*.

3. *Divinația sacră sau divină*

Acest statut al manticii de activitate sacră (*ιερά ἐνέργεια-hiera énergeia*) sau lucrare divină (*θεῖον ἔργον-theion érgon*) este determinat de maniera de concepere a universului de către Iamblichos și neoplatonici în general: ca un vast sistem, în care toate lucrurile se află într-o strânsă legătură și subordonate legilor universale. Principiul (*ἀρχή-arché*) său este următorul: cunoașterea cauzelor și a esenței (*οὐσία-ousia*) devenirii (*τὸ γινώμενον-tó gignómenon*) ne conduce la cunoașterea viitorului.² Deci, posibilitatea de a face previziuni despre viitor le este proprie doar ființelor care dețin cunoașterea cauzelor universale, a esențelor lucrurilor și a ansamblului de relații dintre lucruri. Aceste ființe nu pot fi altele decât zeii, fiindcă numai ei dețin toată știința existentelor. În consecință, forța lor divinatorie este infinită. Dar zeii nu păstrează această forță doar pentru ei înșiși, dimpotrivă: o oferă cu generozitate tuturor celorlalte ființe care sunt capabile să participe (*μετέχω-metécho*) la divin, fără ca, totuși, procedând astfel, ei să piardă ceva, oricât de puțin, din aceasta.

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 1, p. 83.

² *Ibidem*, III, 1, p. 84.

„Dacă este corect ceea ce am spus, puterea divinatorie a zeilor nu este limitată, asemenea unei părți, de nici un loc, de nici un corp omenesc, de nici un suflet conținut într-o singură categorie de ființe particulare, ci, fiind separată și indivizibilă, este prezentă integral și pretutindeni în cei care pot participa la ea. Luminează din afară și umple toate lucrurile, pătrunde prin toate elementele, cuprinde pământul, aerul, focul, apa și nu lipsește din nici o viețuitoare și din nici una dintre ființele cârmuite de natură, ci le dăruiește unora o parte mai mare, iar altora o parte mai mică din preștiința sa. De asemenea, fiind anterioară tuturor lucrurilor și despărțită de ele, izbutește să umple totul, în funcție de capacitatea fiecărui lucru de a participa la ea.”¹

În mod special, această putere divinatorie le este acordată oamenilor care se apropie de zei respectând regulile și etapele precise ale cultului teurgic, care sunt și ele stabilite tot de către zei. În plus, teurgul (*θεουργός-theourgós*) știe că în timpul practicilor divinatorii inițiativa reală le aparține zeilor, și că oficiantul cultului doar participă la aceștia, jucând un rol mai degrabă pasiv, de instrument (*ὄργανον-organon*) pentru ei.² Dar datorită structurii sale complexe, intelectuală și spirituală, omul poate participa la forța divinatorie sau la „preștiința” (*πρόγνωσις-prógnosis*) divină într-o manieră progresivă și din ce în ce mai profundă. La toate nivelele, capacitatea sa divinatorie este obținută și dezvoltată ca urmare a cunoașterii adevărului despre diversele straturi ale realității.

De altfel, Iamblichos ne vorbește despre câteva activități privilegiate de precizare a viitorului, în care sunt puse în evidență forța activă a zeilor și posibilitatea omului de a evolua în cunoaștere și în capacitatea divinatorie. Este vorba de visele situate între veghe și somn sau cele din starea de trezire, singurele care sunt trimise de către zei; entuziasmul mantic și teoforia; divinația prin oracole; divinația prin lumină. Toate aceste activități sunt forme ale manticii divine, pentru că ele exprimă voința zeilor, forța lor divinatorie și evidența cu care ei le transmit oamenilor știința lor despre esențele (*οὐσίαι-ousíai*) lucrurilor și despre destinul acestora în viitor.

3.1. Visele divinatorii

De exemplu, cu ajutorul viselor, sufletul ajunge, în primul rând, la cunoașterea tuturor cauzelor lucrurilor lumii sensibile, putând să realizeze, astfel, predicții despre toate fenomenele cosmosului (*κόσμος-kósmos*). Dar la

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 12, pp. 99-100.

² *Ibidem*, III, 17, p. 106.

un nivel superior de contemplare (*θεωρία-theoría*) și de unire cu zeii, sufletul poate dobândi adevărul despre ființele sau substanțele inteligibile (*τὰ νοητὰ-τά noetá*), ceea ce îi permite să își exercite divinația în domeniul inteligibil. În sfârșit, pe ultimul nivel, care îl apropie în cea mai mare măsură, prin cunoaștere și prin forță, de condiția divină, sufletul nu numai că devine capabil de divinația completă în timp, dar participă, de asemenea, la providența divină (*θεία πρόνοια-theía prónoia*), în virtutea căreia el poate ameliora (*ἐπανόρθωσις-epanórtosis*) într-un mod uimitor organizarea vieții umane.

„Iar dacă dirijează discursurile ființelor supuse devenirii către zeii care sunt cauza acestora, sufletul dobândește de la ele capacitatea de a cunoaște prin analogie ceea ce a fost și ceea ce va fi, își efectuează observațiile de-a lungul întregului timp, cercetează realizările a ceea ce are loc în timp, ia parte la ordinea zeilor, la providența și la reușita lor corespunzătoare. Îngrijește trupurile bolnave, reglează cât mai bine ceea ce se află la oameni în stare de neorânduială și de dezordine, transmite adeseori descoperirile artelor, împărțirea drepturilor, instituirile de legi. Astfel, în sanctuarul lui Asclepios bolile sunt tămăduite cu ajutorul viselor divine. Datorită ordinii aparițiilor nocturne, știința medicală s-a constituit pornind de la visele sacre. Întreaga armată a lui Alexandru a fost salvată atunci când urma să fie nimicită în cursul nopții, fiindcă Dionysos i-a apărut în vis regelui și l-a învățat cum să scape de năpasta fatală.”¹

De fapt, abia în timpul viselor divine (*θεῖοι ὄνειροι-theíoi óneiroi*), premonitorii, sufletul nostru își trăiește autentică viață, care este una separată de corp, strict intelectuală (*νοερόν-noerón*), făcându-l pe om asemenea zeilor și capabil de acte divinatorii desăvârșite (*τέλειαι-téleiai*).

3.2. Entuziasmul divin

Un alt mod de a ajunge la o cunoaștere corectă a viitorului este realizat de către oamenii inspirați de zei și care sunt astfel acaparați de entuziasmul divin. Acești oameni sunt numiți „teofori” (*θεφόροι-thefóroi*), adică „purtători” de zei, iar relația lor cu divinul se dobândește prin intermediul sufletului, sau deopotrivă al sufletului și al corpului, fiind pusă în practică în diverse feluri: fie prin participare (*μετουσία-metousía*) la forța

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 3, pp. 87-88.

zeului, fie prin comuniune (*κοινωνία-koinonía*), fie prin uniune (*ένωσις-hénosis*) cu zeul.¹

În aceste stări foarte speciale, oamenii nu mai sunt ei înșiși, ci o expresie a calităților și a voinței zeilor. Ei își abandonează simpla lor viață umană și personalitatea lor limitată, pentru a trăi la un cu totul alt nivel al realității: suprauman, divin. Din această cauză ei sunt capabili de performanțe fizice și intelectuale excepționale, care provoacă uimirea și admirația întregii lumi și, lucrul cel mai important, pot prezice viitorul fără nici un fel de eroare. Dar, în fond, ei nu sunt decât instrumente pentru zei, singurii care posedă cu adevărat știința viitorului, astfel încât cea mai mică deviație a sufletului uman față de voința divină corupe adevărul predicției.

„În mod greșit, s-ar putea crede că entuziasmul aparține sufletului sau vreunecia dintre puterile sale, intelectului, forțelor sau activităților acestuia, vreunei slăbiciuni fizice sau absenței acesteia. Ar fi lipsit de temei să presupunem că se întâmplă așa. Căci teoforia nu este o operă omenească, iar forța ei nu rezidă întru nimic în rolul și activitatea omului. Acestea nu sunt decât niște premise, iar zeul le folosește ca pe niște unelte. El îndeplinește singur întreaga operă a divinației, acționând prin sine însuși, fără vreun amestec, desprins de rest, fără ca sufletul și trupul să se miște câtuși de puțin. De aceea și oracolele date în felul arătat sunt infailibile. În schimb, atunci când sufletul se mișcă la începutul sau în timpul divinației ori corpul intervine și tulbură armonia divină, oracolele devin confuze și mincinoase, iar entuziasmul nu mai este nici real, nici cu adevărat divin.”²

Trebuie, deci, să analizăm cu atenție calitatea manifestărilor teoforice, fiindcă numai cele autentice au privilegiul de a conduce divinația către rezultate infailibile.

3.3. Divinația prin oracole

Celelalte forme ale manticii divine ne conduc, pe căi specifice, către performanțe asemănătoare. Astfel, divinația prin oracole (*τὰ μαντεῖα-tá manteía*), larg practică în lumea antică, presupune, în primul rând, existența locurilor speciale (izvoare, grote, sanctuare, etc.), ce pot primi și potența prezența (*παρουσία-parousía*) zeilor, care, de altfel, este răspândită, într-o manieră sau alta, peste tot în univers. În plus, ea cere persoane specializate, cu înclinații naturale către comuniunea cu divinul, dar care

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 5, p. 90.

² *Ibidem*, III, 7, p. 92.

sunt, de asemenea, capabile să învețe și să practice arta de a fi posedate de către acesta. De fapt, aceste persoane, numite de Iamblichos „profeți” (*προφῆταιi-profḗtaii*), sunt preoți subordonați unuia sau altuia dintre zei, cu prezența căruia ei sunt familiarizați. Cadrul ambiental amenajat cu grijă ajută preotul să obțină starea privilegiată de armonie cu zeul, astfel încât diversele ritualuri pregătitoare pentru actele de divinație îi purifică (*καθαρίζω-katharízo*) sufletul, făcându-l demn să-l primească pe zeu, care îl acaparează în întregime pentru a vorbi și a se manifesta prin el. În aceste condiții, evident că avem de-a face cu o mantică divină, astfel încât preotul căzut în transă face predicții în întregime adevărate despre viitor.

„Profetesa de la Delfi, fie că le face prevestiri oamenilor datorită unui suflu subtil, igneu, care iese din vreo crăpătură a peșterii, fie că dă oracole șezând în sanctuar pe un scaun de bronz cu trei picioare sau cu patru picioare închinat zeului, se oferă în orice caz suflului divin și este iluminată de raza focului divin. Și atunci când focul care se înalță compact și abundent din crăpătura peșterii o înconjoară din toate părțile, ea se umple de această lumină divină. Când însă este așezată pe scaunul zeului, ea se armonizează cu statornică putere divinatorie a acestuia. Și datorită acestor două feluri de pregătire devine pe de-a întregul a zeului. Atunci zeul vine la ea și o iluminează separat, el unul fiind diferit de foc, de suflu, de respectivul scaun și de orice obiect natural sau sacru care se vede în acel loc.”¹

Exemplul oracolului (*τὸ μαντεῖον-tó manteíon*) din Delfi ne arată că Iamblichos acordă o mare credibilitate oracolelor celebre în lumea antică, pe care le consideră exemplare pentru exercitarea divinației sacre, în care oficiantul este inspirat în întregime de către zei.

3.4. Fotagogia

Inspirația (*ἐπίπνοια-epípnoia*) preoților sau a teurgilor în actul divinației se exprimă cel mai bine prin conceptul iluminării divine (*θεῖας ἔλλαμψις-theías éllampsis*). Din această cauză Iamblichos face din „fotagogie” (*φωτὸς ἀγωγῆ-photós agogé*), adică ritualul de captare a luminii zeilor în scopul de a prezice viitorul, o formă distinctă a manticii divine. Fotagogia presupune că teurgul, prin intermediul formulelor magice și al gesturilor simbolice, este capabil să atragă lumina divină și să o facă să strălucească pe diverse suporturi materiale: apa (*ὑδωρ-hýdor*), aerul (*ἀήρ-áér*), zidurile (*τοιχοί-toíchoi*), cerul, astrele, dar și în mijlocul celei mai

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 11, p. 98.

profunde obscurități (σκότος-skótos). La rândul său, această lumină pătrunde în sufletul teurgului, pregătind, astfel, venirea zeului acolo.

Omul iluminat își abandonează raționalitatea proprie, căci nu mai este conștient nici de sine, nici de nimic altceva; el nu mai gândește cu gândirea sa umană ci, sub directa îndrumare a zeului, își pune la lucru imaginația, care devine capabilă să acceadă la numeroase imagini divine (φαντασίαι θεϊαί-fantasíai theíai) extrem de semnificative, revelatoare ale adevărului despre evenimentele viitoare. Iamblichos insistă asupra faptului că cel care ne oferă această cunoaștere autentică asupra adevărului este zeul, nu omul, care nu este decât servitorul acestuia, canalul său de transmisie, astfel încât această formă a manticii este, într-adevăr, o formă divină, nu umană.

„Pot exista și multe alte tipuri de fotagogie. Totuși, ele se reduc la un singur lucru, iradierea luminoasă, indiferent în ce loc sau prin ce mijloace se produce aceasta. Așadar, deoarece această divinație vine din afară și tot ceea ce posedă slujește numai voinței și gândirii zeilor și deoarece deține o lumină sacră ce își trimite în jos razele, strălucind fie din înaltul eterului, fie din aer, fie de pe lună, fie de pe soare sau de pe vreo altă sferă cerească, e clar că un atare tip de divinație este independent, primordial și vrednic de zei.”¹

Totuși, în ciuda faptului că omul nu este decât un instrument al divinației, al cărui subiect autentic este zeul, actele concrete de divinație au loc într-un context eminentamente uman, așa încât omul este un element indispensabil al ei. Asta înseamnă că divinația se realizează, în primul rând, ca urmare a năzuinței omului de a cunoaște viitorul, și în beneficiul său. În plus, de vreme ce Iamblichos admite că zeii își dăruiesc în mod neîngrădit puterea lor divinatorie, iar ființele inteligente sunt capabile să participe la ea, putem vorbi de o reală colaborare dintre om și zeu în practica divinației sacre.

3.5. Divinația sacră - formă superioară a teurgiei

Observăm că în timpul actelor manticii divine noi suntem uniți cu zeii pentru că ea ne revelează cauzele lucrurilor sensibile și inteligibile, precum și adevărul lor profund, ne dezvăluie gândurile și dispozițiile zeilor, care pun în mișcare întreg universul, permițându-ne să cunoaștem

¹ *Ibidem*, III, 14, p. 103.

evenimentele viitoare și făcându-ne, astfel, înțelepți, divini. Dar Iamblichos ne atenționează că acest tip de divinație sacră, pură, divină, nu are loc decât în cadrul teurgiei, o practică de cult care combină activitatea intelectuală cea mai înaltă cu ritualuri precise și complicate, de tip religios. Ea presupune „îndeplinirea unor acțiuni inefabile, săvârșite într-un mod vrednic de zei și mai presus de orice înțelegere rațională, și puterea simbolurilor mute, înțelese numai de către zei.”¹

Scopul final al teurgiei este unirea teurgului cu divinitatea și, din acest punct de vedere, mantica autentică este încoronarea teurgiei. Dar în momentul în care suntem identici cu zeii, noi dobândim întregul bine (τὸ ἀγαθόν-*tó agathón*) pe care îl putem concepe, și întreaga fericire (ἡδονή-*hedoné*), astfel că, în ultimă instanță, miza reală a manticii divine practicată de către oameni nu este aceea de a cunoaște viitorul, ci de a se înălța către zei pentru a obține perfecțiunea divină (θεϊας παντέλεια- *theías pantéleia*) și pentru a se bucura de cea mai bună viață posibilă: în întregime eliberată de materialitate și fatalitate, deasupra oricărui rău, bună și fericită în mod plener. Se înțelege de la sine că o ființă capabilă de o astfel de viață posedă o cunoaștere universală și absolută, care îi permite să prezică viitorul.

„Doar mantica divină care ne unește cu zeii ne face cu adevărat părtași vieții lor. Întrucât împărtășește prevederea și gândurile zeilor, ne face și pe noi cu adevărat divini. Ea ne oferă în mod autentic binele, deoarece inteligența preafericită a zeilor este plină de toate bunurile. De aceea nu este adevărat ceea ce presupui tu, și anume că cei care posedă această capacitate divinatorie prevăd viitorul, dar nu sunt fericiți. Căci orice prevedere divină este boniformă. Și nu se poate afirma că ei «nici nu prevăd viitorul, nici nu știu să se folosească așa cum se cuvine de el». Ei primesc o dată cu capacitatea divinatorie binele în sine și ordinea adevărată și cuvenită, căreia i se adaugă utilul. Căci zeii le oferă și capacitatea de a se apăra de primejdiile amenințătoare din natură.”²

Dar majoritatea formelor comune ale divinației practicate în epoca sa erau foarte îndepărtate de acest ideal al perfecțiunii umane propus de către Iamblichos, cu toate că cea mai înaltă categorie a lor putea atinge, uneori, rezultate remarcabile. Este vorba, așa după cum am văzut mai sus, despre acte de divinație care fac apel la zei, interpretând destul de corect (ἀψευδῶς-*apseudós*) semnele trimise de către aceștia peste tot în univers. În

¹ *Ibidem*, II, 11, p. 79.

² *Ibidem*, X, 4, p. 199.

schimb, toate practicile divinatorii care se sprijină doar pe capacitățile psihice și intelectuale ale oamenilor sunt imperfecte, relative, problematice, cu toate că ele captează, într-o manieră oarbă, câte ceva din mantica divină. În sfârșit, mantica umană are și forme total false și înșelătoare, unele pretinzând fără temeii că fac apel la zei, altele proclamând, în mod orgolios, capacitatea exclusiv umană de a prezice viitorul.

Concluzie

Preocupat de un model etic și ontologic al omului care urmărește împlinirea sa în perfecțiunea divină, Iamblichos face o critică a principalelor forme umane de divinație, cu scopul de a descrie, prin opoziție cu ele, forma autentică, teurgică a divinației, singura capabilă, din punctul său de vedere, să înalțe omul către zei, unindu-l cu divinitatea. În plus, scopul acestui demers al lui Iamblichos, într-o epocă tumultuoasă (secolele al III-lea și al IV-lea ale erei noastre), care asista la lupte teoretice, dar și fizice foarte dure între creștini și păgâni, era de a justifica forța religioasă a câtorva dintre practicile tradiționale grecești ale cultului zeilor, capabile să se integreze în corpul teurgiei și să o exprime pe aceasta într-o manieră desăvârșită. Acest demers al lui Iamblichos este un exemplu al modului în care filosofii reinterpretează diverse practici culturale, cărora le conferă semnificații inedite pentru a le legitima dintr-o perspectivă teoretică superioară.

KIERKEGAARD PRINTRE PSEUDONIME

Ionuț-Alexandru BÂRLIBA¹

Abstract: *This paper examines Kierkegaard's use of pseudonyms. It is well known that most of Kierkegaard's philosophical works were written under pseudonyms. Throughout this article I try to put together the reasons and the meanings of Kierkegaard's pseudonymity. Thus the first part of the essay identifies and explains the main reasons for which Kierkegaard writes under a variety of pseudonyms. Secondly the paper analyses some of Kierkegaard's most important pseudonyms in order to clarify their hidden meanings. Are the pseudonyms Kierkegaard's aliases? Are the pseudonymous authors real people? How can we tell the difference between Kierkegaard's real opinion and the ideas asserted by the pseudonymous authors? These are some of the questions this paper tries to answer.*

Keywords: *Kierkegaard, pseudonyms, existence, repetition, Climacus, esthetic, ethic, religious, faith.*

Problema complexității pseudonimiei constituie unul dintre aspectele fundamentale și decisive pentru înțelegerea filosofiei lui Søren Kierkegaard. Trebuie precizat de la început că filosoful danez semnează cu pseudonime doar cărțile pe care el le numește estetice (cele filosofice); spre deosebire de scrierile cu caracter religios, pe care le semnează cu propriul nume. Este chiar amuzant de observat că tocmai aceste prime scrieri i-au adus lui Kierkegaard un renume mondial, cărți despre care mărturisea că le-a scris cam de mântuială; cu mâna stângă.

În esență, prin decizia de a scrie sub pseudonim, Kierkegaard avea un dublu scop. Pe de o parte, putea să exprime într-un mod personal concepții disparate sau chiar complet opuse (să le spunem) asupra vieții. Exemplul cel mai potrivit aici este folosirea pseudonimelor Johannes Climacus pentru *Fărăme filozofice* și pentru *Postscriptum Concluziv Neștiințific* și Anti-Climacus pentru *Boala de moarte*. Pe de altă parte, Kierkegaard lăsa la latitudinea cititorilor să tragă concluziile practice, cu efect personal, din ceea ce i se comunicase.

Un aspect important în privința pseudonimiei îl reprezintă dorința lui Kierkegaard, exprimată expres în ultimele pagini ale *Postscriptum*-ului,

¹ Institute of Economic and Social Research "Gh. Zane", Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch, Romania.

ca oricine va cita din cărțile sale să o facă luând în considerare, ca autor, respectivul pseudonim și nu pe el însuși. Iată ce scrie Kierkegaard într-o scurtă și finală secțiune a *Postscriptum*-ului, intitulată *O primă și ultimă declarație*:

„Dorința mea, rugămintea mea așadar este aceea ca, dacă se întâmplă ca cineva să vrea să citeze o anumită remarcă din cărțile mele, să aibă bunăvoința să citeze numele respectivului autor pseudonim, nu pe al meu, separându-ne în așa fel încât remarca să aparțină pseudonimului, în sens feminin, iar responsabilitatea, în sens civil, mie.”¹ (trad. I.A.B.)

De menționat aici că în acea vreme doar bărbații, ca unici proprietari, dețineau drepturi civile.

Am organizat textul de față în două părți. În prima dintre acestea am încercat să sintetizez motivele care ar putea să explice această decizie stilistică și editorială a lui Kierkegaard, iar în cea de-a doua parte am analizat în detaliu câteva dintre pseudonimele cele mai importante pe care le folosește filozoful danez.

1. Motivele pseudonimiei

1. Prima precizare ce se poate face este aceea că, prin semnarea sub pseudonim, Kierkegaard nu intenționa să își facă ascunsă identitatea (fapt de altfel aproape imposibil într-un mediu cultural minor, precum cel oferit de Copenhaga secolului al XIX-lea). Această practică avea mai degrabă menirea de a elimina posibilitatea ca scrierile sale să fie tratate ca venind de la o autoritate cunoscută obiectivă. Astfel, volumele sale erau protejate de pretenția unei titulaturi care să desemneze un sistem filosofic asupra existenței. Conform lui Kierkegaard, cititorul nu are nevoie de certitudini oferite din partea unor autorități definitive, pentru că astfel ar putea fi îndepărtat de la participarea activă, personală la dezbaterile problemelor în cauză. Cititorul trebuie să își creeze

¹ Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, edited and translated by Alastair Hannay, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 529. „My wish, my prayer, therefore, is that if it should occur to anyone to want to quote a particular remark from the books, he will do me the favour of citing the name of the respective pseudonymous author, not my own, i.e., of separating us in such a way that the remark belongs in the woman's sense to the pseudonym, the responsibility in the civil sense to me.”

singur "certitudinile", căutând răspunsuri la dileme, chiar și cu riscul de a trece prin crize existențiale (disperare, anxietate). Acestea pot avea până la urmă un rol purificator, certitudinile fiind astfel asumate.

2. Apoi, Kierkegaard considera că sub pseudonim ideile pe care dorea să le împărtășească cititorilor deveneau mult mai nuanțate. Până la urmă, pseudonimele nu aveau un simplu rol decorativ. Fiecare personaj desemna un mod de viață și de gândire, o atitudine existențială, exprimate simbolic prin chiar numele imaginate; iar Kierkegaard dorea cu atât mai mult să nu fie asimilat cu aceste pseudonime, ce trebuiau considerate persoane diferite de el.
3. Consecutiv, se poate spune că exista și o anumită teamă ca operele sale să fie tratate cu prea puțin interes de către cititori (de altfel, Kierkegaard fusese ridiculizat în dese rânduri în presa vremii). Drept pentru care, pseudonimele i-ar fi oferit lui Kierkegaard o oarecare posibilitate de distanțare față de ideile exprimate; fapt ce îi crea libertatea de a exprima mult mai dezinvolt ceea ce intenționa să transmită; nefiind preocupat astfel de eventuala lipsă de autoritate cu care ar fi fost, altfel, tratate scrierile sale.
4. De asemeni, Kierkegaard ar fi dorit să își exprime ideile asupra existenței din mai multe perspective, fără ca vreuna dintre acestea să fie asimilată ca fiind autoritară sau corectă în unicitatea sa. Astfel, cărțile sale obligau practic cititorii să decidă singuri în privința complexității ideilor și a conflictelor dintre ele, pe care Kierkegaard le expunea cu acuitate și cu inspirație. Spre exemplu, Ana Stanca Tabarasi consideră că tehnica aceasta a pseudonimiei este un mod de a transmite cititorilor o oarece formă de scepticism, o îndoială care să alunge certitudinile științei, ale cunoașterii expuse sistematic, autoritar.¹ Cititorului trebuia să i se facă limpede ideea imposibilității sustragerii din fața unei confruntări dubitative între credință și știință/ filosofie.
5. Apoi, unele dintre pseudonime erau în aceleași timp și personaje implicate direct în firul narativ creionat de Kierkegaard în scrierile sale; astfel, cititorii aveau în fața ochilor un exemplu concret al unui stil de viață, al unei atitudini sau al unui comportament, ce puteau fi

¹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Opere II/1, Sau-Sau*, traducere din daneză, postfață și note de Ana-Stanca Tabarasi, București, Humanitas, 2008, p. 15.

așadar mult mai ușor recunoscute; acestea inspirându-le astfel cititorilor reflecția și capacitatea de interiorizare.

6. În fine, multiplele pseudonime folosite de Kierkegaard subliniază și imensa capacitate creativă a acestuia, ce nu se putea opri asupra unui singur palier al cunoașterii sau al modalității de exprimare.

2. Pseudonime kierkegaardiene

După cum precizam mai sus, am încercat în această a doua parte a textului să identific elementele specifice ale câtorva dintre cele mai importante pseudonime imaginate de Kierkegaard, subliniind totodată apropierea sau îndepărtarea de autorul de fapt al textelor în cauză.

1. Johannes Climacus este un pseudonim special, fiind considerat a fi printre cele mai apropiate de Kierkegaard, filosoful real. De altfel, cele două cărți semnate de acesta – *Fărăme filozofice* și *Postscriptum* - apar ca fiind editate de către S. Kierkegaard. Climacus este apropiat de Kierkegaard în sensul în care intențiile de autor ale celor doi coincid de multe ori. Totuși, Kierkegaard îl prezintă pe Climacus ca fiind un personaj situat în afara creștinismului/ a lumii creștine. Nimic din ceea ce este expus, spre exemplu, în *Fărăme filozofice*, nu vine din partea unui autor care ar putea fi creștin.¹ Atât titlul, cât și subtitlul acestui mic tratat conțin termenul *filosofie*. Acest aspect indică faptul că ceea ce urmează are în vedere o perspectivă umană asupra a ceea ce poate gândi sau percepe individul, aflat în mediul său; în contrast cu scrierile teologice formulate din punctul de vedere al credinciosului, opere care se sprijină decisiv pe ideea de revelație venită din afara sferei umane.

Climacus este un pseudonim aparte și pentru că în paginile *Postscriptum*-ului putem găsi o analiză a tuturor celorlalte pseudonime folosite anterior acestui ultim volum al lui Kierkegaard. Aflăm astfel despre felul în care acestea relaționează precum și despre modul în care contribuie fiecare la scopul general al lui Kierkegaard; anume acela de a îndemna individul spre înțelegerea corectă a ce înseamnă să fii creștin.² De altfel, ultimele pagini ale *Postscriptum*-ului sunt rezervate nu atât unei analize

¹ H. A. Nielsen, *Where the passion is, A Reading of Kierkegaard's Philosophical Fragments*, Tallahassee, University Presses of Florida, 1983, p. 1.

² C. Stephen Evans, *Kierkegaard, An Introduction*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 28.

comparative a pseudonimelor, cât unei mărturisiri directe a lui Kierkegaard, cum că toate cărțile apărute sub pseudonim îi aparțin și că această metodă folosită nu este câtuși de puțin accidentală.¹

2. Anti-Climacus, autorul *Bolii de moarte*, apare, în opoziție cu Johannes Climacus, drept pseudonimul cel mai apropiat de existența religioasă. De altfel, el este și autorul volumului *Școala creștinismului*. Anti-Climacus este de asemeni considerat a fi un pseudonim demn de identificat cu însuși Kierkegaard. În fapt, acesta intenționase inițial ca atât *Boala de moarte*, cât și *Scoala creștinismului* să fie publicate sub propriul nume. Decizia finală face însă ca numele să îi apară doar ca editor responsabil pentru publicare.

Anti-Climacus apare spre finalul bibliografiei kierkegaardiene, odată cu intensificarea criticii asupra religiozității "palide" a lumii creștine contemporane. Astfel, pentru a-și intensifica severitatea judecății, dar în același timp păstrând caracterul indirect și impersonal al comunicării, Kierkegaard inventează acest pseudonim opus lui Johannes Climacus. Totodată, folosind acest pseudonim pentru a-și expune principiile religioase, Kierkegaard evită pericolul de a-și însuși o anumită autoritate în ceea ce privește forma de existență creștină autentică.

Raportată la aceste două pseudonime, perspectiva reală a lui Kierkegaard este în general de identificat undeva la granița dintre ele. Ca viziune religioasă, perspectiva lui Anti-Climacus este superioară celei oferite de Kierkegaard însuși (în sensul în care danezul nu își ducea totuși viața de zi cu zi după rigorile unei existențe religioase). În schimb, punctul de vedere al lui Kierkegaard depășește la rândul său pe cel al lui Johannes Climacus, cel care rămâne un observator până la urmă obiectiv și detașat al stadiului religios al existenței.²

3. Victor Eremita este editorul celor două volume cuprinse sub titlul *Sau-Sau*, care îi are ca autori pe estetul A (reprezentantul stadiului estetic reflexiv; scopul său este evitarea plictiselii. Aici îl putem situa și pe Johannes Seducătorul) și pe eticianul B, numit și asesorul Wilhelm (personajul prototip al stadiului etic). Victor Eremita este considerat a fi un spectator detașat al lumii din jurul său, un tip cu un simț de observație acut

¹ Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, ed. cit., pp. 527-531.

² Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*, originally translated and introduced by David Swenson, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1936, 1962, p. XL.

în privința oamenilor din preajma sa; un posibil prototip al ironistului. Numele său, Victor Eremita (eremitul/ solitarul învingător) ar desemna simbolic tendința religioasă a cărții *Sau-Sau*¹; tendință evidentă în special în volumul al doilea și cu precădere în textul de final al asesorului Wilhelm: *Ultimatum, Edificare cuprinsă în gândul că față de Dumnezeu nu avem niciodată dreptate.*

Există unele indicii în text care îl dau pe Victor Eremita drept autor și nu doar editor al primului volum, el confundându-se astfel cu vocea estetului A.² Ba mai mult, pentru ca ambiguitatea acestui joc al pseudonimelor să fie extremă, se pare că însuși Kierkegaard intenționa publicarea unei scrisori adresate lui Victor Eremita prin care l-ar fi somat să își dezvăluie identitatea. Scrisoarea avea desigur să fie urmată de un răspuns din partea lui Eremita, care să îl învinuiască pe Kierkegaard de suspiciunile astfel create!

Victor Eremita apare din nou, de data aceasta ca personaj, în *Banchetul, In vino veritas*, parte a volumului *Stadii pe drumul vieții*. Alături de alți patru convivi (Constantin Constantius, tânărul din *Repetarea*, Johannes Seducătorul și un negustor de mode), Victor Eremita (acum, proaspăt căsătorit) își exprimă impresiile despre iubire în cadrul unui banchet organizat de Constantin Constantius. Se distinge din discursul său o anumită detașare de latura imediată a existenței și o direcționare către interioritate, într-o formă solitară, nu atât sub forma îndepărtării de lume, cât sub forma incognito-ului, caracteristica ironistului.

O notă aici este necesară. Ironistul ascunde felul interiorizat al existenței sale, conștient fiind de contradicția dintre interioritatea sa și felul inadecvat prin care o exprimă în exterior. Un etician autentic își aliniază cerințele interioare la cerințele etice infinite, reușind o unitate între acestea, pe când ironistul, incognito, își ascunde tensiunea dintre cerințele și interesele personale și cele etice universale prin rolul social acceptat, "jucat" în fața celorlalți.

4. Constantin Constantius - un intelectual ager și perspicace - este autorul *Repetării*.

Constantin Constantius este un reprezentat tipic al stadiului estetic al existenței, un tip rafinat, care, deși își întemeiază existența pe prezent, nu

¹ Idem, *Opere II/1, Sau-Sau*, ed. cit., p. 13.

² *Ibidem*, pp. 14-15.

aționează din pur impuls (asemeni lui Don Juan). Un semn decisiv al "estetismului" lui Constantin este așadar ancorarea în prezent, ca moment discontinuu și mereu trecător. S-ar putea spune că acest pseudonim întruchipează următoarea idee: reușita existențială estetică nu este întemeiată pe reamintirea unui eveniment trecut, ci pe realizarea concretă a ceea ce a fost imaginat și proiectat.¹

Cu alte cuvinte, Constantin este un tip ale cărui certitudini trebuiesc mereu reactualizate și verificate, existența sa fiind definită de constanța activităților sale, fie ele monotone și repetitive. De altfel, numele său desemnează caracterul inconsistent al repetării urmărite și realizate de acest personaj. Se poate chiar spune, în acord cu numele său, că acest personaj pseudonim se află într-o constantă căutare a constanței existențiale.

Autorul *Repetării* se află într-o strânsă legătură cu autorul volumului *Frică și Cutremur*. De altfel, cele două cărți apar în aceeași zi. Kierkegaard le atribuie celor doi motive de inspirație vetero-testamentară. Astfel, dacă în *Repetarea*, autorul Constantin Constantius se inspiră din Cartea lui Iov (în special în portretizarea "tânărului melancolic"), Johannes de Silentio, autorul volumului *Frică și Cutremur*, scrie despre ordalia lui Avraam, situație pe care pretinde că nu o poate înțelege.

5. Johannes de Silentio - În esență, Johannes este un personaj care încearcă să se pună de acord cu aderarea la un mod de existență religioasă; încercare rămasă fără reușită. De altfel, Johannes poate fi identificat cu figura cavalerului resemnării infinite, cavalerul situat cu o treaptă mai jos (în ierharhia/ în dialectica existențială propusă de Kierkegaard) decât cel care reușește mișcarea credinței în virtutea absurdului.

O notă explicativă aici este de asemeni necesară. Resemnarea înseamnă renunțare completă, renunțarea la tot; moment urmat de asumarea suferinței presupusă de acest act al renunțării. "Câștigul" se produce însă la nivelul conștiinței de sine:

„Prin resemnare eu renunț la tot. Această mișcare o săvârșesc prin mine însumi și atunci când n-o fac e pentru că sunt laș și molatic și lipsit de entuziasm și nu simt semnificația înaltei măreții datorite fiecărui individ, măreția de a fi propriul său censor, funcție mai ilustră decât aceea de censor

¹ Stephen N. Dunning, *Kierkegaard's Dialectic Of Inwardness*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1985, p. 63.

general al întregii republici romane. Săvârșesc această mișcare prin mine însumi, iar ceea ce câștig sunt eu însumi în conștiința mea eternă, în fericită armonie cu iubirea mea pentru ființa eternă.”¹

Mișcarea pe care o reușește Avraam, în plus față de cavalerul resemnării este mișcarea credinței în virtutea absurdului (fapt ce îl determină de altfel pe Johannes de Silentio să îl numească, în contrapondere, cavalerul credinței). Într-un mod simplu spus, prin această mișcare, Avraam nu mai renunță, în fapt, la nimic. Prin credință, Avraam nu renunță la Isaac, ci, așa cum subliniază Johannes, îl dobândește.² Mișcarea efectuată în virtutea absurdului, ca salt al credinței/ în credință, continuă mișcarea resemnării, depășind-o:

„El face același lucru ca și celălalt cavaler: renunță infinit la iubirea ce constituie miezul vieții sale și e reconciliat în suferință. Dar apoi se întâmplă minunea: el mai săvârșește o mișcare, mai surprinzătoare decât toate celelalte, căci spune: „am credința că o voi obține, anume în virtutea absurdului, a faptului că pentru Dumnezeu totul este posibil.”³

Numele, *de Silentio*, trimite la inefabilul credinței autentice, solitare (a cărei personificare este Avraam sau Iov). Reducerea la tăcere este de altfel și efectul produs de înfiorătoarea poveste a sacrificării lui Isaac, așa cum este prezentată în paginile volumului *Frică și Cutremur*. Johannes de Silentio este un personaj care se poziționează la porțile stadiului religios al existenței, dar care nu reușește să facă saltul credinței în virtutea absurdului, „împiedicat” fiind de perspectiva etică, rațională, perfect omenească, perspectivă din care nu poate înțelege (deși o acceptă ca fiind posibilă) situația lui Avraam. *De Silentio* întruchipează un personaj reflexiv, taciturn, un tip mai degrabă demonic, un tip care, la rândului său, asemeni lui Avraam, ascunde de fața lumii un secret.

În pseudonimia kierkegaardiană există trei Johannes. Cronologic și nu numai, *De silentio* este al doilea. El apare după *Johannes Seducătorul*, un tip rafinat și totodată demonic, cu anumite interese religioase (în sens

¹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Frică și cutremur*, traducere din daneză și Prefață de Leo Stan, București, Humanitas, 2002, p. 109. Această câștig de sine în conștiința sa eternă poate fi echivalat cu mișcarea alegerii de sine în valabilitatea sa eternă, enunțată de Wilhelm ca scop al stadiului etic al existenței. În plus, această mișcare a resemnării eterne va fi atribuită tânărului personaj din *Repetarea*, care va reuși, prin forma sa de repetare, să redevină el însuși. Trimiterile la episodul biografic al logodnei lui Søren cu Regine sunt de asemeni evidente.

² *Ibidem*, p. 110.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 106-107.

ironic) și înainte de Johannes Climacus, un gânditor, în esență religios, dar care nu este capabil să adere la o existență specific creștină (acesta fiind reprezentantul stadiului intermediar al *umorului*). *De silentio* se situează între aceștia doi. Agreează digresiunile estetice (subtitlul cărții semnat de el este *Lirică dialectică*), deși dilema sa este una ce ține de religios. Asemeni tuturor pseudonimelor lui Kierkegaard, *De silentio* nu este/ nu poate fi creștin; la fel cum nici cărțile semnate de toate aceste personaje nu au această pretenție. De asemeni, *De silentio* este un polemist, ținta sa fiind filosofia și teologia care, în epocă, aveau tendința de a "sistemiza" orice discuție. Se poate identifica aici atitudinea polemică specifică lui Kierkegaard, atitudine îndreptată asupra moliciunii spirituale a contemporaneității, contemporaneitate incapabilă de a face distincții categoriale (cum ar fi cea dintre credință și știință/ filosofie).¹

6. Virgilius Haufniensis – santinela de deasupra portului Copenhagăi sau vigilantul agent de poliție din Copenhaga/ Hafnia care observă atent comportamentul cetățenilor - este autorul pseudonim al *Conceptului de anxietate*. Principalele caracteristici ale acestui pseudonim le aflăm chiar din rândurile prefetei cărții amintite, rânduri scrise de însuși Haufniensis. Acesta se prezintă ca fiind

„...un profan care, deși speculează, se ține totuși la o poștă de speculație; chiar dacă așa sunt eu devotat crezului în autoritate, cum era romanul tolerant în teama lui de Dumnezeu. În ce privește autoritatea umană...sunt un fetișist care slăvește cu aceeași evlavie pe cine ar fi să fie; doar să mi se aducă la cunoștință cum trebuie, să se bată toba mare că el este cel pe care trebuie să îl venerez, că el este, anul ăsta, autoritatea și *Imprimatur*.”²

Motivul posibil pentru care Haufniensis vrea să se țină departe de speculație este acela că speculația presupune o respingere a autorităților pozitive, fapt pe care Haufniensis nu îl intenționează;³ după cum am putut

¹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Frică și cutremur, Prefețe*, Adrian Arsinevici (trad.), Sibiu, Honterus, 2007, p. XII.

² Idem, *Conceptul de anxietate*, traducere din limba daneză de Adrian Arsinevici, Timișoara, Amarcord, 1998, p. 42.

³ Stephen N. Dunning, "Kierkegaard's Systematic Analysis of Anxiety", în Robert L. Perkins (ed.), *International Kierkegaard Commentary*, Macon, Georgia, Mercer University Press, 1985, p. 11.

observa și din citatul anterior. Totuși, Haufniensis acceptă ideea de autoritate dezinteresat, neimplicat, fapt ce întărește tonul general al *Conceptului de anxietate*; volum care - deși tratează o temă religioasă fundamentală, o presuposiție a creștinismului, păcatul originar - păstrează o perspectivă exterioară, psihologică.

Alte pseudonime folosite de Kierkegaard: William Afham, Hilarius legătorul de cărți și Frater Taciturnus în *Stadii pe drumul vieții* și Nicolaus Notabene pentru *Prefețe*.¹

În esență, pentru Kierkegaard funcția pseudonimului nu este aceea de *alias*. Prin pseudonime, Kierkegaard nu urmărește ascunderea propriei identități. Kierkegaard nu se ascunde în spatele pseudonimelor, ci creează personaje veridice și autentice; autori cu gândire și cu valori existențiale proprii. Niciunul dintre cele peste 20 de pseudonime ale activității sale de autor nu este un pseudonim **pentru** Søren Kierkegaard, ci reprezintă un pseudonim **fabricat de către** Søren Kierkegaard. După cum afirmă Flemming Harrits, unul dintre comentatorii însemnați ai lui Kierkegaard, pseudonimele sunt figuri experimentale desprinse, separate și diferite de Kierkegaard.

“Pseudonimele – sub aspectul unor asemenea autori sau figuri experimentale, trimise de capul lor și pe răspunderea lor în lumea largă – demonstrează ce se poate întâmpla când urmezi, în cadrul unei anumite “sferă a existenței” (un mod anume de a înțelege viața și de a acționa în ea), o idee și reflectezi asupra unei întrebări – fie ea cu caracter estetic, etic sau religios.”²

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¹ Este interesat de subliniat aici că acest Nicolaus Notabene este un tip care dorește să prezinte *prefața* ca text de sine stătător, ca specie literară pe care el are ambiția să o emancipeze din situația sa obișnuită; anume aceea de a fi succedată întotdeauna de un alt text, de a fi veșnic subordonată unei cărți adevărate.

² Søren Kierkegaard, *Repetarea*, traducere din limba daneză de Adrian Arsinevici, Timișoara, Amarcord 2000, p. 10.

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MARTIN HEIDEGGER AND FUNDAMENTAL ONTOLOGY

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Abstract: *In this article, the authors present that Heidegger's concept of philosophy of life. The authors analyze Heidegger's philosophy which is a significant mark in the history of philosophy and takes an important place in the study of human existence. As a result, on the one hand, Heidegger's philosophy has accumulated the best from classical German philosophy; on the other hand, it has embodied the strengths of the contemporary concepts of life philosophy of Husserl, Dilthey and Jaspers. It was the transformation of Heidegger's views on the life. Thus, the authors examine the evolution of Heidegger's views on the phenomenon of life from Heidegger's early philosophy to his later philosophy.*

Keywords: *Martin Heidegger, philosophy of life, ontology, metaphysics, humanism*

Martin Heidegger's concept of philosophy of life takes an important place in the study of human existence. On the one hand, Heidegger's philosophy has accumulated the best from classical German philosophy; on the other hand, it has embodied the strengths of the contemporary concepts of life philosophy of Husserl, Dilthey and Jaspers (or otherwise "phenomenology", "philosophy of life" and "existentialism"). As a result of this accumulation powerful and independent "Heidegger's philosophy" has appeared. It was a significant mark in the history of philosophy. Martin Heidegger had a decisive influence on the theoretical foundation of German existentialism and on the formation of French existentialism through the work of Jean-Paul Sartre.

Thus, the historical and philosophical analysis of Heidegger's creativity opens up the whole series of traces continuities (traditions): Kierkegaard - Heidegger - existentialism; Husserl - Heidegger - phenomenological ontology; Nietzsche - Heidegger - axiology and the philosophy of culture; Dilthey - Heidegger - Gadamer - philosophical hermeneutics.

Therefore, in our opinion, the concept of Heidegger's philosophy of life is comparable in order of importance to Kant's concept. It is dedicated

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to the analysis of many studies. Only one aspect such as the transformation of Heidegger's views on the life is interesting for us in this simply intellectually building. The literature analysis shows the complexity of the task because it was one of the main issues for Heidegger.

The evolution of Heidegger's views on the phenomenon of life, we will be divided into two stages.

The first stage – Heidegger's early philosophy. This period preceded "the turn" (a change in his thinking) and the publication of his magnum opus *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*). For Heidegger, the concept of life was represented by the phenomenon. Furthermore, accordingly, its consideration occurred through the achievement of Husserl's phenomenology and Dilthey's philosophy of life.

The second stage – Heidegger's later philosophy. This period is Heidegger's mature philosophical views, in which the phenomenon of life is transformed into the concept of "being", or rather, human being - Dasein (*literally, "there being"*). Besides, this word was broken down to two components "Da" (*there*) and "Sein" (*being*) by Heidegger and got an unusual meaning - human being. But before it, this term means life or existence in everyday German language and was used by other German philosophers to indicate the existence of any entity. Also, we encounter the influence of existential philosophy of Karl Jaspers, but mostly, with the results of the own cognitive research in this period.

Heidegger's early philosophical views on the problem of life can be started with his rather categorical statement: "The all-around helplessness seized our present life, for the life is separated from the true origins of itself and runs on its own periphery. We are now so kept out of the way and spoiled by non-genuine conceptual that almost is not seen possible to leave this to ourselves roots extending depravity"¹.

In his scientific studies, Heidegger aspired to seek fundamental principles, to cleanse the conventional terms of "pent-up" on them for the years of the cultural and historical development of mankind conceptual in authenticity. According to him, many of the terms detached from their initial values and did not have the clear meaning, thereby making a significant moment of irrationality in rigorous scientific construction. Heidegger has chosen the other way than many philosophers before him or

¹ Mikhailov I.A. *Early Heidegger: Between phenomenology and philosophy of life*. M.: Progress-Tradition, 1999. pp. 129-130.

after him. Moreover, he made a deep "terminological cleaning" before building his philosophical system. To avoid judgments relativism, to secure his system from two-valued conceptual interpretations which destroyed themselves the intellectual rigor of construction, Heidegger, on the one hand, returned to the original sources of significant terms and clearly defined them by emphasizing the content, on the other hand, used his new customized terminology, avoiding false-fetched interpretations of the opponents.

Starting from the lecture-course of the winter semester of 1919-1920, Heidegger begins to build his own system of philosophy, which laid the basis for determining the initial concept - "factual life". He fully justifies the content of this term, and the reason for its introduction. As for the content of the term "factual life", it was presented as a phenomenon for Heidegger.

Necessity of introduction to the concept of "factual life" due to the fact that Heidegger has built his highly intellectual and philosophical system, for which it was necessary to completely new basis, i.e. a fundamental principle. The philosophical system with a fundamental principle of "factual life" belongs to Heidegger's early philosophy. In addition, in his lectures, Heidegger tries to show that the foundation of phenomenology as absolutely new science does not mean that it is necessary to focus on the "consciousness" as a starting point for the research. The starting points are in phenomenology itself. Furthermore "everydayness" is taken as a primary phenomenon. Martin Heidegger also remarks that "everydayness" is to be taken as a primary phenomenon.

Furthermore, "everydayness" (*Alltäglichkeit*) is the subject of study, which has been researched by "philosophy of life" for the century. Thus, "everydayness" was studied from different points of views starting with the concepts of life philosophy of Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard to the concepts of life philosophy of Henri Bergson, Georg Simmel, Spengler et al. The only thing which unites them is an irrational approach, the existence of "undetected" and relative bases. Heidegger suggests other point of view in his concept. He tries to present "everydayness" as something original and whole i.e. as a phenomenon. Heidegger's way by analogy can be compared with the search for the research component of life in Vernadsky's concept of philosophy of life. Vernadsky identifies the research component in it and examined it from the standpoint of strictly scientific methods to avoid relativism judgment and to study the life in the strictly rational, scientific methods. Furthermore, Heidegger has done in the same way as

Vernadsky. For the analysis of human existence, he has presented research component "everydayness" in human being. He proposes to consider it as a phenomenon i.e. as something original, objective and accessible to rational methods of thinking. Thus, Heidegger did not rely on pure rationalism. So, for Heidegger, everything, which connected with the mind, intelligence, rationality, lies in the concept of "metaphysics". Heidegger has created his fundamental ontology of human being in the controversy with rationalism and its derivative forms such as humanism and metaphysics.

That is, Heidegger does not mean simply to include their human ontology in the framework of humanism as a socio-political movement. Heidegger wants to present his human ontology as a new form of humanity and the future of humanism¹. The word 'humanism' from Latin means humanity. Humanism, for Heidegger, is a care of the "man's humanity". It is an aspiration to that a man has become free for his humanity and found his dignity².

According to Heidegger, a man must be "human". But what it means to be "human"? According to Heidegger, it means to correspond to your essence (i.e. to be yourself) and to be present as a "self", as "to be" in the world. Therefore, the philosopher concludes that humanism takes different forms depending on the essence of man and his humanity. As Heidegger remarks that humanism is not something settled and objectified. Humanism is a dynamic movement, which is carried out in parallel and together with the human evolution as a perfection of essence³.

Thus, Heidegger notes that the modern society has the new humanism because the modern society, or rather, the essence of the modern man is different than the essence of previous generations. In contrast to the old forms of humanism, Heidegger offers a new form of humanism, which is associated with the other contemporary interpretation of the essence of man. Moreover, according to Heidegger, it is not a rational interpretation of man. This is the human ontology, which is qualitatively different, i.e. very different from the preceding rationalistic interpretations of man.

Analyzing Heidegger's concept of philosophy of life, we should understand that the philosopher's scientific activity has been for the period

¹ Gabitova R.M. *Man and Society in the German existentialism*. M.: Science, 1972. p.18.

² *ibid.* p.19.

³ *ibid.* p.168.

of formation of Einstein's theory of relativity. For this period, the concept of "relativity" was first deduced and explored by rational methods. It was a new form of rationality which has only made its way into scientific knowledge. Furthermore, the society had a hard time perceiving Einstein's speculative constructions, such as twin paradox. It turns out that this relative speculative construction bordering on fantasy, actually, has a strictly scientific basis. Because of rational was suddenly unattainable or difficult to comprehend for the perception and thinking. However, it turns out that it was even more difficult to understand Heidegger's construction for the society. Namely, "human ontology" was created by Heidegger as "being-in-itself", "being-in-the-world". In fact, it turns out that it had rational roots. As that was considered incapable of understanding and cannot be grasped by thinking. Nevertheless, it was embraced by humanism as a form of rationality. Furthermore, it became obvious and present in the world.

Heidegger's scientific constructions in something corresponded to the spirit of the search of new bases of rationality, expanding the boundaries of rational understanding. As Mikhailov notes that rationality in Heidegger's mental constructs is no longer in its unambiguous and categorical understanding. It did not mean to be and be present. For Heidegger, the rationalist worldview is a "metaphysical" worldview, which is true, but to limited extent. Humanism, "man's humanity" is a form of rationality which reveals inaccessible to the rational methods of metaphysics. However, humanism, as a form of rationality, is not rationality. It is polemic with rationalism. It is something present in the world with rationalism¹.

According to Heidegger, other form of worldview corresponds to the validity. It is the humanist worldview based on the human ontology. The human ontology gives the real meaning of "man" (*das Man*). It only connects the true essence of man, his "humanity" with the existential certainty and the existential dependence of man. To distinguish and underline the importance of the concept of "essence of man", Heidegger uses bright definitions such as "coming-to-light of being", "the truth of being", "the shepherd of being", "being-in-the-world", "existence", and

¹ Mikhailov I.A. *Early Heidegger: Between phenomenology and philosophy of life*. M.: Progress-Tradition, 1999. p.165.

"homeland". All these definitions are not peculiar to metaphysics (i.e. to rationalistic interpretation of man), which deals with a man as an entity, and not as being. Thus, Heidegger's "new humanism" claims even more to the new form of rationality than existentialism in Jaspers' understanding. It is a mixture of rational and irrational methods. This is an echo of the formation of Einstein's theory of relativity in scientific knowledge. When it turns out that it is difficult to catch the rational understanding, actually, is substantive and real. Heidegger's ontology, in the same way, polemizing with rational methods of investigation, the so-called "metaphysics", by and large, expands the frameworks of rational understanding. It is rationality. It is present along with rationality. But it is the rationality of the new formation. It is rationality in new understanding of rationality i.e. in understanding of "man's humanity".

During the early period of his creativity, Heidegger identifies three "special features" in the phenomenon of life:

1. The orientation.
2. The self-sufficiency.
3. The global character.

Continuing the tradition of Dilthey, Husserl, Jaspers, who had the influence on the formation of his worldview, Heidegger associates the concept with human being till the last day of his life. A little later, he has found more appropriate term - Dasein for the concept of "factual life". Analyzing Heidegger's lecture courses of 1919-1920, we can trace that Heidegger divides the "world", in which human life is immersed, into the "world around" or the "world about" (i.e. the surrounding world, including the parents, brothers, sisters, bosses, students, strangers, etc.) and "own world". The "own world" (or "I am the world") is inextricably tied up with the world of others and the physical environment of which we are also vitally a part¹. Furthermore, in his essay *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that: "world" (*Welt*) can be understood in another ontical sense-not, however, as those entities which Dasein essentially is not and which can be encountered within-the-world, but rather as that "wherein" a factual Dasein as such can be said to "live"."World" has here a pre-ontological existentiell signification. Here again there are different possibilities: "world" may stand for the "public" we-world, or one's "own" closest

¹ Jackson, Michael *Lifeworlds: Essays in Existential Anthropology*. University of Chicago Press. 2012. p.5.

(domestic) environment"¹. In these suggestions Heidegger presents two important ideas: 1) our life cannot be separated from our world. 2) We should think included in this of "our world" as well the world of other people. On the one hand, they also make up our world. On the other hand, we, in turn, are private their world.

Besides, Heidegger is the first of the philosophers, who says that human life is radically different from other forms of life in his studies. This is the first scientific isolation of the phenomena of human life. Heidegger is also the first scientist who used the term "being" to describe the mode of human existence, because he wanted to avoid terminological confusion. For Heidegger, human existence has still associated with the term "life", "factual life" and "everyday life" in his early studies. But in his essay *Being and Time*, Heidegger started to use the concept of "being" instead of the term "life" (*Leben*). All that is related to human existence, Heidegger became embodied in the term "Dasein".

Moreover, we can only understand the meaning of Being via the entity (being) in Heidegger's concept of philosophy of life. According to Heidegger, the only entity (*das Seiende*) is a man, human being - Dasein. And we can reach the understanding of Being through it. Only this entity, in contrast to the others, has the understanding of Being (*Seinsverständnis*). Furthermore, Being is always opened for this entity. But we should note that happened changes in Heidegger's thinking. So, Heidegger eventually abandons the basic idea of *Being and Time*: "Being is always the Being of an entity"². He writes that Being in general is a single "horizon" (*Horizont*) of various kinds of entities.

In Heidegger's philosophy, the unessence of thing determines its existence, and it follows from the existence of the essence (*Wesen*). Being immersed in the human "being-in-the-world" and is inseparable from it. Moreover, being, first of all, is an event. However, Heidegger has reflected the essential interdependence of the world and man. Thus, he has highlighted the human life in a radically new space.

How does Heidegger justify the basic difference between human life and "life-as-living-matter"? First of all, the human life is able to know itself and think about this being. Human entities can choose the real life (i.e. they

¹ Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time* / translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. London: S.C.M., 1962. p. 93.

² *ibid.* p. 29.

fully understand their position in the world) or unauthentic life (i.e. they live like machines blindly adapting to the established order and rules). Thus, Heidegger clearly indicates that the substantial basis of space of Dasein is psyche, which distinguishes the human being from the life, raising a human life. More precisely, in his later works, being is in a radically new, self-sufficient existence.

Man, according to Heidegger, is to inquire about being. And as the very "questioning" has already had some knowledge about the subject of questioning. Therefore, questioning the meaning of life, a person has a certain way of its understanding.

Postulating the position that a person initially tend to a certain understanding of being, Heidegger makes an important conclusion that if, indeed, a man can always understand his own being, then, we have an opportunity to analyze the human being through the analysis of the understanding of being. Or else, the question of the meaning of being transforms into the question of human being. Thus, Heidegger uses the term "existential" to designation to the human being.

According to Heidegger, the essence of man is his existence. At the same time, existence does not mean being as presence. Because presence answers to the question "What is it?" and Being as presence expresses "what" of the subject. Thus, this way of being belongs to the man, but in contrast to the existence of any other entities, does not affect the specificity of his existence.

Such understanding of being by Heidegger contradicts a traditional philosophical paradigm. Earlier in the philosophy of human existence is always understood as a substantial existence. According to Heidegger, it is unsubstantial (i.e. being is an opportunity (*Möglichkeit*)).

Thus, speaking about Dasein, Heidegger is talking about space-time. It turns out that human existence is a new space-time (*Zeitraum*) different from the inorganic world spaces and life-as-living-matter. For Heidegger, time does not exist without the man. This time is a human presence in three dimensions: past, present and future. Heidegger has finished what Husserl had started i.e. human existence was raised to the new physical space-time. At the same time, it was not an abstraction or a fairy tale.

Man, for Heidegger, is an entity who exists. The proposition "man exists" means: man is that being whose Being is distinguished by the open-standing standing-in in the unconcealedness of Being, from Being, in Being. The existential nature of man is the reason why man can represent beings

as such, and why he can be conscious of them¹. According to Heidegger, the man is open to the world and the world is open to the man. The openness of the world to the man is always inside the time horizon, and largely depends on the time of forms and modes. So, if the primary time "ends" for the human being, then the world, which is understood as a meaningful horizon and a reality, "disappears". On this occasion, Heidegger remarks that Being is time and time is finite, it comes to an end with our death, to the extent there is also a world. The world is not there, and the time in time. When human being (Dasein) does not exist, then there is no the world "here"².

Indeed, the essence of man is illuminated by himself as a being-in-the-world i.e. not through another being. Moreover, Dasein carries 'inside' the sphere of illumination. Thus, Heidegger chooses the concept of "Dasein" for the expression of the existence of being. This involvement of man to nature of Being is a fact of being, for Heidegger, just as the need of the sensual element for experience and knowledge is a fact for Kant.

In contrast to the classical philosophical position, Heidegger believes that the man (Dasein) may not be indifferent, neutral in relation to himself. Whenever the own man's being interrogates himself in his own existential character. The understanding of the world and self does not mean of orientation on the model of perception of available items.

Starting with *Being and Time*, for Heidegger, "Dasein" is converted into a separate category, which he understands as "presence" (*Gegenwart*). That is, the presence is an entity, who understands his existence and belongs to this existence. Thus, the formal concept of existence is declared.

So, Heidegger calls "being-here" ("Dasein") as existence. Unlike Husserl, Heidegger believes that the focus should be done not on the minds and on the existence, being. "Dasein" is always in the being. The main characteristic of this existence is "being-in-the-world" (*In-der-Welt-sein*). Man, who was born, always finds himself thrown into the world. That's why, "being-in-the-world" is the foundation and the initial condition of human existence.

Heidegger reveals the following structural elements of "being-in":

¹ *ibid.* p.68.

² Bystritskii E.K., Kozlovsky V.P., Proleev S.V. & Malakhov V.A. *Being human in culture (the experience of ontological approach)*. Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Institute of Philosophy. Kiev: Science Dumka, 1991. p. 84.

a) Location, which is the fact, that "Dasein" always finds itself in the certain situation. The philosopher uses the term "abandonment";

b) Understanding. Location is always its clarity. Unlike Dilthey, whose understanding is an act of subjectivity, the act of consciousness, for Heidegger, the understanding has an ontological status. Understanding is a movable base of the human existence. It is the way of life.

"Being-in-the-world" is a single phenomenon, in which there are three "constitutive moments":

1) "In-the-world". According to Heidegger, the phenomenological description "world" means to identify and conceptual-categorical record the existence of present. The entity within "being-in-the-world" is a thing of natural things.

2) The second constitutive moment of "being-in-the-world" - entity. The entity is always the way of being-in-the-world. Here we are seeking that which one inquires into when one asks the question "Who?" (*Wer*). By a phenomenological demonstration we shall determine who is in the mode of Dasein's average everydayness¹. Furthermore, Heidegger gives the answer to it. "Who?" is man (*das Man*). Besides, the man, who answers the question of who, is present every day. Furthermore, there is the one who is present in all his being-each-other-among and has already granted themselves².

Man, according to Heidegger, is always dispersed in people (in someone). This "dispersion", for Heidegger, does not mean the depersonalization of man and annihilation of his own self. However, the history of mankind is a collection of individual existences. The man knows about the inevitability of his end and therefore motivates his life or determines his livelihoods. Human being continues materialized, becoming available forms of his work. Man transcends, overcoming the boundaries not only of his presence in the world, but his death (*Tod*).

For Heidegger, man as a being has a "source" of his being in the care. According to Heidegger, a human being is "abandoned" in the existing world and therefore should be responsible for itself. It participates interested way in the world, in which is. Thus, the care characterizes our endless interaction with all that we find or use. This is a way of structure,

¹ Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time* / translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. London: S.C.M., 1962. p.79.

² *ibid.* p.79.

which we "live life", an active attitude, constructive and necessary condition of human being - Dasein¹.

According to Heidegger, the connectedness of life and sense of temporal structures of existence, interdependent with the integrity of the world, carried out in the "care" (*Sorge*). The "care" unites the three main characteristics of Dasein²:

- 1) existential;
- 2) facticity;
- 3) falling prey or entanglement.

According to Binswanger, Heidegger's great merit lies in the fact that he summarized being (Dasein) under the term "care". Heidegger uses the term "care" (the phenomenon of care) to describe the dominant position of the human being.

For Heidegger, the care is "being-here". Analysis of "here", which is making the way forward up to the phenomenon of care, urged to prepare the fundamental-ontological perspective, the question of the meaning of life in general. For Heidegger, the care is a radical concern regarding the human's own being. Mikhailov believes that it is important that Heidegger defines a human being is not through rational comprehension of the world, but through the care. Dasein is not just "thrown" into the world, not only in captivity opportunities but they can actively convert³.

Moreover, the dimensions of the care structure, according to Heidegger, is a unity of three things such as projection (being-ahead-of-itself), thrownness (already-in-a-world) and falling (being-amidst-entities). Besides, we know them as future, past, present.

3) The third constitutive moment of being-in-the-world is being-in (*In-sein*). Being-in has respectively a formal expression of the existential presence of being, having the essential device being-in-the-world. As Heidegger writes: this latter term designates the kind of Being which an entity has when it is "in" another one, as the water is "in" the glass, or the garment is "in" the cupboard. By this "in" we mean the relationship of being which two entities extended "in" space have to each other with regard to

¹ Mikhailov I.A. *Early Heidegger: Between phenomenology and philosophy of life*. M.: Progress-Tradition, 1999. p. 180.

² Massey, Heath *The Origin of Time: Heidegger and Bergson*. State University of New York Press, Albany, 2015. p.124.

³ Mikhailov I.A. *Early Heidegger: Between phenomenology and philosophy of life*. M.: Progress-Tradition, 1999. p.224.

their location in that space. Both water and glass, garment and cupboard, are "in" space and "at" a location, and both in the same way. This relationship of being can be expanded: for instance, the bench is in the lecture-room, the lecture-room is in the university, the university is in the city, and so on, until we can say that the bench is "in world-space"¹.

Thus, for Heidegger, "being-in" is identical to the concept of "being-here" ("being-there") i.e. being, which is essentially constituted in the being-in-the-world, is itself always its "here" ("there"). "Being-here" is divided into two parts:

- 1) the existential constitution of the "here" ("there");
- 2) everyday being-here and falling prey.

In turn, the existential constitution is broken down by Heidegger on: a) the presence as a disposition; b) fear as a mode of attunement; c) presence as understanding; d) comprehension and interpretation; e) the statement or judgment as a derivative mode of interpretation; f) the presence, speech and language.

Heidegger understands everyday being-here and falling prey as: a) talk; b) curiosity; c) ambiguity. Thus, these phenomena becomes visible to the basic way of being-here, we have interpreted as a falling, what are the "falling" existential seems their way of mobility².

In small works such as *Die Technik und die Kehre* and *Frage nach der Technik*, Heidegger argues against the common view of the technology as the sphere of realization of scientific achievements. He offers a different vision, drifting back to the Renaissance, namely, understanding of the essence of art as a science. The problem of the relationship of technology and human is rather important issue not only for the existential analysts, but for all areas of philosophy, considering the phenomenon of life. The fact that the phenomenon of life, both in terms of understanding the life-as-living-matter, and in the understanding of the "human", in one degree or another connected with the problems of the art. In the first case, the technology is actively influences on the flow of life, causing a destructive or positive response to humans. In the second case, it forms a sphere of human existence. Human being is carried out in conjunction with the technology, and this interaction is not possible.

¹ Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time* / translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. London: S.C.M., 1962. p.82.

² *ibid.* p.159.

Hesle, analyzing Heidegger's philosophy of art, notes that Heidegger first saw a danger in the technology to people. If the philosophy of Francis Bacon to Spengler the technology was regarded as one of the highest values of European culture, Heidegger first felt anxiety about the importance of technology in human existence. Heidegger shows the technology as a problem for the consideration of metaphysics, emphasizing that the essence of modern technology largely determines the interpretation of the world and ways to communicate with it¹. According to Heidegger, the anthropological approach to the problem of technology is too trivial, as the answer to the question "What is the technology? Man". The anthropology, according to Heidegger, explains only one side of this complex phenomenon. Therefore, only metaphysics is able to cover the essence of technology. At the same time, the danger from the equipment is not in the literal sense (i.e. the death of man from the technology), and in the deeper impact (i.e. on the essence of human existence). Actualization of the importance of technology has touched the area of human existence. Furthermore, Heidegger was terrified of this. In this he sees the danger to society (*Gesellschaft*).

Thus, we examined the evolution of Heidegger's views on the phenomenon of life from Heidegger's early philosophy (before the publication of *Being and Time*) to his later philosophy.

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WITTGENSTEIN'S LANGUAGE GAMES AS COMMUNICATION ACTS

Michał WENDLAND¹

Abstract: *This article attempts to apply philosophical solutions proposed by Ludwig Wittgenstein to contemporary theoretical considerations of communication. These solutions may contribute toward the consolidation of communication philosophy against the backdrop of language philosophy. The article includes a consideration of the thesis, according to which the concept of a language game can be compared to the concept of communicative action, and the extent to which Wittgenstein's approach to language may be referred to as interpersonal communication. Particular emphasis is placed on the category of forms of life, interpreted as social practice, in which various communication practices are undertaken and implemented (corresponding to "families" of language games). The text also includes an indication of both the potential benefits of such an interpretative operation as well as some of its limitations.*

Keywords: *Wittgenstein, language games, communication act, communication practices, form of life, communication theory.*

1. Introduction

Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophical views are mentioned only very rarely in the context of theoretical considerations of communication.² Although their impact on the contemporary philosophy of language is colossal and undisputed (especially in the so-called philosophy of colloquial language), his philosophical analyses are not widely quoted in studies of communication issues.

This does not only apply to the author of *Philosophical Investigations*; communication studies rarely refer to philosophy, and interest in issues of communication is not as high among philosophers as might be expected. This article describes the possibility of conducting a comparative analysis of Wittgensteinian "language games" and the concept of communication

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acts. The attempt is therefore to demonstrate that theoretical considerations of communication may be principally supported and substantiated with arguments drawn from the achievements of the great philosopher (as well as others) Ludwig Wittgenstein. Moreover, the use of such arguments and philosophical solutions may contribute to broadening the perspective of these studies, to deepen or even revise some of their key elements.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the possible similarities between Wittgenstein's characteristic way of thinking about language in the latter period of his philosophical work and the basic elements of the contemporary theoretical reflection on communication. The article consists of three parts. The first concerns the criticism directed by Wittgenstein against the search for "the essence of language." The assumption that language has a specific function that allows its definition is, in his opinion, wrong. I attempt to demonstrate that an analogous criticism can be aimed at reductionist tendencies in certain theoretical approaches to communication. If it is possible to indicate, according to Wittgenstein, countless language games and countless functions of language (not just the descriptive function), then it is similarly possible to identify a wide variety of communication functions, not just one (e.g., the function of information transmission).

In the second part, I refer to the three basic metaphors that Wittgenstein uses in his deliberations on language ("language game," "family resemblances," and "form of life"), moving later to suggest a comparison of the key elements of his ideas (language games) and communication acts and practices. In the last part, I conclude by indicating some of the most serious problems and limitations resulting from such a comparison, which would have to be resolved in order to arrive at the possibility of applying Wittgenstein's philosophy in considerations of communication. At the same time, I indicate some of the positive consequences of the proposed analogy and possible ways of its application.

2. The Functions of Language and Communication

2.1. Wittgenstein's criticism of searching for the "essence of language"

One of the key elements of Wittgenstein's approach to language is the conviction that there is no such thing as "the essence of language," an

entity that would be common to all that we call language:¹ “Instead of producing something common to all that we call language, I am saying that these phenomena have no one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all.”² The conviction that language has one specific function, which can be associated with its “essence,” was characteristic of the earlier philosophy of language. That “essence of language” was sought mostly in the relationship between language and the world, specifically in how objects were described with the words (characters) included in the language. It was assumed, therefore, that the only function of language was descriptive, i.e., the function of describing the world. Only later philosophers, inspired by the views of Wittgenstein, including John L. Austin,³ sanctioned the practice of distinguishing other language functions.

The manifestations of such a reductionist approach to language can be found in the writings of Gottlob Frege and Rudolf Carnap, for example, and above all in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. In his early work, the young Wittgenstein described the so-called picture theory of language, according to which “we create pictures of facts,” “a logical picture of fact is a thought,” “a thought is a proposition with a sense,” and “language is the totality of sentences.”⁴ From this point of view, the ontological structure of the world is represented by the logical structure of language, which is a kind of “model” (picture) of reality. In other words, everything that is within the limits of the world is also within the limits of language (“the limits of my language define the limits of my world”), and the only function of language thus understood is to reflect.

However, when Wittgenstein returned to philosophy in the 1930s and began to develop a new concept of language, he radically broke from the earlier notion. *Philosophical Investigations* begins with a polemic with the traditional theory of word meaning, which is referred to as Augustinian, but which can easily be found in the writings of the neopositivists, Frege, Carnap, and the young Wittgenstein. Quoting a fragment on learning language from Augustine’s *Confessions*, Wittgenstein says:

¹ Quoting Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*, I state not the page number, but the number of the quoted paragraph. I do so because of the unique numbering of pages in the issue of *Philosophical Investigations*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1997. In all other cases in the references, the page number is stated.

² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1997, § 65.

³ John L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979.

⁴ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Cosimo, New York, 2009.

These words, it seems to me, give us a particular picture of the essence of human language. It is this: the individual word in language names objects – sentences are combinations of such names. In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: every word has meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.¹

According to the Augustinian concept of meaning, it is an object denoted by a sign or word, and this applies to all words. There are, however, doubts: is it certain that all words have a meaning of this type? Is such an approach to meaning universal, i.e., does it include all that we call language? Perhaps it concerns nouns and verbs, but do, say, numerals have the same type of meaning as the word “apple” or “chair”?

According to Wittgenstein, such an idea of language (or more precisely, of word meaning) is probably not wrong or untrue. In many cases, the meaning of the word, what it represents, is indeed an object, item, or thing (similar in “meaning,” according to Frege). However, as the Austrian philosopher claims, “that philosophical concept of meaning has its place in primitive idea of the way language functions.” “But one can also say that it is the idea of a language more primitive than ours.”² This means that language is not limited to the mere naming of objects and that its function is not reducible only to the determination of things. In many cases, it is so, but not in all. Such an approach to language is not a description of its “essence”; it is not universal.

Wittgenstein argues in a similar fashion regarding alternative concepts of word meanings, especially the psychological approach, which traces its roots to the works of John Locke and David Hume. Within this approach, the meaning of a word is not so much an item, object, or thing but, rather, a mental state, a mental image formed in the mind of the person using the word, hearing or uttering it. Moreover, in this instance, it appears that although in many cases mental images may be regarded as meanings of words, this is not so in all cases.

Indeed, is there any universal concept of meaning that is also an “essence of language”? In his search for answers, Wittgenstein’s proposal was to compare language with a toolbox. This new metaphor replaced the old idea of language as a “mirror of reality,” which was derived from Enlightenment philosophy, including the writings of Leibniz. The young

¹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 1.

² *Ibid.*, § 2.

Wittgenstein in *Tractatus* was willing to recognize language as an “image” or a “mirror” whose function – the only function – was the true or false reflection of the world. The new metaphor, however, forced us to look at language in a different light: “Think of the tools in a tool-box: there is a hammer, pliers, a saw (...). The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects.”¹ The multitude of tools resembles the multiplicity of types of sentences, and the multitude of functions that individual tools – or types of tools – can serve is analogous to the multiplicity of functions of language. “But how many kinds of sentences are there? Say assertion, question, and command? – There are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use what we call ‘symbols,’ ‘words,’ ‘sentences.’ And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and forgotten.”²

Wittgenstein contrasts the earlier description – which reduced the function of language to imagining objects and thus defining their essence – with a whole new approach. From his point of view, it is impossible to indicate a general theory of meaning or a definitive function of language. He proposes that the meaning of the word be associated with the method of its use. Characteristically, this proposal, which indicates the transition from the classical semantic recognition of meaning to a pragmatic approach, is not postulated as a replacement of the others: “For a large class of cases – though not for all – in which we employ the word “meaning” it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.”³ In many cases, the meaning of a word is simply the object to which it refers; in others, it is a mental state; in others still – the use of a word is its meaning. Although the postulate of recognizing meaning as the method of a symbol’s use is of great importance for the whole of the contemporary philosophy of language, it should be emphasized that Wittgenstein considers it to be merely one of the possibilities, not the only one. Otherwise, one kind of reductionism would simply be replaced by another.

This breakthrough concept was taken up and developed by many philosophers contemporary to Wittgenstein as well as some who came later. John L. Austin was one of the first to appreciate it although he treated

¹ Ibid., § 11.

² Ibid., § 23.

³ Ibid., § 43.

the problem of the multiplicity of the functions of language with less enthusiasm and ironically stated that postulating its “infinite” number is exaggerated: “Philosophers will do this when they have listed as many, let us say, as seventeen; but even if there were something like ten thousand uses of language, surely we could list them all in time.”¹ However, Austin essentially agreed with Wittgenstein’s position. He distinguished between the descriptive and performative functions of language and focused on its analysis, sharing the opinion of the author of *Philosophical Investigations* that one cannot reduce “the essence of language” simply to a description of reality.

2.2. Criticism of the transmission model of communication

How do Wittgenstein’s thoughts—on the multiplicity of the language function, the lack of its “essence,” and the multiplicity of equivalent concepts of meaning—concern the theory of communication? Of course, searching for Wittgenstein’s literal references to what we now call “the science of communication” or “communicology” would be very difficult (and probably also pointless). He did not use the term “communication” and died around the time when the fundamental works of communication theory were just being created in the United States and Canada.² As accepted in the introduction, however, it does not preclude an attempt to use some of Wittgenstein’s ideas and his way of thinking and formulating questions with regard to the issue of communication.

The question put by Wittgenstein regarding language and semantics could be adapted to communication, especially the transmission model, which is very deeply rooted in theoretical reflections on interpersonal communication. The transmission approach to communication³ usually refers to the research tradition derived from the works of American communication theorists such as Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver. Their mathematical theory of communication became the starting point of a vibrant trend in research on communication in the 1950s and 1960s, represented by Carl Hovland, Theodore Newcombe, Bernard Berelson,

¹ J.L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, p. 234.

² I mean here the works of Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver (*The Mathematical Theory of Communication*, 1949) and Harold Innis (*Empire and Communication*, 1950). Wittgenstein died in 1951.

³ Other terms are also used: the cybernetic, telegraphic, or hydraulic model.

John Hoben, Harold Laswell, Roman Jakobson, and others. In the transmission approach, it is assumed that communication is a process of transmitting mental content (intellectual or emotional) by subject A (usually known as the sender or “source”) to a subject (or subjects) B (called the recipient). The term “mental content” means what is thought or what is felt (a mental act). The mere transfer of mental content (the transmission) is made by means of a given medium (external, by means of the senses).

Common features of the various examples of the transmission approach to communication include: (1) the use of the transmission metaphor and (2) the identification of the notion of communication with information. In other words, what is communicated (transmitted) is information. This approach, which has its source in the cybernetic model of Shannon-Weaver (created as a model for the study of the flow of information in telecommunications networks), is present in the various definitions of communication presented by, among others, Theodore Newcombe (“Every communication act is viewed as a transmission of information, consisting of a discriminative stimuli, from a source to a recipient”¹), Bernard Berelson (“Communication: the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, etc., by the use of symbols – words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. It is the act or process of transmission that is usually called communication”²), and John Hoben (“Communication is the verbal interchange of thought or idea”³).

The transmission model of communication has been repeatedly and multilaterally subjected to criticism. It was, above all, reproached for the hasty transfer of the modeling of telecommunications onto interpersonal relationships,⁴ remonstrated for a disregard of historical and social contexts,⁵ and criticized for the identification of communication with

¹ Theodore Newcomb, “An Approach to the Study of Communication Acts,” in: Alfred G. Smith (ed.), *Communication and Culture*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1966, p. 66.

² Bernard Berelson, Gary Steiner, *Human Behavior*, Harcourt, Brace and World, New York 1964, p. 254.

³ John Hoben, “English Communication at Colgate Re-Examined,” *Journal of Communication* 4 (1954), p.77.

⁴ See: Yves Winkin, *Anthropologie de la communication. De la théorie au terrain*, DeBoeck, Paris 1996; Bruno Ollivier, *Les sciences de la communication. Théories et acquis*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2007.

⁵ Graeme Patterson, *History and Communications. Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, the Interpretation of History*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1990.

information.¹ A number of alternative proposals have been formulated, including an orchestral model (Ray Birdwhistell and Gregory Bateson) and a ritual view (Erving Goffman, Eric Rothenbuhler, and James W. Carey), and communication has been incorporated into research in anthropology (Dell Hymes and John Gumperz) and history (the Toronto School). According to Walter J. Ong:

Human verbal communication is sometimes carelessly conceived of according to an information model, as simply the movement of an item from one point to another. But human communication involves much more than simple diffusion of units of information... Contrary to common assumptions, there is no way for me to transport a concept from my mind or consciousness into yours, no "channel" carrying my thought from me to you. (...) my thoughts are not "sent" to you by the code over or through a "channel," transported from my mind to you as an electric impulse is transported from a sending telegraphic instrument (...). A human communication "medium," co-called, such as speech, is more than just a "medium", more than a "channel." I cannot place my thoughts in your mind.²

One of the objections toward the transmission model of communication is that of reductionism – as indicated above – that communication is reduced to the transmission of information, and the process is considered to be a universal "essence" of communication. Thus, many definitions of communication built around this view have emerged from an assumption that all communication consists precisely of the transmission of information. This assumption can also be criticized using the philosophical analysis provided by Wittgenstein.

The transmission model of communication can be compared to the old philosophical vision of language as a "mirror of nature," according to which the only function of language is the true or false imitation of reality. In both cases, we are dealing with two metaphors: a metaphor of communication as transmission and a metaphor of language as a picture. Both share a tendency toward reductionism. Both are expressions of the search for a certain universal principle, the essence of a social phenomenon – communication or language. Both are expressions of an assumption,

¹ See: Walter J. Ong, "Information and/or Communication: Interactions," in: *Faith and Contexts*, Vol. 4: *Additional Studies and Essays 1947-1996*, Thomas J. Farrell & Paul A. Soukup, Scholar Press, Atlanta, 1999.

² W.J. Ong, "Information and/or Communication: Interaction," p. 4-5.

according to which everything that we call communication or language can be reduced to the general form of a universal, unchanging model that combines common features. Such an approach can be described as essentialism.

Wittgenstein disputed this approach in the initial parts of *Philosophical Investigations*. If we look at communication from his standpoint, it appears that communication is not reducible to one single function, i.e., the transmission of information: "I am saying that these phenomena have no one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all."¹ Therefore, any attempt at defining communication using the transmission model resembles the old attempt to define the meaning of a word as the object represented by the word. Undoubtedly, in many cases, communication does really consist in transmitting information, but not always. Similarly, in many cases, the meaning of a word is a specific object, a thing – but not in all.

Various communication functions have been repeatedly listed, such as Harold Lasswell's functions of supervising, maintaining social relationships, and the transmission of cultural heritage² or Roman Jakobson's functions: emotive, referential, poetic, phatic, metalingual, conative.³ Regardless of how many functions may be indicated, the function of information will be one of them, though probably not the only one. This implies that reducing all that we call communication – to searching for a common denominator of all communication acts in the transmission of information – is an example of reductionism and should be replaced by an alternative, non-essentialist model; not one in which a putative common feature is replaced by another – but a model in which communication is more like a toolbox and the various communication acts perform equally varied functions as the different functions of tools.

A claim that all communication is the transmission of information from sender to recipient resembles the claim that the meaning of each word is represented by an object or that all acts of language consist in describing extralinguistic reality. It is easy to see that such statements are, in formal

¹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 65.

² Harold Laswell, „The Structure and Function of Communication in Society,” in: Wilbur Schramm and Donald F. Roberts (eds.), *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, pp. 84-99.

³ Roman Jakobson, „Linguistic and Poetics,” in: Thomas Sebeok (ed.), *Style in Language*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1960, pp. 350-377.

models, preceded by a large quantifier. The basic consequence of Wittgenstein's proposal is to replace the large quantifier with a small one. One could then say that certain communication acts consist in the transmission of information; in some cases, the meaning of a word is represented by an object, etc.

This approach, however, raises a number of serious problems, for example: since certain communication acts consist in one thing, while something else in others, then is a single definition of communication, covering all its functions, even possible? In order to answer this question in the spirit of Wittgenstein, his concept of languagegames and the so-called "family resemblance" between them deserves attention, which is the focus of the next section.

3. Communication Act as a Language-game

3.1. Language-game, family resemblance and forms of life

In the previous part of this article, I suggested the possibility of comparing a "language-game" to a communication act. I accepted that the criticism of the definition of communication, which reduces it to the function of information transmission, can be performed analogously to Wittgenstein's criticism of the search for the "essence of language" (or the concept of meaning) by reducing it to a definite function. In order to develop and justify this comparison, the most important elements of the idea of "language games" in *Philosophical Investigations* and Wittgenstein's later works should be inspected.

In order to emphasize the pragmatic, contextual, and peculiarly relativistic way of describing language, Wittgenstein introduces the concept of language games: "I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the action into which it is woven, the language game."¹ The "actions into which it is woven" may be understood as the socio-cultural context within which each language game takes place, that is, a particular case of language use (speech). The notion of language game is closely related to the pragmatic concept of meaning, since the meaning of words can change depending on the context or the language game in which it will be used.

The Austrian philosopher uses three metaphorical terms. The first is the "game" itself; the second is "family resemblance," and the third is

¹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 7.

“form/way of life.” I will mention and briefly comment on each before moving on to the relationship between such a model of language and a communication act.

According to Wittgenstein, language is like a game, e.g., a game of chess, cards, football, etc.¹ In “playing” a language game, we use words (signs, sentences) like players use figures of chess, card games, or a ball. It is related to the analysis of the word’s meaning as a way of using it in the language game: a ball may be used in different (unrelated) games. Similarly, a word can change meaning depending on the context in which it is used.

The comparison of language to games has been met with an ambiguous reception from philosophers contemporary to Wittgenstein and those coming after. For example, Rush Rhees, a student of Wittgenstein and one of the editors of *Philosophical Investigations*, has concluded that the analogy between language and games is misconceived and that the claim that language is a family of language games does not explain the possibility of communicating and conducting discourse.² According to Rhees, the “form of life” plays a more important role in this matter, which – in his opinion – Wittgenstein did not pay enough attention to. Since we are able to communicate, it means that language has after all a unity inherent in the common way of life. This approach has been shared by, for example, Robert Brandom, as part of his inferentialism.³

Wittgenstein was also criticized for stubbornly refusing the opportunity to provide an analytical definition of language, language games or the game itself, and for seeking multiplicity where a certain unity could be found. Hans-Johann Glock writes, “He [Wittgenstein] is therefore open to the charge that, with persistence, ‘game’ can be analytically defined, for example, as a rule-guided activity with fixed objectives that are of little or no importance to the participants outside the context of the game.”⁴ Indeed, Wittgenstein himself was willing to acknowledge that something connects the various games if only they are a kind of activity and that they proceed according to certain rules, etc. In his opinion,

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1998, p. 66.

² Rush Rhees, *Wittgenstein and the Possibility of Discourse*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

³ Robert Brandom, *Articulating Reasons: An Introduction to Inferentialism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2009.

⁴ Hans-Johann Glock, *A Wittgenstein Dictionary*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1996, p. 121.

however, there is no basis at all for formulating an analytical definition consisting of the necessary and sufficient conditions to define the “game.” It should be noted, however, that he also formulated a less radical version of this opinion, claiming that in any case, games do not need to have anything in common.¹ He did not deem it impossible to accurately define the game as a problem: “One might say that the concept ‘game’ is a concept with blurred edges. – ‘But is a blurred concept a concept at all?’ – Is an indistinct photograph a picture of a person at all? Is it even always an advantage to replace an indistinct picture by a sharp one? Isn’t the indistinct one often exactly what we need?”²

At the end of the previous section, I referred to the problem of one of the implications of comparing communicative action to the language game: since, according to Wittgenstein, there is no single function of language and that their number is infinite, what would the other functions of communication (other than transmission of information) be, and is it possible to identify them all? Is it conceivable to list all the possible functions of communication? If communication is not only a transmission of data – then what else is it?

Attempting to prepare a hypothetical list of all the possible functions of communication would be pointless. Of course, one could present examples of the most “typical” acts or practices of communication; one could create a classification (e.g., identify arguing, promising, and lying as certain types of communication acts). In a similar manner, Wittgenstein’s language games are combined in certain groups on the basis of “family resemblance.” Wittgenstein, writing about types of games (including language games), asks: “What is common to them all? Don’t say: ‘There must be something common, or they would not be called ‘games’ – but look and see whether there is anything common to all.’”³ Instead of one feature being common to all language games, the Austrian philosopher recognizes a number of similarities that connect them: “For if you look at them you will not see something common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that.”⁴ He uses the term “family resemblance” to refer to the similarities connecting the types of language games. Having indicated the various groups of games and the possibility of

¹ L. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, p. 139-140.

² *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 66.

⁴ *Ibid.*, § 66.

perceiving the similarities that connect them instead of one common feature, he says:

And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail. I can think of no better expression to characterise these similarities than “family resemblances”; for the various resemblances between members of family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. And I shall say: “games” form a family.¹

In resorting to such an argument, it should be accepted that communication acts also form certain groups, “families.” When they consist in, for example, asking about the departure time of a train and getting an answer, or asking about the price of goods in a shop, then we can conclude that their function is to transmit information from the sender to the recipient. As such, they belong to a certain “family” of communication and are “related” to other “families” and, thus, to communication acts involving explaining the way to someone, analyzing a map, or reading a cookbook. We must also take into account diverse types of communication acts, other families of language games, e.g., situations in which a group of people pray together, flirt, learn a text by heart and recite it, falsify personal data, etc. It would probably be difficult to recognize all these cases as examples of the transmission of information, and yet, we consider them all to be communication.

A third important concept used by Wittgenstein in his considerations of language is the “form of life” (*Lebensform*). This was rarely used although it was undoubtedly one of his key terms. It remains quite difficult to understand and arouses significant controversy among experts and researchers of Wittgenstein’s thought. Rush Rhees (mentioned earlier) believes that Wittgenstein had an unrealistic trust in the comparison between language and games and should therefore have devoted more attention to the forms of life.

What is a form of life? At least four major interpretations of this concept have been suggested. In John F. M. Hunter’s opinion:² according to the first interpretation (1) the form of life is simply synonymous with the

¹ Ibid., § 67.

² John F.M. Hunter, “Forms of life in Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*,” *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 5 (1968) pp. 233-243.

language game; according to another (2), it is a fixed type of behavior (the behavior-package), such as gestures, facial expression, etc., correlated with specific language games; the third interpretation describes the way of life in (3) the cultural-historical perspective; and the fourth (4) is of a naturalistic character. Hunter focuses on the last two. He accepts that according to the cultural-historical interpretation of life forms, they represent the social context of language and become combined with religion, social structure, value systems, and forms of organization of industry and commerce, etc. However, he firmly rejected this interpretation and turned to the fourth, naturalistic one, according to which, a form of life is organic in nature, and the word "life" has a biological meaning.

Hunter's "organic," naturalistic interpretation has been met with criticism. He claims that the possible cultural-historical approach is weakened by the lack of its justification in Wittgenstein's texts. However, it has been demonstrated¹ that the expression "form of life" was drawn from the works of, among others, Oswald Spengler and Eduard Spranger, not from the natural sciences. It has also been argued that the cultural-historical interpretation of the form of life is well founded and that a form of life could be, for example, religion.² The justification for the cultural-historical interpretation of forms of life was sought not only in the *Philosophical Investigations* but also in Wittgenstein's works published after his death, e.g., in the Lecture on Ethics, the Lecture on Aesthetics, and The Blue and Brown Books. In the Lecture on Ethics, he writes: "What belongs to a language game is a whole culture."³ Arguing against Hunter's naturalistic interpretation, Nicholas Gier states that "Lebensformen are therefore primarily the formal conditions, the patterns in the weave of our lives, that make a meaningful world possible. They are the existential equivalents of Kant's *Bedingungen der Möglichkeit der Erfahrung*. As some commentators have observed, forms of life perform a transcendental function."⁴ Thus,

¹ See e.g., Nicholas Gier, "Wittgenstein and Forms of Life," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 10 (1980), pp. 241-258; H.-J. Glock, *A Wittgenstein Dictionary*.

² See: Patrick Sherry, "Is Religion a Form of Life?," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 9 (1972), pp. 159-167.

³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology, and Religious Belief*, ed. Cyril Barrett, Blackwell, Oxford 1967, p. 8.

⁴ N. Gier, "Wittgenstein and Forms of Life," p. 257.

although the issue of the forms of life is controversial, its cultural interpretation is justified.¹

Therefore, since there are compelling justifications for the cultural-historical interpretation of the forms of life, perhaps it is also possible to consider it as a socio-cultural phenomenon in relation to communication.

Wittgenstein recognizes that language is one of the forms of life, next to, e.g., religion or art: "Here the term 'language-game' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life."² He also points out that talking, taking part in language games, is woven into the social context, especially in certain types of activities: "It is characteristic of our language that the foundation of which it grows consists in steady forms of life, regular activity. Its function is determined above all by the action which it accompanies."³ It should also be remembered that, in the context of linguistic forms of life, "an enormous number" of particular language games function. Moreover, the implementation of a given language game is done in relation to a specific activity and takes place in a certain context. There is also no doubt that the language game requires the use of signs (words, gestures) and that it involves two or more "players." Basically, the given examples – with the famous example of a builder and his assistant – show that the language games considered by Wittgenstein pertain to talking, conversation, though, of course, they may have many other forms: "Review the multiplicity of language games in the following examples, and in others: giving orders, and following them; describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurement (...); reporting an event; speculating about an event (...); play-acting (...); guessing riddles; making a joke; telling it (...); asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying."⁴ Listing the various examples of language-games, he ironically adds: "It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of words and sentences, with what logicians have said

¹ And if a certain parallel may be accepted between Wittgenstein's "forms of life" and Kant's conditions for any possible experience, then perhaps it would be worthwhile to consider the possible relationship between "forms of life" and, e.g., Heidegger's existentials.

² L. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, p. 23.

³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, ed. James C. Klagge and Alfred Nordmann, Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis, 1993, p. 404.

⁴ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 23.

about the structure of language (including the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*)."¹

3.2. Communication acts and practices and Wittgenstein's description of language

On the basis of the above presentation of Wittgenstein's three main elements of language description (language game, family resemblances, and forms of life), a hypothesis can be formulated, according to which the language game is that which can be described as the act of communication. The communication act thus understood is also an action; it is woven into a specific socio-cultural context, consists in manipulation of signs, and requires participation from "players." If language can be compared to a game, then so can communication. If language is a form of life, then so is communication. Moreover, in accordance with the findings of the previous section of this article, it should be considered that the act of communication does not fulfil only one function (e.g., the transmission of information) but can have many functions and consist in, e.g., "...guessing riddles; making a joke; telling it (...); asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying."²

At this point, I should explain that when using the terms "act of communication" or "communicative action," I am not referring to the title concept of Jürgen Habermas (his work *The Theory of Communicative Action*). Habermas uses the term communicative action;³ however, he assigns a specific and rather narrow meaning to it: "When involved in communicative action, the participants are orientated towards mutual agreement. The motivation for cooperation, therefore, is not empirical but rational (...). The basic condition for communicative action is that participants achieve a common definition of the situation in which they find themselves."⁴ Defining a communicative action from the perspective of a consensus, however, may raise some doubts. It is quite easy to imagine a few sharp exchanges between arguing people, with no trace of striving for agreement, yet we recognize the incident as being part of communication. The question is whether the rationality of a communicative action, and

¹ Ibid., § 23.

² Ibid., § 23.

³ Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1981.

⁴ Jan Dietz, Guy Widdershoven, "Speech Acts or Communication Actions?" in: *Proceedings of the Second Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work*, Kluwer, Boston 1991, p. 239.

hence its design toward reaching an objective, must be identical to reaching an agreement or of success – in other words, does the communication have to be effective? A communication act can be described as intentional and thus rational, i.e., deliberate. However, whether or not the implementation of a communicative action has been accomplished, it need not be deemed on the basis of whether the objective, and even less a consensus, has been achieved. An oral exam is probably a communicative action, intentional and rational, but when a student receives a failing grade, it is difficult to say with certainty whether the intended objective has been achieved. Nevertheless, it does not mean that there was no communication between the student and the examiner.

A dispute with Habermas' understanding of communicative action is beyond the remit of this paper. I shall limit it only to state that I am using the same term – communicative action – but I give it a different, much broader meaning, equating it with Wittgenstein's language game. The game, as previously mentioned, is not reducible to any single function, such as obtaining a consensus. I therefore use the term communicative action to emphasize the pragmatic, peculiarly utilitarian nature of communication as an activity woven into the social and cultural context.

I assume that particular communication acts are instances of realization of a particular communication practice. By a particular¹ communication practice, I understand certain types of communication acts close to each other ("related" to each other) in terms of form, course, the theme directing the parties performing the practice, etc. One could say that a given communication practice is comprised of all the individual instances of its realization, which are of a specific type. A particular communication practice may be exemplified by writing letters (epistolary practice), persuading someone to see your point of view (the practice of argumentation), conducting discussions (dialogical practice), delivering public speeches (e.g., sermons), publishing, and reading the press, etc. As part of the example of epistolary practice, various communication activities can be noted, such as writing, sending, and reading letters.

I further assume that all the different types of particular communication practices form a whole, defined simply as the practice of communication (singular). The practice of communication may be

¹ "Particular" – i.e., always specific, such as "epistolary communication practice," "argumentative communication practice," etc.

recognized as one of the areas of symbolic culture and, therefore, as one of the types of social practices. Social practices may include religious, artistic, political, or communication practices. Analogously, in the case of, for example, artistic practice, we may indicate a number of specific artistic practices (musical, graphic, literary), and with respect to those, specific actions (such as writing a novel as an activity within the literary artistic practice).

The practice of communication is thus one amongst many social practices. By social practices, I understand all activities performed by people within a collective, which are not only biologically conditioned, and which are not only based on reflex or instinct. Thus, social practices (as types of action) can be distinguished from behavior. It is also plausible that social practices are related to specific rules (sets of rules), thanks to which individual actions can be combined in certain groups. A given social practice, therefore, is related to all the rules determining the method of performing activities characteristic of this social practice; the sum of the social practices is defined as culture – in the broad sense of the word.

How can the conceptual structure outlined above be compared to Wittgenstein's concept of language and language games?

The communication act can be compared to a language game. A particular communication practice could be the equivalent of a language game's "family." Language would be the equivalent of communication practices – as a set of all the various types of communication practices – whereas social practices (including communication) would, in Wittgenstein's dictionary, be referred to as "forms of life."

The number of examples of communication, or the kinds of language games, that could be specified is infinite. Wittgenstein's examples of language games cited earlier – "giving orders, and following them; describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurement (...); reporting an event; speculating about an event (...); play-acting (...); guessing riddles; making a joke; telling it (...); asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying"¹ – can be considered as examples of particular communication activities. However, there would be no possibility of indicating any one function that would be fulfilled by them all. For example, the function of communicative action, which consists in issuing commands, would be different from the function of telling jokes.

¹ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 23.

Wittgenstein maintains that language games form families. I assume that the equivalent of such a “family of language games” can be found in a given communication practice, e.g., the epistolary one, which is a “family” of communication activities “related” to each other in terms of function, methods of realization, reasons for employment, etc. Moreover, the particular “families of language games” (and analogously: types of communication practices) may be “related” to each other to a greater or lesser extent. For example, a “kinship” (but not identity) can be demonstrated between the practice of reading letters and that of reading newspapers. Wittgenstein also perceives similarities between types of games, e.g., football.¹

I have defined the sum of all kinds of specific communication practices as communication practice – one of the many social practices. Thus understood, communication practice would be a “family of families” analogous to language. According to Wittgenstein, language is a type of activity divisible into language games that are related to each other, thereby constituting a “form of life.” Thus, should the cultural-historical interpretation of the concept be adopted, social practices (including the practice of communication and its Wittgensteinian counterpart – language) would be among the forms of life, next to, e.g., religion, art, politics, etc.,

In this way, we create an analogy from the most basic elements (communication activity – the language game) to the most general ones (social practices – forms of life). Of course, to carry out such a comparison is only the beginning of a journey on a path that leads to the full application of Wittgenstein’s late philosophy to the study of communication. The path proves to be long and tortuous because there are numerous problems implied by this analogy. It is, nevertheless, worth the trouble.

4. Conclusions – Limitations and Prospects

The idea of associating one of the greatest contemporary philosophers with theoretical considerations of communication is certainly tempting, especially since communicology, as a fairly young discipline, would gain much from the support of established philosophical findings. However, there are questions and concerns, some of which I recall here.

Each attempt at using a theoretical position in research, for which it has not been prepared, entails the risk of over-interpretation, the possibility

¹ Ibid., § 66.

of imputation, or at least adapting it for the intended purpose. In deciding to demonstrate the analogy occurring between two related yet distinct theoretical issues, one should be aware that not all elements of the compared concepts will always fit together. In other words, one may have reckoned with the costs of the analogy in the form of specific problems arising from the comparative analysis. Assuming that Wittgenstein's way of thinking about language can be transferred to the theory of communication, some elements of his philosophy may be difficult to adapt to this new field.

The most serious issue, I think, has to do with Wittgenstein's assertion of the impossibility of defining language. The philosopher, as we saw earlier, precludes the possibility of determining a common feature that describes all that we call language. Indeed, his peculiar anti-theoretical attitude has been met with many critical voices. Since Wittgenstein assumes that there is no "essence of language," no common features that would validate an analytical definition, does the same also apply to communication? The first section of the article demonstrated that such a claim can be used as a tool to dispute the reductionist tendencies that consist in reducing all communication to one of its functions (e.g., data transmission). Perhaps the consequence of Wittgenstein's philosophy can be accepted – that communication activities have not one but an enormous number of different functions – and defining it by pointing to only one is just as mistaken as an attempt to define language by recalling only its descriptive function. However, should this consequence go further? Should it be accepted, after Wittgenstein, that it is not possible to indicate a single definition of communication? It would be a highly problematic consequence for all researchers of communication, just as the conclusions of the author of *Philosophical Investigations* are problematic for language theorists.

An attempt to apply Wittgenstein's thought to the study of communication thus encounters a considerable limitation. Although one could accept (and adopt) the criticism of reductionism, there is still a need for some (one or another) definition of communication that would allow us to determine which types of activities and practices we recognize as communication acts and practices. There is therefore a need to specify certain limits, which Wittgenstein himself wished could be abolished.

The problem may be possible to overcome, but not within a single paper. Wittgenstein's texts and their key interpretations should be carefully

analyzed to demonstrate either that his objections to definitions (of language or communication) are unjustified or that he allowed, if not for some form of analytical definition, at least a heuristic approximation allowing further theoretical consideration.

I think, however, that the prospects for the use of Wittgenstein's ideas in the study of communication are promising, that the limitations stemming from the comparison do not preclude the prospects, and that all doubts can be overcome and explained. The potential theoretical consequences of the proposed comparison between communication acts and language games can, to a great extent, be expanded. The consequence resulting from Wittgenstein's strong anti-mentalism (antipsychologism) seems to be particularly interesting (though also not free of controversy). With an emphasis on pragmatism (meaning as use), the author of *Philosophical Investigations* engages in a polemic with the conviction about the existence of specific mental states as parallel to speech acts. It is closely related to his criticism of so-called private language and the introspective method: language, in his view, happens only in the "public space" and not the "private space" of our psyche. He thereby attacks the Cartesian idea, which is deeply rooted in Western philosophy, about the subject and the mind as "closed" inside the body. If the comparison of communication acts to language games proves to be justified, the next highly interesting step would be to consider the relation between Wittgenstein's anti-mentalism and the theoretical models of communication that depict the process of communication as a transfer of mental content between the minds of individuals. An anti-mentalist theory of communication, inspired by Wittgenstein's arguments, would put pressure on the intersubjective area of social action and signs and not on the idea of "conjugated minds."

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« LA BELLE ÂME » ET LES BEAUX OBJETS DE NOTRE TEMPS

Ana BAZAC¹

Abstract: *We are surrounded by beautiful objects but by bad social relations, would one conclude after the evaluation of the state of our society. But the article does not deal with sociology of art, and lesser with political sociology. Its aim is to give an epistemological and ethical substantiation of an important problem in the present philosophical debates. After defining the objects and their functions, one shows a) the reciprocal compensation between the beautiful and the other functions of objects, b) the historical separation between the concepts, and c) the formation of the idea of unity and reciprocal translatability of the beautiful, the good and the true. The twofold and intertwining relation of the modern man and the world (on the one hand, it is able to consider only the individual, but not the concrete universal: the characterisations and the concepts, as the beautiful, have not in view the relations between domains, but only the objects considered individually/in an isolated way; on the other hand, the modern man cannot translate (reciprocally) neither the domains nor the concepts) does correspond to the concept – actually, to the epistemological model – of Hegel’s beautiful soul (belle âme/ die schöne Seele). The result is the monstrous (Sloterdijk’s translation of Kant’s sublime) visible in all the objects, despite their aesthetisation. The idea of unity (and thus, of reciprocal translatability, Kant) of the beautiful, the good and the true – and the critique of the disjunction between the aesthetics, the ethics and the search for the rational knowledge – are opposed to the monstrous in order to demonstrate the necessity of this reciprocal translation but also the real tendency of the present-day people to assume the competence to assess the beautiful beyond appearances.*

Keywords: *objects, Hegel (the beautiful soul), modernity/late modernity, disjunction and unity of the beautiful, the good and the true.*

Introduction

Nous sommes entourés de beaux objets mais de mauvaises relations sociales, on puisse conclure après ce qu’on évalue – même tacitement, comme on le fait habituellement – l’état de la société dont nous vivons. Mais l’article ne fait pas de la sociologie de l’art, encore moins de la sociologie politique. Son but est de donner un fondement gnoséologique et éthique à un problème très important dans les débats philosophiques de

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nos jours : celui du *rapport entre le monde écrasant des objets et leur valeur donnée par les hommes*.

En effet, le terrain est celui de l'ensemble des objets, y inclus les objets d'art, créés depuis l'apparition de la modernité comme *agglomération de l'artificiel*. Cette agglomération transforme l'ontologie traditionnelle de l'Être comme nature extérieure et achevée en ontologie « du néant ouvert aux projets »¹, donc ontologie de l'action humaine. Mais dans ce terrain et dans cette ontologie on découvre que les objets ont des facettes nocives pour l'homme. On a longtemps considéré les objets et leurs facettes nocives comme donnés objectifs, éternels et inévitables et on a glosé d'une manière plus ou moins efficace autour de ces donnés. C'est-à-dire la grande provocation a été de comprendre l'idée de la liaison entre les qualités des objets – en quelle mesure éternelles et donnant naissance aux figures de l'éternité humaine surprise dans son milieu artificiel – et les relations humaines. Mais ni l'histoire de la compréhension de cette idée n'est pas le but de cet article : le but est de mettre en évidence la détermination des relations sociales modernes sur le rapport entre l'homme et les objets construits par lui.

Ces relations se manifestent comme et mènent à un double rapport – mais entrelacé – de l'homme moderne à la réalité des objets.

D'une part, il est capable d'envisager seulement l'individuel, mais pas l'universel concret, donc ni la structure unitaire des contradictions considérées par lui comme abstraites et isolées. Ni les caractérisations des objets ou les concepts – comme celui du beau – ne considèrent pas les liaisons entre les domaines, mais seulement les objets confrontés isolément. Mais cette faiblesse de la pensée ayant lieu sur le plan gnoséologique se réverbère aussi dans le plan éthique. C'est l'autre part du rapport de l'homme moderne à la réalité : le fait qu'il ne peut pas traduire mutuellement les domaines, ni les concepts.

C'est la philosophie qui nous aide à comprendre tout ça : le concept de Hegel de *belle âme*, l'idée de l'unité – et donc de traductibilité mutuelle – du beau, du bien et du vrai, et les critiques de la disjonction entre esthétique, morale et recherche de la connaissance rationnelle sont

¹ Peter Sloterdijk, « L'heure du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art : sur l'interprétation philosophique de l'artificiel », premier chapitre du « L'heure du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art » (2000), dans *Essai d'intoxication volontaire* suivi de *L'heure du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art*, Traduit de l'allemand par Olivier Mannoni, Nouvelle édition revue et augmentée, Paris, Hachette Littératures, 2001, p. 232.

mentionnés dans cet ouvrage afin de démontrer la nécessité de cette traduction mutuelle et aussi la tendance réelle des hommes actuels de prendre en charge les compétences de juger le beau au-delà des apparences.

Après ce qu'on définit les objets et leurs fonctions, on relève : a) la fonction de compensation mutuelle entre le beau et les autres fonctions des objets, b) la séparation historique des concepts et c) la constitution de l'idée d'unité et traductibilité réciproque du beau, du bien et du vrai (surtout Kant). Cela veut dire qu'on ne peut pas juger le beau seulement en termes esthétiques, il est traductible en termes liés d'avec le vrai et le bon /le bien, il se réfère toujours à l'entier environnement de l'homme. Ainsi se dégage la responsabilité gnoséologique et morale envers la qualification de beau.

En discutant le problème de l'universel du beau, on montre que l'étude et la préoccupation *fragmentées* pour le beau constituent seulement des moments dans le saisissement du monde : ils sont inhérents, nécessaires, mais pas suffisants. La critique contre la séparation des fonctions des objets et la perspective fragmentée sur le beau est envisagée surtout du point de vue du couple *utile – beau*, opposé à la valeur de finalité (Kant) : on part de Nietzsche et on mentionne quelques idées de la pensée occidentale moderne (Heidegger), tout en mettant en relief les contradictions visibles concernant la beauté des objets modernes, par la lecture des auteurs renommés et des chercheurs contemporains perspicaces. Bref, relier le modèle gnoséologique de *la belle âme* avec le concept de *monstrueux* (Sloterdijk) – « le sublime » de Kant caractérisant la modernité galopante – paraît une belle solution ouvrant en même temps le champ du *possible opposé*.

La belle âme

Comme on le sait, *la belle âme* est la métaphore de Hegel pour la forme (et l'étape) de la conscience quand celle-ci – en se fixant directement sur l'être et, même si le plus sûr être est celui de l'individualité qui parle/ le sujet/ l'agent, donc même si la conscience a comme objet son propre existence (la conscience se constitue toujours face à un objet) – se pose moralement devant les autres hommes et, n'étant que la connaissance et la volonté du devoir, ne peut voir les contradictions multiples dans son être, entre soi et les autres, entre la simple connaissance du devoir abstrait et l'action d'un devoir déterminé, entre divers devoirs concrets. Ainsi elle

n'est pas capable de comprendre ni l'universel et sa constitution concrète ni l'humanité des autres hommes comme contenu de sa vérité. Dans *la belle âme*, le besoin de la certitude finit dans la splendeur nue de la conscience de soi absolue que cette âme ne veut pas déranger par la confrontant avec la réalité et les actions qui ne relèvent que des antagonismes et problèmes qui ne s'achèvent jamais. Non, *la belle âme* est celle des rêves de sa propre perfection, rêves dont l'origine est constituée par la conception du devoir abstrait et le credo que l'intention seule de la conscience serait suffisante afin de témoigner sa moralité : et donc *la belle âme* se consume plutôt en aspirations se perdant dans l'éther sans prendre forme¹.

S'il y a gens qui, en partant de la seule certitude représentée par leur être unique, ne comprennent pas les valeurs universelles immatérielles de l'humanité – en effet, ne sont pas du tout intéressés à propos d'autres personnes sauf de celles liées d'une manière ou d'autre de leur propre être – si la « loi universelle » reconnue est pour eux seulement celle en quoi *ils* se reconnaissent, s'ils réduisent les efforts et les valeurs concernant le « bien-être de l'humanité » par un délire de présomption selon lequel c'est seulement eux qui valent quelque chose, alors leur attitude même envers les *relations* humaines tout comme envers les *objets* a lieu par le même délire de présomption².

Leur perception est limitée. Et tout d'abord il y a une base métaphysique de cette limitation. Hegel avait parlé de l'intention de la conscience perceptrice qui veut saisir le *ceci*, « pris par elle comme Universel »³ simple qui est un Un différenciant de tous les autres objets et ainsi comme « le vrai ». L'individu devient déterminé / ses certitudes deviennent déterminées justement et seulement par les objets, parce que « l'objet est le vrai et l'universel, l'égal à soi-même, et que la conscience est au contraire le changeant et l'inessentiel »⁴. Alors, il peut certainement se tromper, appréhender l'objet inexactement et s'illusionner⁵, mais c'est sa subjectivité qui est l'auteur de cette fausseté, car les objets sont pour lui les repères stables et fixes, en donnant sa sécurité. C'est la raison pour laquelle son

¹ G W F Hegel, *La Phénoménologie de l'esprit*, Traduction de Jean Hyppolite, Paris, Aubier, 1941, Tome II, p. 186.

² G W F Hegel, *La Phénoménologie de l'esprit*, traduction Jean Hyppolite, Tome I, Paris, Aubier, 1939, pp. 302-311.

³ G W F Hegel, *La Phénoménologie de l'esprit*, traduction Jean Hyppolite, Tome I, p. 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁵ *Ibid.*

jugement de valeur concernant les objets part évidemment de ceux-ci mais est le résultat de « sa résolution, ou encore sa réflexion en soi-même hors du vrai »¹. C'est – peut-on le nier ? – le résultat de son pouvoir de considérer que « la chose est un Un proprement parce qu'elle s'oppose à d'autres »² et que « le vrai lui-même, la chose, se montre »³ plein(e) de renseignements sur la liaison profonde entre l'unicité et les multiplicités des objets et sa conscience libre et capable de s'enrichir par l'intériorisation des significations des objets. Et est-ce qu'on ne comprend mieux l'idée même de collectionner, et en tout cas la soif des riches pour les objets (et pour l'objet des objets, l'argent qui les garantie) qu'ils croient d'être l'unique source de leur propre valeur ? (Évidemment l'idée de collectionner ne se situe pas sur le même plan avec le désir d'avoir plus, même si ils ont une base métaphysique commune ; parce que dans l'intérêt de collectionner la conscience est libre en tendant à approfondir les significations déduites par elle-même et dans les arrangements qu'elle-même crée ; la conscience est donc active et contrôle les objets, elle veut faire quelque chose et elle fait : encore une fois, c'est elle qui construit le monde des significations, dans un sens même le monde des objets ; pendant que le désir d'avoir de plus en plus des objets est le signe d'une conscience passivement subordonnée devant un mouvement extérieur et chaotique face à lequel la seule solution et d'avoir, de consommer – donc pas de produire – des quantités de plus en plus grandes de ses éléments).

Mais le pouvoir de la conscience transforme les singularités sensibles aperçues – les objets de la perception – dans l'universel dont l'esprit a besoin. Toutefois c'est seulement un *universel sensible* et, parce que « l'objet, dans ses pures déterminabilités ou dans les déterminabilités qui devaient constituer son essentialité, est supprimé autant qu'il l'était dans son être sensible »⁴, ce sont des contradictions que se constituent dans la conscience : entre l'universel posé par la certitude apparue pendant la perception et, d'autre part, les déterminabilités concrètes de l'objet, entre les déterminations considérées comme essentielles et les autres, entre ces autres nécessaires et pas nécessaires.

Eh bien, si la conscience se trouve dans l'état de *la belle âme*, vivant dans l'atmosphère des illusions qu'elle se fasse d'elle-même (et du monde),

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

² *Ibid.*, p. 100.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

alors elle sépare les parties des contradictions et les considère comme abstraites ; bien sûr, elle veut résoudre les contradictions mais elle le fait du point de vue des abstractions séparées : ainsi, même la perception des objets est marquée par ce point de vue qui appauvrit la compréhension des relations entre l'homme et les objets. Et même si *la belle âme* se considère comme « l'entendement humain sain (bon sens) »¹, la compréhension même et aussi les objets qui, en effets, existent comme tels (c'est-à-dire avec les couleurs et les déterminations perçues et comprises) seulement pour et par la conscience des hommes, ont une étrange pauvreté : que la quantité des objets ne peut pas compenser. Le bon sens matérialiste de l'acquisition se considère comme garantie de la richesse, de la beauté et de la victoire : mais « Il est en général toujours le plus pauvre là où, à son avis, il est le plus riche »². Parce qu'il croit, par exemple, que seulement une des déterminabilités soit « le vrai »³ – même si puis il soutient l'opposé (et tombe en désespoir en sponsorisant de beaux événements) – et arrive à dériver toutes les choses de cette une.

Brièvement, *la belle âme* selon laquelle la douce moralité consisterait dans le regard unilatéral qui exclut tant l'universel que le concret des autres points de vue considère tout son environnement d'une manière limitée ou fragmentaire. Elle rompt les déterminations une de l'autre – comme elle rompt les déterminations de « l'essence » des choses, c'est-à-dire de la complexité de leurs significations, et ça justement parce qu'elle part de l'image abstraite et de « l'essence » vers la vie qu'elle compresse dans cette image de « l'essence » – et se réjouit d'elles dans leur isolement⁴. Et, en ce qui concerne le beau, *la belle âme* ne veut pas le traduire comme bon et comme vrai : parce qu'elle veut que le beau reste ancré dans le domaine de

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁴ On peut faire une connexion – comme d'ailleurs Hegel l'avait fait – avec la perspective empiriste de la philosophie et des sciences humaines, isolées de et refusant la métaphysique ; voir la critique de cette démarche chez Kojin Karatani, *Transcritique: On Kant and Marx* (2001), Translated by Sabu Kohso, MIT Press, 2005. Si la métaphysique est définie comme développement du rationalisme, alors on peut résumer « le relativisme sceptique, les multiples jeux de langage (ou consensus public), l'affirmation esthétique du présent, l'historicisme empirique, l'appréciation des subcultures (ou *cultural studies*)... (qui) avaient perdu leur plus subversives potences devenant ainsi la pensée dominante... doctrine officielle dans les plus conservatives institutions dans les pays développés... » comme « appréciation de l'empirisme (y inclus l'esthétisme) contre le rationalisme », p. X.

l'individuel et parce que seulement par la traduction le beau touche l'universel qu'elle ne désire pas. Parce que le beau comme synonyme (du bon et du vrai) raconte quelque chose de plus que l'objet et la relation entre l'homme et cet objet.

Les fonctions des objets et...

Les objets sont tout ce qui est fixé par la conscience humaine, et réalisé comme *nœud* (matériel ou virtuel, simplement existant d'une manière ou d'autre) *de significations* pour elle. La réalisation a lieu dans l'esprit, mais comporte aussi l'action créatrice de l'homme multipliant à l'infini les objets et constituant la nouvelle qualité de l'environnement, l'artificiel.

Il y a beaucoup de fonctions des objets, leur nombre étant le même que celui des objets, même si la philosophie arrive à déceler seulement quelques catégories.

Parmi ces catégories il y a celle esthétique et parmi les concepts tournoyés par la conscience esthétique est celui du beau. En effet, *le beau* est le concept le plus important car il contient dans le sous-texte la fonction de compensation pour toutes les fonctions des objets qui font mal à l'homme, pour tous les manques et pour tout le trop qui, tous, excèdent la capacité de résistance des êtres humains ; mais peut être le beau a la fonction de compensation aussi pour autres fonctions, bonnes ou neutres : tout comme ces autres fonctions puissent substituer le beau quand elles sont plus importantes pour ceux qui les jugent.

...leurs concepts et le beau

Et de ce phénomène se montre une idée qu'on ne peut pas négliger : certainement les différents concepts se constituent parce qu'on a besoin d'eux, c'est-à-dire l'histoire de l'expérience humaine a mis en évidence les facettes multiples des actions, des relations, des institutions, des situations dont les hommes devaient absolument les comprendre, donc caractériser, et face à lesquelles ils ne pouvaient pas se débrouiller sans les concepts. Aussi, les concepts apparaissent dans une première instance comme synonymes des concepts déjà existants, *comme si* les nouveaux-nés seulement traduiraient les premiers, au fond eux tous étant mutuellement substituables.

Mais les nouveaux concepts – comme tous les concepts – sont expérimentés et ainsi deviennent de plus en plus autonomes et le fait qu'ils sont plus ou moins équivalents avec autre concepts ne compte plus : tout simplement, on ne peut plus s'exprimer sans eux. Mais si les objets sont des entités unitaires (où leurs différentes facettes s'unissent), leurs fonctions (donc y inclus les fonctions des actions, des relations, des institutions, des situations) sont pas seulement mutuellement traductibles mais elles ont besoin de cette traduction / équivalence / médiation réciproque. Cet aspect de traductibilité/intelligibilité des objets a certainement lieu avec les concepts. N'est-ce pas, donc, que de nouveau on peut traduire/ définir les concepts liés d'avec un domaine par d'autres concepts relatives aux autres domaines ?

Un problème cardinal est donc la *séparation* des concepts – comme celui du beau –menant aux réflexions séparées sur les domaines (et sur les objets). Néanmoins entre concepts différents il y a des liaisons qui même les structurent en unités conceptuelles spéciales : voir le célèbre triptyque *beauté, bonté et vérité* (Platon) ou *Le Vrai, le Bon et le Beau* (Diderot), même si chaque concept peut être regardé et développé en manière isolée : parce que chacun a la possibilité d'exister sans les autres.

Le problème posé ici regarde quelque chose de plus et suggéré par Kant : l'appartenance commune du beau, du bien/ du bon et du vrai dans l'esprit humain comme sentiments et idées ayant comme critère « la beauté et la dignité de la nature humaine »¹ et donc leur *traductibilité mutuelle* – évidemment, seulement limitée –. Aristote attirait déjà l'attention que le bien/ le bon ne puisse pas rester dans une seule catégorie si il se réfère aussi à la substance qu'à la qualité, à la quantité, au temps etc.² De plus, il peut être aimé et poursuivi *pour lui-même* ou comme *moyen* pour d'autres buts³. Et encore : même si le prédicat bon peut se lier de beaucoup des choses, et les hommes les aiment toutes (évidemment, en différentes proportions), ce qui compte pour attribuer ce prédicat à une chose ou une autre c'est justement ce qui compte le plus pour les gens ; et maintenant nous nous

¹ Emanuel Kant, *Remarques touchant les Observations sur le sentiments du beau et du sublime* (1764). Traduites, introduites et annotées par Brigitte Geonget, Préface de Bernard Bourgeois, Paris, Vrin, 1994, p. 94.

² Aristote, *Éthique à Nicomaque*, Traduction par Jean Tricot (1959), Éditions Les Échos du Maquis, 2014, 1096b, p. 25.

³ *Ibid.*

écartons de « la fin en vue de quoi tout le reste est effectué »¹ (le bonheur), et jugeons par une translation : si le principe est *ce qui compte le plus* et si on ne reste pas dans le ciel des abstractions mais on se déplace parmi les infinies activités et préoccupations concrètes des hommes, alors c'est clair que la qualification de bon / beau / vrai est donné lorsqu'ils sont le plus intéressés de problèmes et de résolutions (actions, créations) d'ordre éthique, *ou* esthétique, *ou* de la connaissance. Poursuivant le beau etc., les hommes construisent des réalités nouvelles, des objets (y compris des objets idéaux, des institutions, des relations), des significations qui tendent à répondre à leur intention et paraissent devenir autonomes de tous les autres objets. Les savants les étudient comme tels (et il le faut, évidemment), mais les objets n'ont jamais une seule signification et une seule fonction, et font partie du chœur permanent et inachevé des objets, des réalités érigées par les hommes qui, en vérité, ne sont pas si obtus de ne les pas considérer toutes ensemble dans leur pratique quotidienne : même si, comme étapes de pensée et comme techniques, ils passent par la concentration sur les objets isolés.

Enfin, si le beau est seulement un concept subordonnant l'environnement afin de voir la réalité dans les termes de ce concept, ou autrement, si le beau est une signification posée *par l'homme dans les objets* (Kant) – et mettant ainsi en évidence les nouveaux objets, les ceux-là beaux – alors c'est lui qui est *responsable*² pour la beauté et la laideur. Et si c'est vrai pour les significations esthétiques, alors c'est vrai aussi pour toutes les significations, pour tous les objets, pour toutes leurs fonctions. Et même si la théorie met en parenthèse³ des significations, des objets, des fonctions, afin qu'elle comprenne mieux ceux dont elle se concentre dans un moment ou l'autre, le principe de responsabilité ne peut pas être mis en parenthèse.

Le but de ce chapitre a été donc de montrer que le beau ne peut pas être jugé seulement en termes esthétiques, qu'il est traductible en termes liés d'avec le vrai et le bon /le bien, qu'il se réfère toujours à l'entier environnement de l'homme, et de souligner ainsi la responsabilité gnoséologique et morale envers la qualification de beau.

¹ *Op. cit.*, 1097a, p. 27.

² C'est justement du *constructivisme* kantien (la compréhension des concepts comme significations mis par les hommes) que vient la responsabilité des concepts (et évidemment, des hommes).

³ Kojin Karatani, *op. cit.*

L'universel du beau

Comme on le sait depuis Kant, il n'y a pas de l'universel dans les jugements esthétiques, même si quelques critères seraient nécessaires dans l'approche des goûts, ou mieux, dans le développement des goûts. Ces critères se subordonnent au principe que le beau – en effet, des différents beaux objets – plaît universellement, sans concept mais apprécié dans un moment historique, ou mieux, dans un cadre spatial- temporel, y inclus par l'aide de l'appréciation générale ayant lieu dans ce cadre. Cette appréciation générale, donnant des règles pour chaque sujet expérimentant le plaisir ou le déplaisir, dénote – encore une fois, sans concept – la *nécessité* de considérer les objets selon elle.

L'image kantienne du beau est, on l'a dit maintes fois, contradictoire, si elle oppose le beau/ le jugement esthétique (subjectif, particulier) à la logique (à l'universel et à l'objectif) et en même temps la suppose. Mais cette image n'a pas été seulement l'expression des contradictions *réelles* du domaine esthétique – se situant entre la connaissance et le désir, le dernier appartenant déjà au monde des actions¹ –, n'a pas seulement pavé le chemin vers le relativisme épistémologique selon lequel le jugement esthétique comme celui strictement cognitif ne sont que des décrypteurs des différences dans le développement humain (pas un miroir fidèle de la réalité), mais aussi elle est une prémisse *sine qua non* pour la compréhension du beau en termes du bien (surtout), donc pour la traductibilité mutuelle du beau et du *bien*. Ce dernier est apprécié aussi – la morale étant le troisième niveau de manifestation du plaisir² – pendant que même la beauté apparaisse pas seulement dans sa forme *libre* de tout concept mais aussi dans sa forme *dépendante* de ce concept et des idéaux de perfection, et encore dans sa forme de sublime qui n'est pas seulement quelque chose de l'esthétique mais aussi de l'éthique.

Une conclusion qui se dégage de la construction kantienne est encore une fois la *nécessité de lier les appréciations esthétiques à celles éthiques (et gnoséologiques)* : les objets, y inclus ceux d'art, ont certainement une raison esthétique, celle d'exprimer dans une manière sensorielle la capacité

¹ Le désir c'est toujours celui de faire quelque chose, car il est l'autre face de l'*action*, c'est-à-dire la manifestation de la persévérance de l'être (du *conatus* de Spinoza, nous a rappelé Frédéric Lordon, *Capitalisme, désir et servitude : Marx et Spinoza*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2010).

² C'est-à-dire *aussi* du plaisir, parce que la vie éthique est subordonnée à et réglée par la raison.

humaine (et des capacités humaines concrètes, des individus précis ou anonymes) de sentir et de connaître. Mais ces objets – et peut être pas chacun d’eux, mais le complexe des objets/ le complexe de l’environnement, c’est-à-dire des fonctions et des significations dans lesquelles un objet quelconque est intégré – ont aussi et décrivent la raison éthique et celle logique, comme les fonctions et les significations éthique et logique¹ données par les hommes dans leur « vie de la pratique » à la fois active et contemplative², supposant donc leur prise de position, c’est-à-dire le permanent dépassement, impure mais d’une manière inhérente impure, des conditions de possibilité de l’existence humaine.

Si on rompt la signification esthétique d’autres significations, alors on se cantonne dans l’individuel et dans l’esthétique en soi. Or, l’étude et la préoccupation *fragmentées* pour le beau constituent seulement des moments dans le saisissement du monde : ils sont inhérents, nécessaires, mais pas suffisants. Les gens – et surtout après leur expérience – ont plutôt une perspective « architectonique »³, visible dans la tendance de la philosophie. Mais si la vision intégrative, architectonique, considère la méta- structure des choses, la liaison des fonctions mutuellement explicables, comme le véritable *poiesis*, comment peut-on expliquer la rupture réelle des fonctions des objets et la persistance de la tradition « neutre » dans l’analyse du beau ?

Beaucoup de critiques concernant la séparation des fonctions des objets

Le présent article n’envisage pas de souligner les raisons sociales et les explications sociologiques des états mentionnés dans la question ci-dessus. Mais seulement des éléments explicatifs faisant partie de la couche « super structurelle » des idées envisagées, sous un angle plutôt épistémologique.

Il y a plus d’un siècle, Nietzsche avait écrit amèrement que la modernité avait changé la hiérarchie des fonctions poursuivies par les gens : et si *l’utilité* est devenue plus importante que le beau – et même la

¹ Hegel avait mis en évidence cette liaison par l’idée de *contenu* de la beauté.

² Peter Sloterdijk, *The Art of Philosophy. Wisdom as Practice* (2010), Translated by Karen Margolis, New York, Columbia University Press, 2012.

³ Kojin Karatani, *Architecture as Metaphor; Language, Number, Money* (1983), Translated by Sabu Kohso, MIT Press, (1995), Third printing 2001.

science avait été mise au service des fins mesquines, c'est-à-dire rompue de valeurs éthiques qui promeuvent l'homme libre et créateur, « comme la demi-barbarie à côté de la culture »¹ – alors la simplification et la « barbarie »² arrivent. La solution est « le gai savoir », la subordination de la raison et de la réflexivité envers les valeurs dites ci-dessus : par le moyen de la critique.

D'ailleurs l'entière pensée occidentale moderne avait été marquée par la critique de la prééminence des fonctions utiles – et ainsi lucratives – sur celles esthétiques et gratuites. À cause du modèle ontologique de l'Être achevé de la nature³/ du stable / du critère de la sûreté pour la compréhension, l'artificiel, la technique (les moyens et les résultats) et même l'art avaient été considérés comme dégradant l'Être originel, comme s'opposant à lui. Et on pourrait apporter la cause de cette cause et de la critique résultante : le manque de la perspective sociologique de la philosophie. En effet, dans le 20^e siècle déjà, on aurait pu comprendre que : 1) l'artificiel n'est pas seulement opposé à la nature, mais il est aussi sa continuation ; cette manière de penser n'aurait pas pu abolir la nécessaire différenciation ontologique entre la nature et l'artificiel, mais simplement elle aurait pu mettre le problème du point de vue du *telos* humain ; et 2) le caractère nocif de l'artificiel n'est pas ontologiquement originel – du moment qu'on se réfère à la nocivité des objets apparus par et après la révolution industrielle – mais a été lié d'avec les relations capitalistes. Mais justement parce que la critique sociale/ l'analyse sociologique avait été écartée par les philosophes, le modèle ontologique avait continué l'opposition nature – artificiel : qui était le cadre explicatif des problèmes et des contradictions, et aussi du pessimisme⁴.

¹ Nietzsche, *Le gai savoir* (1887), Traduction par Henri Albert, Les Échos du Maquis, 2011, § 103, p. 105.

² *Ibid.*, 28. p. 68.

³ Peter Sloterdijk, « L'heur du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art : sur l'interprétation philosophique de l'artificiel », pp. 223-231.

⁴ Souvenons-nous pas seulement de Heidegger, mais aussi de Günther Anders, *L'obsolescence de l'homme. Sur l'âme à l'époque de la deuxième révolution industrielle* (1956), trad. fr. Ch. David, Paris, Éditions de l'Encyclopédie des Nuisances/ Ivrea, 2002. Selon Anders, l'homme moderne est devenu inférieur au monde des objets, ayant ainsi une « honte prométhéenne » devant eux ; la logique technique déterminerait irrévocablement la sort de l'homme, la bombe atomique du 1945 ouvre une étape historique dont la signification est celui du délai de la destruction possible de l'homme.

La contradiction la plus visible concernant la beauté des objets modernes

Les expériences esthétiques des hommes ont lieu dans une certaine atmosphère de l'universel dans chaque étape temporelle ; elles dénotent et mènent à une certaine universalisation des valeurs, y inclus éthiques, dans chaque étape temporelle. À l'inverse, les paradigmes éthiques et, plus, culturels génèrent une certaine manifestation des expériences et des concepts esthétiques. Par exemple, l'Illuminisme du 18^e siècle et le nouveau Illuminisme de l'IT ont conduit vers la séparation du beau et du bien et à la perte de la pensée éthique esthétique / de l'esthétique éthique¹.

Le développement de la modernité – donc y inclus la post-modernité – a mis dans l'avant-garde de la société un couple de concepts/ de valeurs qu'on ne soupçonne pas coexister fraternellement : *l'utilité* et *le plaisir* esthétique. Mais on contredise immédiatement mon étonnement, car tout le monde connaît la valeur utile de l'esthétique des objets faits pour être vendus. C'est dans les décennies récentes que plus les objets répondent aux critères de « l'économie des singularités » (les objets sont « bons » lorsqu'ils sont conformes aux engagements en valeur – y inclus ou bien surtout dans les formes éthiques et esthétiques – car les singularités sont les objets qui ont de la valeur pour l'homme présent selon ses interprétations/ actions de donner des significations particulières qui transcendent la simple utilité²), plus ils sont désirés, vendus, connus, et circulent.

Mais justement parce que le beau existe dans cette configuration sociale, il a les significations générées par la *coexistence des valeurs* (d'ailleurs comme toujours : les valeurs esthétiques et éthiques ont eu les spécificités de « leur temps », pour le dire brièvement). Cette coexistence est une raison de plus de considérer leur traductibilité mutuelle. En tout cas (dans le sillage d'Aristote), le caractère concrète de telle ou telle coexistence des valeurs est donné par une valeur spéciale : celle de *finalité*, qui traverse et marque toutes les valeurs et l'entière structure des relations humaines. La finalité reflète et représente les *relations de pouvoir* / de domination – soumission et, même s'il n'y a pas une seule finalité, les *telos* des objets suit surtout la finalité dominante : ils la transfigurent.

¹ Masahiro Hamashita, « Extending Meanings of Aesthetics and the Ethical Moment », *Contemporary philosophy. A new survey*, Edited by G. Fløistad, Vol. 9, *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2007, pp. 25-40.

² Lucien Karpik, *L'économie des singularités*, Paris, Gallimard, 2007.

Cette situation de la finalité des objets (donc y inclus des valeurs, des institutions et des relations) est visible dans la pratique quotidienne. D'une part, il y a la finalité imposée d'en haut, dans une *stratégie* qui présuppose que les objets seraient utilisés par l'entière population selon les « instructions d'usage » attachées aux objets déjà dans leur projection. Concrètement la valeur instituée des objets serait celle permise par le paradigme dominant : par exemple, le beau, le bien et le vrai seraient subordonnés à l'utile du marché. Mais la créativité de la majorité subjuguée se manifeste aussi par sa *tactique* quotidienne (même routinière) d'usage dans laquelle on part des objets donnés – donc on *braconne* sur le territoire culturel existant – mais on utilise/ consomme ces objets dans une manière inconsciente de résistance aux représentations dominantes, faisant une espèce de *bricolage* avec le matériel existant¹. C'est – on pourrait emprunter le concept développé par Catherine Malabou² – la capacité de changer la forme des objets qui montrent ainsi leur *plasticité* : comme si les hommes seraient des moules et comme si les objets mêmes ne seraient pas finis une fois pour toujours mais malléables. Et de cette manière de voir une double conséquence se profile : les hommes – y inclus ceux extérieurs à la classe qui donne le modèle dominant des objets – perdent leur position passive devant les objets (n'oublions pas : devant des institutions et des relations aussi), et d'autre part les objets se manifestent *à la fois* comme déterminants de la vie humaine et comme subordonnés à elle. La finalité des objets est donc double aussi : car les objets, au fond transformés par le consume subalterne, conduisent à une autre logique que celle imposée d'en haut ; par le « faisant faire » (M. de Certeau) de ceux d'en bas l'ordre des choses dominant arrive à fonctionner dans un registre différent. En ce sens, la tactique est « l'art des faibles », qui oppose à la cohérence de la stratégie un corpus d'innombrables « mouvements browniens » (M. de Certeau) devant lesquels le futur n'a plus la forme d'une unique flèche³.

¹ Michel de Certeau, *L'Invention du Quotidien*. Vol. 1, *Arts de Faire*, Paris, Union générale d'éditions 10-18, 1980.

² Catherine Malabou, *L'Avenir de Hegel : Plasticité, Temporalité, Dialectique*, Paris, Vrin, 1996.

³ Le futur a été conçu selon le modèle de la flèche orientée en avant dans le libéralisme (utopique) fondant le passage vers la modernité institutionnalisée. C'est après cet événement que le nouveau système avait commencé à montrer son essence contradictoire qui a mené à une difficulté grandissante des interprétations philosophiques de conserver et le sens du modèle de la flèche (Kierkegaard, Nietzsche) et le modèle comme tel (Marx).

Il résulte que l'esthétique des objets se présente de manière contradictoire. Plus la finalité dominante est restrictive et ainsi anti-esthétique, plus il paraît qu'on soit hanté par le beau. Et dans cette obsession le beau paraît *gratuit*, suivi pour lui-même, et séparé du reste des valeurs, y inclus d'utilité se manifestant en différentes manières : voir le tapage autour de la décoration¹ mais aussi la prolifération des objets-kitsch², en effet n'embellissant pas la vie s'ils ne font que substituer les objets déjà habitués des gens – déjà existants et ayant leur beauté – en vue de stimuler les achats ; voir aussi, la médiation esthétique et savante des emballages entre les intentions des vendeurs qui se passent de tout *telos* esthétique³ et les acheteurs ; mais pourquoi pas aussi les objets létaux (comme les chars de combat⁴ mais pas seulement) faits avec le plus grand soin pour ne pas violenter le sens esthétique des utilisateurs ?⁵

D'autre part, il paraît que rien de gratuit n'a plus de valeur si les objets ne sont pas intégrés dans le système de « hyper- marché »⁶. La recherche de Dionysos⁷, du désordre des sentiments qui pourrait mener au bonheur mieux que la raison, n'est qu'apparent : parce qu'il est totalement subordonné au froide quête rationnelle du profit. L'esthétisation de l'approche des objets est un argument des pessimistes qui proclame « la barbarie esthétique ». Mais malgré tout, l'optimisme ne peut pas être ignoré : c'est justement la hyper- consommation qui aurait enrichi les capacités esthétiques des gens, la sensibilité au beau au-delà de toute perspective utilitariste, le besoin d'expériences esthétiques comme

¹ Analysé, par exemple, par Catherine Geel, « L'ordre sans qualité : du décor et de la décoration », en *Fresh Théorie*, Paris, Éditions Léo Scheer, 2005, pp. 97-113.

² Eberhard Wahl, Abraham Moles, « Kitsch et objet », *Communications*, 13, 1969, pp. 105-129.

³ Catherine Grandclément et Franck Cochoy, « Dévoiler ou emballer ? Socio-scénographie du packaging », en *Fresh Théorie*, pp. 123-145.

⁴ Ian Liebenberg, "Penetrating global consciousness: Art, killing as art, art as subversion, peace and the inversion of speed and power", *Cogent Art & Humanities*, DOI 10.1080/23311983.2015.1015334, Published 28 April 2015.

⁵ Mais peut-on ignorer la permission bienveillante de la direction de l'armée américaine pendant la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale afin que les aviateurs des bombardiers puissent peindre sur les fuselages des figures et des mots renforçant leurs sentiments tant esthétiques que moraux ?

⁶ Concernant l'art, voir Nathalie Moureau, Dominique Sagot-Duvaurox, *Le marché de l'art contemporain*, Paris, Éd. La Découverte, coll. Repères, 2006.

⁷ Daniel Bell, *Les contradictions culturelles du capitalisme* (1976), Paris, PUF, 1979, pp. 138-154.

ingrédient du bonheur¹. En effet, on ne peut parler d'une manière unilatérale ni de la barbarie éthique induite par cette société, justement parce qu'elle relance les interrogations éthiques² : ne peut-on donc penser au revirement du beau au lieu du sublime, si c'est le premier concept qui « inspire le sentiment moral » parce qu'il est lié de l'idée et du plaisir de l'*harmonie* (et pas de la disproportion et de l'excessif comme le sublime³) et ainsi il est partagé universellement⁴ ?

Les phénomènes d'exacerbation de la consommation à cause de la mode des objets se manifeste en deux manières : l'*esthétisation des objets* – suggérant que les objets de consommation seraient *comme* des œuvres d'art⁵ – et la direction artistique de *ressembler* les objets d'art aux objets quotidiens. Cette dernière tendance comporte le danger de la dissolution du clivage entre l'art et les industries quotidiennes⁶. Il s'agit de la *banalisation* des objets d'art comme « choses », c'est-à-dire comme extérieurs en quelque sorte au primordial ordre du beau mis par le sujet dans ces objets. Non pas parce que les objets d'art qui avaient assumé la forme/

¹ Gilles Lipovetsky, *Le bonheur paradoxal. Essai sur la société d'hyperconsommation*, Paris, Gallimard, 2006, p. 320.

Mais voir aussi George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society : An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life* (1993), Pine Forge Press ; Revised edition, 1996, où le processus de *McDonaldization* crée une image fautive du consommateur heureux et du capitalisme de succès, par la rationalisation du consume et l'instrumentalisation de la culture dans les « cathédrales du consume ». Sa signification est que, en achetant tout, on s'unie avec le système, on fait part de lui. Ce processus s'est propagé dans tous les parties du système (université, santé, culture), ayant comme effets au niveau de la psychologie des gens : l'impatience, l'attention limitée, la superficialité, la capacité limitée de voir au-delà de l'*instrumentalisation* des objets et des fragments de réalité entourant les êtres humains.

² Gilles Lipovetsky, *ibid.*, p. 321.

³ Peut-être on peut lier les significations de ce concept d'avec la consommation des objets considérés dans un univers d'exclusivités par le célèbre pourcentage 1% du monde.

⁴ Jean-François Lyotard, nous souvenant l'opinion du Kant : Jean-François Lyotard, *Leçons sur l'Analytique du sublime (Kant, critique de la faculté de juger, §§ 23-29)*, Paris 1991.

⁵ Et bien incluant dans les objets de consommation des reproductions des œuvres d'art.

⁶ Sven Lütticken, « Art and Thingness, Part I: Breton's Ball and Duchamp's Carrot », *e-flux*, 2/2010, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/art-and-thingness-part-one-breton%E2%80%99s-ball-and-duchamp%E2%80%99s-carrot/>.

Mais voir aussi que la difficulté de préserver la distinction entre art contemporain et objets quotidiens provient aussi du présent rôle secondaire de la critique d'art qui devrait apporter des jugements et des critères, Jean-Luc Chalumeau, *Les théories de l'art. Philosophie, critique et histoire de l'art de Platon à nos jours*, 5^e éd., Paris, Vuibert, 2009, p. 145 : « Si la critique est paralysée, la théorie de l'art ne sert à rien et l'histoire de l'art est elle-même entravée ».

l'apparence des objets quotidiens ne seraient pas des objets sémiotiques¹, des signes transmettant des significations faisant partie de l'univers artistique. Mais la fonction sémiotique ne se dégage pas facilement si la fonction d'utilité et celle d'échange sont puissantes : même si la fonction sémiotique elle-même arrive à créer des valeurs d'échange².

Ainsi l'objet d'art *readymade* (voir Duchamp) oscille entre le statut de chose et celui de signe, n'étant pas le quasi-objet épistémologique (opposé au quasi-sujet et considéré par Bruno Latour comme le sens épistémologique de l'objet en même temps dé-fétichisé comme nature pure et comme construction humaine pure³), mais, faisant partie de la même « réification » (Lukács) que tous les objets, contribue supplémentamment à la diminution et de la créativité de l'homme et de sa capacité signifiante. Toutefois, on peut penser au *readymade* comme manière de chercher des manières de créer des objets d'art et des objets quotidiens à la fois, et ainsi de développer et la créativité de l'homme et sa capacité signifiante.

De toute façon, les signes manifestés comme œuvres d'art n'ont pas seulement des significations esthétiques, mais aussi sociales et politiques. Parce qu'ils sont intégrés dans des compliqués réseaux sociaux et racontent sur de nombreux phénomènes ayant lieu ici. L'art *readymade* et l'implication des gens qui ne sont pas des artistes dans le monde de la création artistique, une autre face de la tendance de la disparition de la démarcation objets d'art – objets quotidiens, rendent compte par exemple de la place de l'*entertainment* dans la stratégie dominante et aussi dans les tactiques des gens ordinaires afin qu'ils puissent résister. Si dans la stratégie, l'*entertainment* est seulement une face – simplifiée, brutalisée et agressive – dans la structure des actions de contrôle opérationnel de la majorité de la population (disons métaphoriquement le reste de 99%)⁴, il est à la fois un jalon et un moyen d'être dépassé, y inclus par la jonction des sentiments esthétiques et éthiques, dans les *tactiques* de la population.

¹ Voir Catherine Geel, Catherine Levy, *100% India*, Paris, Seuil, 2005.

² Jean Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Paris, Gallimard, 1972; aussi Violaine Appel, Lylette Lacôte-Gabrysiak et Delphine Le Nozach, sous la dir., *La Mise en scène des produits et des marques. Représentations, significations, publics*, Paris, Éd. L'Harmattan, 2015.

³ Bruno Latour, *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes : Essais d'anthropologie symétrique*, Paris, La Découverte, 1991.

⁴ Alain de Benoist, *Michael Jackson*, 12 de julio de 2009,

<http://antagonistas.blogia.com/2009/071201-michael-jackson-por-alain-de-benoist.php>.

Encore des aspects criants de la relation beau – utile (et ainsi beau – bien) : l'utilisation de l'art comme objet de thésaurisation, similaire en quelque sorte à la monnaie – l'objet des objets, le plus utile produit parce qu'il achète tous les autres objets (et beaucoup des sujets) – ; le baptême des objets (institutions) nocifs et porteurs de la valeur de destruction, comme « arts » et comme ayant un significatif caractère esthétique.

Et cependant : la continuation du bricolage quotidien des gens ordinaires ne pouvait pas être qu'un aspect de la tendance de destruction de la séparation absolue entre l'art et les occupations non- artistiques, préfigurant la *confluence* entre les artistes – déjà dé-professionnalisés par l'avant-garde artistique – et les gens communs, entre les œuvres d'art et les objets quotidiens de la vie. On sait que, par la réduction et simplification extrêmes, l'avant-garde avait promu un « universalisme faible » justement pour faire face au changement rapide qui détruit la persistance de la valeur considérée des œuvres d'art. Mais justement cette opération des artistes, appréciée seulement par les artistes (car – c'est moi qui ajoute – le public profane a besoin d'un universalisme fort), a permis la constitution d'un nouveau phénomène artistique : le développement des réseaux de socialisation où les *producteurs* des textes, des images, des significations y inclus esthétiques sont *en même temps les spectateurs*. Tandis que dans l'art de masse antérieure à l'époque IT, il y avait une séparation totale entre les producteurs et les spectateurs. Et si on sait bien qu'on ne lit/ voit/ goûte les productions des réseaux que seulement s'il y a déjà une liaison entre les productions et les préoccupations et manifestations des lecteurs et spectateurs, alors il est clair qu'on ne puisse pas être spectateur sans être producteur. Sur les réseaux, les produits sont d'un niveau bas de visibilité artistique, se ressemblant à la vie : mais alors, et si la seule solution pour être vu, connu, apprécié – ce que les artistes veulent avant tout – est de répéter la production, de continuer, ce phénomène expose la caractéristique *transitoire* de la société d'aujourd'hui et son *manque de temps* : rempli et contrebalancé par des productions qui demande très, très peu de temps¹. La même transformation des spectateurs passifs devant une production théâtrale (donc de masse) en individus capables de raconter, de traduire et d'interpréter activement leurs propres histoires, de donner leurs propres significations et ainsi construire leurs propres manières de comprendre le

¹ Boris Groys, *The Weak Universalism*, *e-flux*, 4, 2010, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-weak-universalism/>.

monde¹. Est-ce que de cette adéquation naîtra un nouvel art d'universalisme fort ? C'est le temps qui résoudra cette question : parce que, et justement à cause de leur traductibilité mutuelle, les problèmes esthétiques ne dépendent jamais seulement de techniques et de théories d'art, mais de *l'ensemble des rapports de l'homme aux choses*². En cette perspective, même si le beau est une représentation, la séparation des logiques objectives extra-esthétiques des objets ne fait qu'apporter et maintenir le beau décrété loin de la sensibilité des hommes, et ainsi assimilé aux illusions triviales et savantes plutôt inutiles.

Enfin, la réciprocité des valeurs (l'esthétique et l'éthique) est visible dans ce qu'on appelle *l'art critique* (et plus, *le discours critique*). Au contraire à la théorie bien répandue que l'art, y inclus les discours, a une grande capacité formative de la conscience de l'homme, on a observé (c'était déjà Rousseau) que les œuvres et les discours critiques mobilisent seulement quand on est déjà convaincu. Mais la théorie mentionnée avait généré le quasi prédominance de l'art mobilisateur et de l'art critique comme direction paradigmatique de la modernité tardive du 20^{ième} siècle jusqu'à les années 70. Toutefois, leur influence est aujourd'hui plutôt mineure : ce n'est pas la propagande qui induit les pensées critiques, mais « le documentaire » qui montre la réalité au-delà des « interprétations des experts » qui parlent justement pour cacher les choses. Les choses ne sont pas belles, mais elles sont imbues de significations éthiques : et les experts les écartent dans des *talk shows* interminables. Et si l'opposition entre parole et image fait partie du discours dominant parce qu'il considère que seulement les experts savent penser et qu'ils doivent « traduire » les situations réelles pour les gens ordinaires – tout en considérant que « les masses » pourraient comprendre et réagir (d'une manière rangée) seulement aux images mythiques et édulcorées – la philosophie met en évidence la capacité universelle de penser³.

¹ Jacques Rancière, «The Emancipated Spectator » (2004), *Artforum*, March 2007, pp. 271-280.

² Qui sont résistantes aux représentations conçues à leur sujet et qui montrent, surtout avec le développement de la modernité, que la hégémonie des représentations est dialectiquement liée à la matérialité des choses, cf. Neil Cummings, « Reading Things : The Alibi of Use », Introduction to *Reading Things*, (Neil Cummings ed.), London, Chance Books, 1993.

³ Le philosophe Jacques Rancière : «La parole n'est pas plus morale que les images», le 15 décembre 2008, <http://www.telerama.fr/idees/le-philosophe-jacques-ranciere-la-parole-n-est-pas-plus-morale-que-les-images,36909.php>.

Au lieu de conclusion : « la belle âme » et les beaux objets de notre temps

Qui conçoit une telle apparence des objets ? L'homme avec une « belle âme », qui sépare les choses et les objets et pense que le mal et le mauvais des uns pourraient être compensés par le beau et le gratuit en soi.

Le modèle gnoséologique de « la belle âme » décrit des manières de penser et d'actionner qui sont tout à fait « monstrueux ». En effet, des choses étonnantes, condamnables, dépravées, niant absolument toutes les illusions et belles paroles « ont été provoquées par des acteurs humains, entrepreneurs, techniciens, artistes et consommateurs...intégré(s) par une sorte de complicité à ce monstrueux de nouveau type »¹. Tous ces gens ne sont pas/ plus intéressés ni même d'apparences pour cacher ce monstrueux. Mais chez Kant, les apparences tiennent du beau, le sublime est au-delà du beau : il est « informe », arrêtant la possibilité que la forme esthétique – et la forme des choses en général – acquiert l'état de plénitude / leur réelle finalité. Le sublime est une présentation négative, « violant l'imagination »², quelque chose de « hideux »³ : un état subjectif qu'on peut appeler *Ungeheure*, « monstrueux » dans l'interprétation de Sloterdijk.

Malgré l'esthétisation, les objets de la modernité manifestent et transmettent le monstrueux fait par les hommes : les objets, comme quelque chose d'« incommensurable et supra-objectif »⁴ font parti de la décision de « renoncer à la possibilité d'avoir un alibi »⁵.

« La belle âme » ne comprend pas les significations ontologiques de la création, c'est-à-dire pour l'être humain en général, pour l'être humain des créateurs et pour l'être humain des destinataires. En rompant les apparences esthétiques de la valeur éthique et de celle de la rationalité, pas seulement qu'elle subordonne la sensibilité esthétique aux fonctions restrictives et évanescences comme celle de l'utilité, ou mieux de la marchandise, mais elle subordonne et introduit toutes les valeurs et fonctions dans le monstrueux qui dissout toute sensibilité et volonté de

¹ Peter Sloterdijk, « L'heur du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art : sur l'interprétation philosophique de l'artificiel », p. 205.

² Emanuel Kant, *Critique de la faculté de juger* (1790), Traduit et introduit par Alexis Philonenko, Paris, Vrin, 1992, §23, p. 119.

³ Ibid., p. 121.

⁴ Peter Sloterdijk, « L'heur du crime et le temps de l'œuvre d'art : sur l'interprétation philosophique de l'artificiel », p. 207.

⁵ Ibid., p. 206.

regarder les actions humaines et les fonctions des objets sous l'angle de leur finalité humaine. (Ici « la belle âme » est la métaphore de l'idéologie dominante, bien sûr). Si les objets n'ont pas un seul sens – d'être beaux, utiles (mais à qui et pour quoi faire / à quelle raison ?) etc. – et pas à tous les hommes d'un cadre spatio-temporel, si le relativisme d'en bas n'est pas équivalent au relativisme d'en haut (M. de Certeau), si l'incertitude donnée par l'individu dans son unique approche sensible et raisonnable de l'existence peut conduire vers une paralysie de la compréhension des objets de l'homme, alors la *coexistence systémique/ dialectique* du beau, du bien et du vrai et leur *traductibilité mutuelle*, ainsi que leur position supplémentaire et *mutuelle d'ultime raison de chacun d'eux* peuvent être considérées comme jalons inépuisables et intarissables des jugements concernant la réalité et la vie.

Les moyens actuels (y inclus la science et la technique) nous permettent un monde plus « esthétique » que jamais. Cette apparence – invitant à l'étudier en elle-même – cache les multiples médiations entre domaines et entre les fonctions des objets, comme elle cache leur finalité. Il paraît qu'il soit suffisant de laisser les objets parler pour l'entière anthropologie humaine. Mais s'ils ne sont pas approchés inversement, de finalités et de principes (comme celui de totalité, d'environnement) vers leur apparence, alors ils deviennent des moyens de « stultification » (Rancière) d'une masse d'anonymes incompetents qui apprécient, dans une jouissance perpétuelle et cherchant cette jouissance, les beaux objets seulement dans leur « individualité », leur isolation. Toutefois, des processus contemporains se constituent envers cette tendance. La philosophie contribue à ces processus justement par le questionnement des manières dominantes de penser.

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DISPUTA BENJAMIN - ADORNO DESPRE IMPLICAȚIILE POLITICE ALE ARTEI ÎN EPOCA TEHNICII MODERNE

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Abstract: *In this paper, I attempt to analyse the Benjamin – Adorno debate on the political implications of the art in the age of modern technology in art, which up to that point, had not had a substantive role on the interpretation and reflection on art. Benjamin’s insights on art have proven to be almost prophetic, to such an extent that the history of the 20th century ideologies did nothing more, as I will argue, than keep this new esthetical potential up to date with the existing political purposes. This ambivalent esthetical potential, triggered by the influence of technology on art – seen both as democratic and revolutionary emancipation, as well as ideological manipulation – achieved a level of success that, probably, not many could have foreseen. For this reason, it is not surprising that Theodor Adorno reacted to this diagnosis and responded to Benjamin’s question emphasizing that the influence of technology on art does not lead to the democratization and expansion of the revolutionary character of masses, but, on the contrary, it leads to a commodity fetishism, and, implicitly, to a new way of propagating ideological interests. In this light, I will point out that the disagreement in views between Benjamin and Adorno on the influence of technology on art can remain valid for forthcoming attempts to debate on the status of art in the current technological era and its connection with ideology.*

Keywords: *Benjamin, Adorno, philosophy of art, philosophy of technology, ideology.*

I. Introducere

Eseul filosofului Walter Benjamin, *Despre opera de artă în epoca reproducibilității sale tehnice*², publicat în anul 1936, apare ca o reacție necesară asupra unor probleme care până la momentul respectiv nu jucaseră niciun rol în reflecția asupra artei, anume întrebarea despre semnificația inovațiilor tehnologice în raport cu producția artistică și, implicit, despre implicațiile filosofico-politice ale coeziunii dintre artă și tehnică. Scrise în mai multe etape, în principal sub influența fotografiei și a

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² Benjamin, W., *Opera de artă în epoca reproducibilității sale tehnice*, ed.critică de Burckhardt Linder, Simon Broll și Jessica Nitsche, trad.rom. Christian Ferencz-Flatz, Editura Tact, Cluj-Napoca, 2015.

filmului, problemele ridicate de către Benjamin se aplică și asupra devoltării acelor instrumente media, ce pot fi foarte bine încadrate în ceea ce am numi tehnologiile de reproducere estetică: discurile, video-urile, TV-ul, dar și acele tehnologii media la care s-a ajuns în urma dezvoltării digitale. Intuițiile eseului lui Benjamin despre artă s-au dovedit a fi profetice, astfel încât istoria ideologiilor secolului XX nu a făcut altceva decât să actualizeze acest nou potențial estetic în scopuri politice. Iar acest potențial estetic bivalent rezultat din influența tehnicii asupra artei – atât democratic-revoluționar, cât și de manipulare ideologică – a reușit, în urma dezvoltării tehnologice ulterioare, să atingă un nivel pe care, probabil, puțini alții îl intuise la început. De aceea, nu este de mirare faptul că un filosof precum Theodor Adorno a răspuns imediat publicând în anul 1938 un eseu replică, *Despre caracterul de fetiș în muzică și regresia auzului*, în care ajunge la o concluzie contrară celei formulate de către Benjamin în ceea ce privește statutul operei de artă în epoca reproductibilității tehnice. Astfel, disputa dintre Benjamin și Adorno în jurul influenței tehnicii asupra artei rămâne paradigmatică pentru toate încercările ulterioare de a discuta despre statutul artei în epoca tehnicii moderne, respectiv despre raportul său cu politicul.

II. Aura operei de artă

Redactat în cinci versiuni, niciuna finală, eseul lui Benjamin vine parcă să ateste intrarea sub semnul reproductibilității și a perfectibilității continue nu numai a operelor de artă, dar și a scriiturii însăși¹. Această transformare fundamentală a statutului ontologic al creației artistice în urma dezvoltării tehnicii, sesizată și de către Paul Valery, citat în motto-ul eseului, îl conduce pe Benjamin să afirme într-o scrisoare către prietenul său, Alfred Cohn, că încercarea pe care ar urma să o întreprindă în această lucrare este să ofere lumii „cea dintâi teorie estetică a materialismului”². Punctul de plecare al meditației benjaminieni este acela al teoriei marxiste a modurilor de producție conform căreia capitalismul, în cele din urmă, ar ajunge să-și creeze singur condițiile ce ar permite propriul său sfârșit³.

¹ Cf. Notă asupra ediției de Christian Ferencz-Flatz, în Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, p.6.

² Burkhardt Linder, *Geneza lucrării și istoricul publicării ei*, în Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, p.233

³ Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, p.152. În articolul de față am folosit versiunea a cincea a eseului, cea canonizată de către editura germană Shurkamp (cf. Burkhardt Linder, *Geneza lucrării și istoricul publicării ei*, în: Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, pp.229-277).

Făcând așadar recurs la teoria dialecticii materialiste a bazei și a suprastructurii, Benjamin va căuta să formuleze acele tendințe de dezvoltare pe care arta le cunoaște în condițiile de producție prezente, și care ar urma să se dovedească utile în formularea unor „exigențe revoluționare în politica artei”¹. Totodată, acesta mai subliniază încă din început caracterul anti-fascist al demersului său, urmărind să obsolutizeze acele concepte tradiționale ale esteticii - creație, geniu, valoare eternă și mister - care au fost adesea utilizate în scopuri fasciste.² După această introducere programatică, Benjamin va căuta să-și desfășoare meditația plecând de la ceea ce caracterizează în definitiv producția capitalistă, anume reproductibilitatea sa tehnică. Din acest motiv, meditația asupra statutului artei în epoca tehnicii moderne este chemată să-și afle punctul de plecare în analiza tensiunii dintre unicitate și reproductibilitate. Cu toate că este recunoscut faptul că opera de artă a fost dintotdeauna reproductibilă, respectiv copiabilă, putem vorbi despre o modificare ontologică a statutului ei începând abia cu secolul al XX-lea, atunci când tehnica reproducerii atinge un standard care nu mai fusese niciodată atins până la acea dată în istorie:

„În jurul anului 1900, reproducerea tehnică ajunsese la un nivel atât de avansat, încât ea putea nu doar să-și ia drept obiect ansamblul operelor de artă deja existente, transformând din temelii modul în care acestea sunt receptate, ci dimpotrivă să-și cucerească ea însăși propriul său loc în rândul procedeelelor artistice.”³

Prin această schimbare, nu numai condiția de receptare a artei a fost sensibil modificată, ci și tehnologiile de reproducție și derivatele ei estetice, precum fotografia și filmul, care au început să aibă o influență tot mai mare asupra producției artistice însăși.

Walter Benjamin, luând în mod evident drept model tradițional al operei de artă doar singularitatea unei lucrări în contextul artelor vizuale, afirmă că prin actuala posibilitate aproape nelimitată a reproducerii, se pierde într-un mod irecuperabil „aici-ul și acum-ul” lucrării, „existența sa unică în locul în care ea se găsește”⁴. Conform lui Benjamin, această prezență unică constituie însăși autenticitatea lucrării, care la rândul ei

¹ Benjamin, *op.cit.*, p.152

² *Ibidem.*

³ *Ibidem*, p. 153

⁴ *Ibidem*, p.154

determină spațiul său istoric, încorsetându-o astfel într-o tradiție, deoarece „autenticitatea unui lucru este ansamblul a ceea ce poate face obiectul tradiției din cuprinsul său, de la originile sale și până în prezent, începând cu dănuirea sa materială și până la mărturiile istorice care-l privesc”¹. Rezultatul conferirii statutului de autenticitate unei opere de artă, care reprezintă condiția necesară prealabilă pentru ca aceasta să poată fi introdusă într-o tradiție, este denumită de către Benjamin *aură*, folosind astfel un concept împrumutat din contextul religios. *Aura*, cea care înconjoară imaginea religioasă de cult, este definită într-un mod secular de Walter Benjamin ca fiind o „apariție unică a unei depărtări, oricât de aproape e ea altminteri”². Precum imaginea religioasă radiază inaccesibilitate, la fel și opera de artă secularizată păstrează aceeași structură. De aceea, opera de artă mai păstrează încă atașat acel ritual magic sau religios în slujba căruia a stat originar: „Valoarea unică a operei de artă „autentice” se fundează mereu în ritual, căci, în ritual, opera de artă și-a găsit înaintea de toate valoarea sa de utilizare primă și originară” – iar acest fapt este încă recunoscutibil „în cuprinsul celor mai profane forme ale cultului frumuseții, înțeles ca ritual secularizat”³. Astfel, doctrina *l’art pour l’art*, care dorea să elibereze arta de toate conexiunile, propunându-și să-și asigure aura doar pentru ea însăși, a devenit, conform lui Benjamin, o „teologie negativă a artei” sub forma unei idei de artă pură, desemnând „o artă care nu doar deneagă orice funcție socială, ci refuză totodată să se lase determinată de orice model concret din realitate”⁴.

Astfel, mult discutată și controversată teză centrală a lui Walter Benjamin constă în faptul că reproducerea tehnică a operei de artă distruge nu numai aura acesteia, ci implicit și tradiția și autenticitatea ei, precum și statutul ei cvasi-religios. Această modificare a statutului ontologic al operei de artă în urma pierderii aurei este elogiată de Benjamin ca fiind un pas decisiv în emanciparea față de vechile categorii estetice:

„În momentul în care etalonul autenticității încetează să mai fie în genere aplicabil la domeniul producției artistice, întreaga funcție socială a artei

¹ *Ibidem*, p.155

² *Ibidem*, p.156

³ *Ibidem*, p.157

⁴ *Ibidem*, p.158

cunoaște o răsturnare. Astfel, fundării sale în ritual îi ia locul numaidecât fundarea într-o altă practică, și anume în politică.”¹

Indiciu al acestei mișcări este pentru Benjamin chiar transformarea a ceea ce cândva a fost valoarea de cult a unei opere de artă originale, în valoarea sa expozițională – transformare care se observă cel mai clar la film, al cărui unic scop este unul expozițional, care nu mai este legat și determinat de niciun timp și spațiu concret. De aceea, în operele cinematografice, tehnica reproducerii mecanice este pentru prima dată inerentă în însăși tehnica producției de filme – ele existând doar sub formă de copii și se realizează numai prin difuzarea lor în masă. Ceea ce aduce cu sine filmul este exemplar în ceea ce privește transformările provocate asupra statutului artei prin intermediul tehnicii, fiindcă „filmul este opera de artă perfectibilă prin excelență, iar această perfectibilitate se leagă tocmai de faptul că el implică din capul locului o renunțare radicală la ideea de valoare eternă”². După cum observă și Gianni Vattimo în eseu *Arta oscilării*³, ceea ce Benjamin caută să laude la acest întreg fenomen de schimbare este faptul că reproductibilitatea tehnică reușește să facă să dispară complet valoarea „culturală” a operei în favoarea valorii ei „expozitive”. Astfel, pentru Vattimo acesta e ca și cum am spune că opera nu are o „valoare de întrebuințare” deosebită de valoarea ei de schimb sau că la urma urmei toată semnificația ei estetică se identifică cu norocul, receptarea și interpretarea ei în cultură și în societate.⁴ Cu toate acestea, Walter Benjamin a observat pe bună dreptate faptul că această lipsă a auriului la film se înlocuiește cel mai adesea printr-un substitut de aur, sau aur secundară – de exemplu, prin cultul starului -, căreia îi revine rolul de introducere pe piață a produsului artistic, oferindu-i astfel ceva în genul unei consacării la un nivel mai înalt:

„Filmul răspunde la închircirea auriului prin construcția artificială a unei „personality” în afara studioului. Cultul starurilor, pe care capitalurile din cinema îl promovează, conservă acel farmec al personalității, ce nu mai

¹ *Ibidem*, p.158

² Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, Versiunea a 4-a, p.130

³ Vattimo, G., *Arta oscilării*, în: *Societatea transparentă*, trad. Stefania Mincu, Editura Pontica, Constanța, 1995, pp. 52-71

⁴ Cf. *Ibidem*, p.56

constă deja de multă vreme decât în magia fetidă a caracterului ei de marfă.”¹

Faptul complet irelevant despre când și unde este proiectat un film, apare astfel suprastilizat în cadrul premierelor, amintind prin aceasta de acea unicitate a auri. Acest fenomen caracterizează în primul rând primele puneri în scenă ale pieselor de teatru și de operă, afirmând de asemenea acea tendință de aurificare – tendință care altminteri este observabilă astăzi și în muzee și galerii. La fel însă și viceversa, formele cinematografice de cult al starului, care funcționează drept surogat de aură, au început să afecteze, la rândul lor, și celelalte domenii artistice: unicitatea lui *acum și aici* se leagă tot mai puțin de unicitatea operei de artă, cât de apariția creatorului lor. Însă în ceea ce privește potențialul emancipator al filmului, Benjamin este mai mult decât optimist, deoarece însăși tehnica filmului previne un asemenea final, în care atât interpreții, cât și spectatorii să fie alienați și împiedicați în formarea unei conștiințe de clasă. Filmul, mai bine decât orice alt mijloc artistic, este capabil să formeze o a percepție colectivă. Totodată, mai afirmă Benjamin, în ciuda supunerii filmului intereselor de capital, acesta poate pentru moment „facilita o critică revoluționară asupra reprezentărilor tradiționale despre artă”².

III. Despre democratizarea și ideologizarea artei prin tehnică

Distrugerea auri, conform lui Benjamin, începe să își desfășoare cel mai fecund puterea sa productivă acolo unde cu adevărat nu mai există niciun *acum și aici*. Faptul că unul și același film poate fi vizionat în orice moment și în orice loc are o influență semnificativă asupra comportamentului de percepție al oamenilor. Astfel, ubicuitatea filmului își crează propriul cerc de receptare: masele.

Boris Groys subliniază însă că singura diferență dintre original și copie este una topologică, prin urmare, reproducerea tehnică nu duce nemijlocit spre distrugerea auri, ci doar spre un nou gust estetic specific maselor, care preferă copia în locul originalului: „consumatorul de masă actual preferă mai ales ca arta să-i fie mai ușor inteligibilă, să-i fie remisă”³. De aceea, acesta afirmă că „dacă diferența dintre original și copie este una

¹ Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, p.166

² *Ibidem*, p.166

³ Groys, B., *Topologia auri și alte eseuri*, trad. Aurel Codoban, Lorin Ghiman și George State, Editura Idea Design&Print, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 21.

topologică, atunci numai mișcarea definită topologic a contemplatorilor decide asupra acestei deosebiri”¹. În acest sens, Benjamin nu ezită să scoată în evidență faptul că masele, care față de arta tradițională aveau o atitudine mai degrabă rezervată, se dezvoltă acum, în fața filmului, ca fiind principalul ei cunoscător:

„Reproductibilitatea tehnică a operei de artă modifică atitudinea maselor față de artă. Astfel, dacă ele au în genere o atitudine cât se poate de reacționară față de un Picasso, această atitudine devine, din contră, cât se poate de progresistă față de un Chaplin. Acest raport progresist cu arta se caracterizează din capul locului prin faptul că, în cuprinsul său, simpla plăcere a privirii și a trăirii operei respective se leagă într-un mod strâns și nemijlocit de atitudinea de evaluare, proprie specialistului.”²

Benjamin nutrea prin aceasta o mare speranță și anume aceea că filmul nu va duce numai la aprofundarea a percepției oamenilor, ci și la o democratizare a artelor. Faptul că noua paradigmă a modului de percepție nu mai era contemplația, ci divertismentul, este chiar subliniat în mod expres de către Benjamin, care vedea tocmai în acesta o posibilă nouă formă de percepție, care să conțină în sine și un anume potențial revoluționar:

„Căci distracția, pe de o parte, și contemplația concentrată, pe de alta, formează o opoziție ce ne îngăduie următoarea formulare: cel care contemplă în chip concentrat o operă de artă se transpune în aceasta; el pătrunde în cuprinsul ei așa cum ne povestește legenda despre pictorul că acesta s-ar fi introdus și pe sine în pictura sa atunci când a văzut cât este de desăvârșită. În schimb, masa distrasă transpune opera de artă în sine.”³

Exemplul acestui nou mod de percepție a maselor fiind atitudinea față de filmele lui Chaplin în comparație cu picturile lui Picasso. Prin aceasta Benjamin subliniază din nou importanța cinematografului, cel mai capabil dintre toate artele să scoată la lumină aceste schimbări profunde la nivelul a percepției, iar această speranță în democratizarea artelor prin intermediul inovațiilor tehnice ar fi trebuit confirmată de evoluția ulterioară în domeniul tehnicii.

Cu toate acestea, Benjamin a trebuit să asiste la felul cum filmul a putut deveni și un instrument de propagandă a regimurilor totalitare. De aceea, el s-a văzut nevoit să-și încheie eseul cu un diagnostic estetic-politic

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

² Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, p.170.

³ *Ibidem.*, p.176.

legat de practica fascistă de estetizare a politicului, despre care am putea spune că emană tocmai ceea ce Benjamin dorea să fie distrus, anume aura:

„Fascismul încearcă să organizeze masele proletarizate nou-apărute fără să se atingă de raporturile de proprietate la a căror înlăturare ele aspiră. Obiectivul său este acela de a ajuta masele să capete expresie (iar nu să obțină ceea ce li se cuvine de drept). Masele au dreptul la o transformare a raporturilor de proprietate; însă fascismul caută să le dea o expresie prin conservarea acestora. Astfel, fascismul conduce în mod consecvent la o estetizare a vieții politice. Siluirea maselor, pe care fascismul le obligă să se prosterneze în cultul unui Fuhrer, își găsește un corespondent precis în siluirea aparatului tehnic, pe care el o pune în slujba unor valori de cult.”¹

În mod evident, aceste rânduri oglindesc însăși tragica experiență la care a asistat Benjamin, văzând cum fascismul a început să se folosească estetic, într-un mod tot mai radical, tocmai de noile tehnologii precum radioul, fotografia și filmul. De aceea, gândul că structura filmului, cu al său mod specific de percepție, ar putea veni chiar și împotriva unei gândiri totalitare era departe de Benjamin. Recunoașterea faptului că fasciștii au fost în stare să propage noi valori cultice tocmai prin intermediul acelor tehnici de reproducție despre care se credea că vor distruge definitiv aura și toate valorile cultice, estetizând astfel într-un mod evident politicul, ne face receptivi la ceea ce am putea numi drept caracterul bivalent al statului artei în epoca reproductibilității sale: pe de o parte conține un potențial de emancipare revoluționară a proletariatului printr-o politizare a esteticului, iar pe de altă parte conține potențialul masificării printr-o ideologie totalitară de estetizare a politicului. În ceea ce privește potențialul propagării fascismului prin intermediul noilor mijloace tehnologice, Benjamin afirmă că toate aceste încercări de estetizare a politicului culminează în raportarea estetică față de război. Argumentul pentru această ipoteză este găsit de Benjamin în celebrul *Manifest futurist* al lui Marinetti, scris cu ocazia războiului colonial al lui Mussolini din Etiopia, în care războiul este celebrat ca fiind un eveniment estetic. Citând pasajul respectiv, al celebrării estetice a războiului, Benjamin își încheie analiza, concluzionând astfel:

„Fiat ars – pereat mundus, spune fascismul, așteptând ca războiul să îi procure, după cum mărturisește Marinetti, împlinirea artistică a unei

¹ *Ibidem*, p.177.

percepții sensibile modificate de tehnică. Aceasta este în chip vădit încununarea ultimă a devisei *l'art pour l'art*. Omenirea, ce reprezenta odinioară, la Homer, un spectacol destinat zeilor din Olimp, a devenit azi, dimpotrivă, un spectacol pentru sine însăși. Alienarea sa față de sine a atins un asemenea grad, încât ea a ajuns propriu-zis să-și savureze propria nimicire ca pe o plăcere estetică de prim rang. Așa se prezintă estetizarea politicii pe care o întreprinde fascismul. Comunismul îi răspunde prin politizarea artei.”¹

IV. Adorno despre fetișizarea artei prin tehnică

Diagnosticul final al lui Benjamin din eseul său din 1936 s-a dovedit a fi unul profetic, astfel încât istoria regimurilor totalitare nu a făcut altceva decât să actualizeze acest nou potențial estetic al filmului în scopuri politice. Consider că dezvoltarea și utilizarea ulterioară, de-a lungul celui de-al doilea mondial, a acestui potențial bivalent care caracterizează opera de artă în epoca reproductibilității sale tehnice, a reușit să facă obsoletă diferențierea benjaminiană între un uz comunist și unul fascist al artei. De aceea, nu este de mirare faptul că un filosof precum Theodor Adorno, care cunoscuse în exilul său american o și mai avansată industrie de reproducție în masă a operelor de artă a răspuns imediat, ridicând problema lui Benjamin la un alt nivel critic. Astfel, într-una dintre scrisorile adresate de către Adorno lui Max Horkheimer, în anul 1936, acesta ia o atitudine destul de radicală față de scrierea lui Walter Benjamin, afirmând că acesta „mitologizează mitologizarea însăși, făcând nu doar din râsul scârbos al publicului de cinema, ci și din multe alte atrocități similare (din „distracție”, din „probă” și din alte tabuizări infantile) o veritabilă ontologie”². Tot din aceeași scrisoare mai aflăm și critica conform căreia „Benjamin se încrede în proletariat ca într-o providență oarbă, îmbrățișând tocmai acele trăsături ale sale, produse de mașinăria burgheză”, respectiv că „el inventează, pe latura artei capitaliste tehnificate – a cinemaului, care e, în fond, cea mai alienantă dintre arte -, teorii ce ar putea să servească drept ideologie celei mai vulgare practici capitaliste (ce nerozie, bunăoară, să spui că filmul distruge aura, când tocmai el o produce într-un chip demonic)”³.

Așadar, anunțându-și încă din aceea scrisoare intenția de a da o replică lui Benjamin, Adorno publică în anul 1936 un eseu *Despre Jazz*, în

¹ *Ibidem*, p.144.

² *Ibidem.*, p.322

³ *Ibidem.*, p.322

care încearcă să abordeze problema din perspectiva muzicii ușoare, *leichte Musik*. În acest eseu, Adorno afirmă că jazz-ul reprezintă un mecanism de mutilare psihică pus în slujba consumului de masă, iar pretinsa sa atitudine antiburgheză nu este decât o fațadă superficială.¹ Totodată, caracterul personal al jazz-ului și libertatea pe care acesta o oferă muzicianului, nu sunt decât o aparență și o împachetare ideologică prin care se încearcă producerea tocmai a contrariului, anume un individ depersonalizat și supus colectivului.

Doi ani mai târziu, în 1938, în eseu *Despre caracterul de fetiș în muzică și regresia auzului*², în urma analizei efectului radioului și a discurilor asupra percepției publice a muzicii, Adorno afirmă, din nou, contrar lui Benjamin, că reproductivitatea tehnică a artei, conduce de fapt nu la o democratizare și o deaurizare a ei, ci chiar din contră, la un nou fetișism al mărfii, și implicit către un nou focar de propagare a unor interese ideologice. Fundamentul acestui fetișism este faptul că arta devine de acum accesibilă în primul rând ca marfă, iar ceea ce o transformă în obiect de artă nu mai e calitatea sa estetică, ci aura ei secundară, de business, formată din cultul starului, tehnică și propagandă – toate acestea devenind atât fundamentul și obiectul operei de artă în sine, cât și al cererii și consumului ei. Rezultatul acestui proces este supunerea și acomodarea vitalității și originalității operei de artă la formele tehnice de marketing. Astfel, conform lui Adorno, noile forme media de transmitere a artei, nu numai că aduc un omagiu caracterului fetiș de reproducție tehnică, distrugând totodată esența unei opere muzicale, dar și conduc pe receptor, prin formele sale de recepție și manifestare, spre o decădere pe o treaptă inferioară, chiar primitivă a conștiinței estetice.³

Critica reproductibilității tehnice a artei făcută de Adorno denunță deci acele repercusiuni asociate formei deconcentrate a acestei noi disponibilități a artei care, pentru muzică – probabil în contrast cu filmul – ar avea efecte fatale: fiindcă dacă un film ca întreg poate fi receptat într-o manieră distrasă, în muzică ascultarea deconcentrată face imposibilă

¹ Cf., Burkhardt Linder, *Geneza lucrării și istoricul publicării ei*, în: Benjamin, W., *op.cit.*, pp.256-257.

² Adorno, T., *On the fetish-character in Music and the Regression of Listening (1938)*, în: Leppert, Richard (ed.) *Essays on Music*, University Of California Press, Berkeley, 2002, pp.288-317

³ Cf., *Ibidem*, pp.303-304

percepția întregului.¹ Iar astăzi se vede că dezvoltarea Compact-Discului nu a făcut decât să confirme analizele făcute de Adorno. Creșterea disponibilității și posibilității accesării unei piese muzicale în fiecare moment, indiferent de loc, a condus în mod neîndoielnic la tendința actuală a ascultării fragmentate și atomizate, în track-uri – tendință care alienează tot mai tare ascultătorul de contextul întregului. Astfel, dacă Benjamin mai putea încă găsi pentru film aspecte pozitive în fenomenul divertismentului, acesta devine pentru Adorno indiciul reificării gustului muzical, care nu mai poate să se manifeste decât ca lipsit de voință și de spirit, fragmentar și conform schemei reclamelor industriei producătoare - de aici originea culturii hit-urilor și a producțiilor artistice mainstream, pe care ajungem să le consumăm fără alegere și discernământ.²

V. Concluzie. Speranța luptei avangardiste contra tehnicii

Pentru Adorno, reproducerea mecanică și comercializarea operelor de artă nu conduce așadar înspre o distrugere a auzului - fapt elogiât de Benjamin -, ci numai spre o falsificare a acestuia.³ Totuși, observăm faptul că Adorno nu vrea să meargă mai departe cu constatarea sa despre „regresia auzului” și să o aplice și pe fenomenul cinematografic. Însă suntem de părere că diagnosticul său se poate aplica tuturor mijloacelor artistice, și acest lucru deoarece scepticismul său față de euforia democratizării artelor prin intermediul tehnologiei merge până într-acolo încât să se îndoiască de posibilitatea tehnicii de a oferi impulsuri cu adevărat inovative, așa cum se întâmplă în actualele condiții de piață. Ba chiar mai mult, Adorno ne invită constant să medităm mai degrabă la potențialul distructiv decât la cel inovativ pe care tehnologia l-ar putea avea asupra artei contemporane, ca instrument distinctiv al industriei culturale. De altfel, această critică a fost continuată și în *Dialectica luminilor*, din 1944, unde este dezbătută din nou masificarea prin intermediul tehnicii industriei culturale, care, conform lui Adorno și Horkheimer, „nu a realizat nimic altceva decât standardizarea și producția de serie, scarificând tot ceea ce făcea diferența dintre logica operei și cea a sistemului social”⁴.

¹ Cf., *Ibidem*, p. 305

² Cf., *Ibidem*, p. 304

³ Cf., Adorno, T., *op.cit.*, p. 312

⁴ Adorno, T., Horkheimer, M., *Dialectica luminilor*, trad. Andrei Corbea, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2012, p.141.

Pentru a nu se înțelege greșit critica lui Adorno, trebuie subliniat faptul că el nu era un reacționar, iar el și Benjamin erau de acord că progresele modernității reprezintă ceva salutar, iar că progresul modernității este legat de progresul tehnicii. Însă ei considerau că acest *status quo* trebuie abordat în permanență critic, pentru că instrumentele civilizației progresului și ale emancipării - ale Luminilor - își poartă cu sine dialectic posibilitatea regresului într-o nouă formă de barbarie - sau Mitologie - care poate culmina într-un pozitivism al facticului, care să prezinte raporturile sociale drept necesare, anulând prin aceasta individul în mod definitiv în fața forțelor economice.

Adorno nu-și încheie însă articolul *Despre caracterul de fetiș în muzică și regresia auzului* într-un mod sceptic și pesimist. Pentru el, adevărații reprezentanți ai luptei contra simțului comun de masă, supus ordinii tehnologice de piață, sunt chiar protagoniștii avangardei moderne care, precum Schonberg, Webern sau Alban Berg, reclamă o afirmare a individualității dincolo de malaxorul industriei culturale.¹ Desigur, speranța lui Adorno cum că mișcările avangardiste nu vor putea fi absorbite de interesele ideologice ale industriei culturale rămâne un fapt discutabil. Cu singuranță însă, ceea ce se sugerează în finalul eseului lui Adorno, este credința că estetica avangardistă modernă ar reprezenta un ultim bastion de rezistență față de industria culturii tehnificate.

În concluzie, se poate afirma că manifestând doze diferite de optimism sau pesimism față de posibilitățile de manifestare ale artei în epoca tehnicii moderne, cei doi gânditori ai Școlii de la Frankfurt au reușit să sublinieze ceea ce se poate numi caracterul ambivalent - sau chiar dialectic - al artei în epoca tehnicii moderne: pe de o parte el conține un potențial de emancipare revoluționară a maselor printr-o politizare a esteticului, iar pe de altă parte, conține potențialul masificării printr-o ideologie totalitară de estetizare a politicului. De aceea, putem considera că pozițiile lui Benjamin și Adorno în disputa privitoare la semnificația influenței tehnicii asupra artei rămân paradigmatică pentru toate încercările ulterioare de a discuta statutul artei în epoca tehnicii moderne, respectiv despre raportul său cu politicul.

¹ Cf. Adorno, T., *On the fetish-character in Music and the Regression of Listening*, pag. 315

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VALUES TRANSFORMATION IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES: REVOLUTION OR ECLECTICISM?

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***Abstract.** The article examines eclecticism as the attributive characteristic of the existence and the transformation of values in transitional society. Also the possibilities and limits of the defining the processes of transformation of values in a transitional society are discussed.*

***Keywords:** transitional society, values, revolution, eclecticism.*

Introduction

The problem of understanding the nature and features of society transition has special influence on value issues. Considering the axiological sphere of transitional society it becomes obvious that transit is not just a way from point A to point B, from here to there. It is not just a rejection of the current values of the point A and the preference of the future values of the point B. At any given time the diversity of values in a transitional society presents a variety of options, simultaneously ongoing cancellation, (re)birth, competition, denial, and interaction of values and ideologies. Also the development and formation of social phenomena and structural changes such as the information revolution, humanization, democratization of society, intensification of cross-cultural communication, globalization, etc., have made a colossal impact on the fundamentals of social systems everywhere and given rise to profound changes in the essence of social institutions and practices, which in turn have given rise to profound changes in the everyday life of people, their ideas, interpersonal communications, moral norms, life goals and strategies. These developments and changes contribute to the formation of a new infrastructure of social relationships and personal communications, and leads to changing the value system.

Values in Transit

When we talk about transitional societies, the main accent is on the processuality and contextuality of the transit. Also, this "transit" cannot be considered as a linear process, but only as a multidirectional, multi-speed

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and ambivalent one. Sometimes it resembles Brownian motion in the axiological sphere.

Describing these contradictory processes, Ukrainian philosopher Serhii Krymsky wrote “transition process is those transformations, changes or alterations that are genetically linked with (at least) two states of stability of the system, one of which is the initial, and the second is resultative, final or target (for social change). It is characterized by:

a) variability, the variety of ways, shapes, patterns and manifestations of progress towards stability;

b) the structural tensions or even rocking of the initial structures (the boundary of which can be chaos);

c) the opposition of ordered and unorganized material, the spontaneous and programming changes, and thus the social transitions - the degree of legitimacy and illegitimacy of the process;

d) centaur-similarity of the transition process formations, the occurrence of events that connect features of opposing trends, issues, requirements.”¹

Obviously, the metaphor of centaur will accompany any process and transformation in transitional societies. Only temporal and spatial framework of the existence of this “centaur”, its vitality and the possibility of transformation will differ.

The changes in value system are subject of study for many researchers worldwide. How the system of values is changed? Sequentially or suddenly? Is it possible in any way to fix the moment of change? Seeking the answers on these questions, L. Füstös and A. Szokolczai (1998) have transformed Karl Jaspers’s “axial age” concept into the “axial moments” concept. They wrote: “The axial age refers to one concrete historical period. Restricting attention to this age carries the danger of reducing sociological theory to a radical historicism. However, the limitations in time and place can be erased if the period is conceptually extended, using the term 'axial moment' An axial moment occurs when there is a global collapse of the established order of things, including the political system, the social order of everyday life, and the system of beliefs - a very rare event - leading to a

¹Krimsky, S. 2003. “Концептуальний лад аналізу перехідного процесу”, *Занути філософських смислів*. [“The conceptual structure of the transition process analysis”, *Queries for philosophical meanings*] Kyiv: PARAPAN, 201-202.

major spiritual revival that, as an answer, locates the source of order inside the individual"¹.

In mass culture the term "revolution of values" is wide spread. Obviously, its application in defining the process of values transformation in a transitional society has relativistic connotations. From my point of view, it is relevant to use term (re)evolution in order to emphasize the inner duality of the process of transformation of values in a transitional society. Also particle "re" means "again", which underlines urgency of rethinking and reappraisal of values for the transitional societies. Actually, revolution of values as immediate shift from one axiological paradigm to another exists only in the field of slogans and appeals, even such brilliant as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Revolution of Values" speech delivered on Apr. 4, 1967. Any revolution is a decisive step towards new values but not a sudden axiological change. So, the term «revolution» can be applicable there only in a certain meaning. To be precise, only in one definition of revolution. In the best way this process can be defined by Alexis de Tocqueville definition ² of the one type of revolution (among two others) as "slow but sweeping transformations of the entire society that take several generations to bring about".

As example of this can be value system of transitional Ukrainian society, in which the number of shifts occurs at the same time: from a command economy - to the market one, from closed society - to open one, from ethno-national state development - to the civil-national state development, etc. Ukrainians' values priority in 2016 are not that different from what they were in 1991: good health, (4,78 on a scale from 1 to 5), children's well-being (4,77), family prosperity (4,76), material well-being (4,64). In comparison values important to Ukrainians the least throughout the years were participation in religious activities (3,31) and political or civic movements. (3,09). Compared to 1991 some values are regarded higher than they used to be, of note are having an interesting job (from 3,94 to 4,24), national independence (from 3,83 to 4,23), raising education level (from 3,66 to 4,07), lack of overt social segregation (from 3,59 to 4,06), being able to voice out one's opinion on politics and/or different matters without

1 Füstös, L., Szokolczai, A. 1998. Value Systems in Axial Moments: A Comparative Analysis of 24

European Countries. *European Sociological Review*, 14(3): 21 1-229

2Boesche, R. 2006.Tocqueville's Road Map: Methodology, Liberalism, Revolution, and Despotism, Lexington Books: Google Print, 86.

fearing for one's freedom (from 3,51 to 4,02), broadening one's cultural worldview, acquainting with cultural values (from 3,55 to 3,94), possibilities for entrepreneurial initiative (from 3,3 to 4,01), democratic development of country (from 3,23 to 3,75). For the first time in all years of conducting polls the opinion on value of participation in political or civic activities reached a positive mark – 3,06¹.

Some researches (William², Soedjatmoko³) describing the transition of the values pay attention to the long process of their gradual transformation. But it is obvious that such ambivalent process has many attributive characteristics. In this regard, I. Predborska's concept of "multidimensional space of possible socio-cultural shifts" is methodologically worth. This space consists of many planes, in which different displacements take place. Societal transformation can be regarded as the simultaneous drift in all parts of these planes⁴.

Such understanding of transitional processes shows their multidirectionality, ambiguity, and relativistic potential. But how do values exist in this situation of permanent instability and multi-directional movement? From my point of view, for transitional society one of the most important attributive characteristics is *eclecticism* of the axiological sphere, which has a significant impact on the social order development, politics, and policies.

The multiple faces of eclecticism

Eclecticism of value system is also one of the most important challenges of transitional societies. It possesses many forms and trajectories of change. It should also be noted, that eclecticism concept is ambiguous. The historical review made by J. M. Dillon and A. A. Long⁵ shows that the

¹ До Дня Незалежності: що українці думають про Україну?» - прес-реліз. ["To Independence Day: what Ukrainians think about Ukraine?" - Press release]. Accessed August 30, 2016. <http://dif.org.ua/ua/publications/press-relizy/do-dnja-nezalezno.htm>

²William, R. 1979. "Change and Stability in Values and Value Systems: A Sociological Perspective". In: Rokeach, M. (ed.): *Understanding Human Values*. New York: FreePress, 15-46.

³Soedjatmoko, 1986.

"Slow Growth and Global Priorities Values in Transition". *The Washington Quarterly*, 9(4), 67-72.

⁴Predborska, I. 2003. "Toward a New Paradigm in Social Philosophy", *Social Philosophy Today. Communication, Conflict, and Reconciliation*, 17, Virginia, 265-273.

⁵Dillon, J. M., and A. A. Long, editors *The Question of "Eclecticism": Studies in Later Greek Philosophy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 31 – 33.

term eclecticism has been used by modern historians to indicate quite different philosophical attitudes with a great number of ambivalent senses:

1. There is first of all the negative meaning of the term, originating chiefly from Zeller and denoting a combination of heterogeneous elements that is substantially uncritical and more or less deliberate. In this sense the term has undergone a strong decline in recent years.

2. The term may be used as a statement of fact, without any positive or negative implications: it simply states that the doctrine of a philosophical school is combined in an author's thought with elements of a different origin.

3. Eclecticism is also defined as the more or less arbitrary attitude of authors who accept into the doctrine of their own school extraneous elements because they are honestly convinced that these are compatible with, and indeed helpful in explaining or defending, their own doctrine.

4. The eclectic attitude of Potamo and Clement, which is completely deliberate and stated at the outset, can obviously continue to be described as eclecticism.

5. More recent discussions indicate, however, that this attitude must be distinguished from another one, which chooses among doctrines with the same deliberate program but whose spirit is strongly anti-dogmatic and anti-sectarian. The typical example is Galen.

6. Finally, although it has not yet been mentioned, there is a sixth attitude, which must be distinguished as absolutely different from all previous ones and which is often called eclectic. It is the posture of Antiochus of Ascalon, who tried to prove the basic agreement between Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Stoicism and tended to make these three schools coincide and form a single common doctrine.

In contemporary philosophy, social sciences, and mass culture the concept of eclecticism usually is used in two main senses:

- Eclecticism as the best choice.
- Eclecticism as a combination of different styles, paradigms (mainly with negative connotations of inconsistency).

Let us consider each of the interpretations in more detail. The first interpretation of the concept comes from its etymology. The Greek ἐκλεκτικός (eklektikos), literally means "choosing the best", and that from ἐκλεκτός (eklektos), "pick out, select".

Eclecticism, in philosophy, is the selection of elements from different systems of thought, without regard to possible contradictions between the

systems. Eclecticism differs from syncretism, which tries to combine various systems while resolving conflicts.¹ The article *Eclectisme* written by Diderot for the *Encyclopédie* contained a flattering definition of an eclectic²: "The eclectic is a philosopher who, trampling underfoot prejudice, tradition, antiquity, general agreement, authority—in a word, everything that controls the minds of the common herd dares to think for himself, returns to the clearest general principles, examines them, discusses them, admits nothing that is not based on the testimony of his experience and his reason; and from all the philosophies he has analyzed without respect and bias he makes for himself a particular and domestic one which belongs to him.... There is no leader of a sect who has not been more or less eclectic.... The Eclectics are among the philosophers who are the kings on the face of the earth, the only ones who have remained in the state of nature, where everything belonged to everyone." (trans. A.A. Long)

Describing the meaning of eclecticism as a process of picking up and having as an example Odette's problem when she began to lie to her lover, Brian A. Hatcher in his book *"Eclecticism and Modern Hindu Discourse"* shows how the process of selection can quickly turn violent. He wrote "What Odette apparently ignored was the violence involved in disarticulating truths one from the other; she failed to see how the torn edges and empty gaps in her story betrayed the sham of it all. We can relate this to the complaint we frequently voice ourselves when we object that a particular phrase, image, or piece of music has been wrenched or torn from its context. Rather ironically, then, it turns out that the shadow side of the eclectic's laziness and lack of creativity is in fact her aggressive and unrestrained manipulation of the truth. The eclectic's appetite knows no bounds and this can be shocking."³

The second way to use concept "eclectic" can be understood by next example. Describing nineteenth century culture Jacob Teunis Harskamp wrote: "Eclecticism never amounted to a movement or constituted a specific style: it is characterized precisely by the fact that it was not a

¹Eclecticism. The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2012, 6th ed, Columbia University Press.

² *Encyclopédie*, art. "Eclectisme," vol. 5 [Paris, 1755]

³ Brian A. Hatcher. *Eclecticism and Modern Hindu Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 28-29

particular style."¹ So, eclectic is something that has no essence, and combines attributive features of different. That is to be eclectic means having no identity, not to belong to any direction, flow or paradigm. There is no eclectic essence, as it cannot be replicated per se. It is the result of accidental or deliberate combination. That is, in this case, eclectic character acquires the status of immanent self-determination. But the question arises: what should be chosen as a starting point: variety and diversity of styles or nonexistence of styles. There M. Heidegger's hermeneutic ontology appears as methodologically significant because it problematizes choice "being" or "non-being" as a starting point of reasoning. After all the negativity of (non-A) always contains a positivity of (A).

Eclecticism in axiological sphere of transitional societies

Conventionally eclecticism can be divided into immanent and transcendent. But interpretation of eclectic as such that goes beyond a paradigm (transcends) only strengthens internal contradictions of this phenomenon. However, it should be noted that for axiological sphere of transitional societies to be eclectic is the only way of being, the only way to maintain the relative stability of the system that is as "heavenly body, which, being between powerful centers of gravity, unable to stabilize its orbit."² But it is important not to freeze in eternal eclecticism, not to forget the final aim. In this regard, any movement to the resultative state of stability by getting rid of an obsolete one has positive potential. Good example of this is real process of decommunization that has been started in Ukraine since 2015 and aimed to exclude from urban and rural semiotics any communist signs, names, titles.

However, in the political life of transitional society eclecticism of values generally possess second meaning and has connotations of inconsistency. It is often manifested in the form of consumerism and reductionism by creating a utopian picture of a "bright future" due to combination of absolute ideas, not paying attention to the praxis of problem. After all, each system, theory or concept that even claims to be universal, has its scope, limitations, warnings and risks. Political

¹Harskamp, J. 2011. *The Anatomy of Despondency: European Socio-Cultural Criticism 1789 – 1939* (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History). BRILL, 30.

²Predborska, I. 2000. Трансформаційні проблеми українського суспільства [Transformational problems of Ukrainian society]. *Hrani, Dnepropetrovsk*, 5 (13), 106-116.

manipulation ignores it. As raindrops falling on the ground become dirty, the idea of absolute good when faced with reality can acquire new unexpected meanings. The slogans of development a democratic society in Ukraine today are built in the best traditions of Lenin's «Land to the Peasants! Factories to the Workers! ». At the same time politicians get overlooked that any implementation of democratic ideals requires the direct participation of this most demos. And active participation. But the active participation of citizens greatly complicates the manipulation, and denotes a dramatic moving away from the concept of one-dimension and mass man. Therefore, the questions of personal and corporate social responsibility are rarely raised. After all, in such circumstances it is difficult for a politician to justify his/her role. In the previous paternalistic paradigm of "a politician is provider of goods, a voter is consumer" all are obvious. And what will happen to a politician, if the voter turns from a consumer into the creator?

For example, to obtain short-term preferences in the election campaign the democratic values (equality, solidarity, egalitarianism) are represented as a kind of ideal being. Post-colonial habitualness of ordinary voter to the uncritical acceptance of slogans and promises finds the response in the public consciousness. This creates ample space for political manipulation, and puts knowledge management issues in the first place.

Conclusion

Summarizing above mentioned ideas, I can conclude that transitional society in any given time experience unique historical period, which characterized by simultaneously ongoing cancellation, (re)birth, competition, denial, and interaction of values and ideologies. Revolutionary processes can move broad masses to civil and political activity, but real "revolution" of values needs much more efforts. A thousand-mile journey begins with one step. But, speaking about the society we should not forget that this is not an abstract concept. Society is the people, the people and their life paths. And when the transit takes decades, when society can stand in the "eternal centaur" state, unequivocally that not everyone will be able to reach the aim. What about people whose whole life is "transit"? The explanation that they were born in the "bloody lands" will not be enough. Therefore, every political decision, policy and law on imperative basis should be based on universal values of humanism, the value of human life, the responsibility.

ROLUL METAFORELOR ÎN FILOSOFIA ISTORIEI A LUI HANS BLUMENBERG

Ionuț RĂDUICĂ¹

Abstract: Hans Blumenberg tried to elaborate a better tool for understanding the epochs through the metaphors. In this article we will be focusing on Blumenberg's theory which claims a central role for historical metaphors, such as the starry sky, the shipwreck, the truth or the book. The main question is if this variation of metaphors throughout history offers a better understanding of history.

Keywords: Hans Blumenberg, metaphors, philosophy of history.

În opera sa, Hans Blumenberg intenționează să demonstreze, interpretând metaforele, că acestea din urmă funcționează în sensul teoriei nonconceptualității sau metaforologiei, o teorie care păstrează în osatura sa idei autentice, care sunt astăzi din ce în ce mai amplu dezbătute. Dintre lucrările utile temei noastre, în care Blumenberg analizează metafore care ne permit să interpretăm istoria, în general, și modernitatea, în particular, enumerăm: *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (1960), *Die kopernikanische Wende* (1965), *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit* (1966), *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt* (1975), *Arbeit am Mythos* (1979), *Die Lesbarkeit der Welt* (1979) sau *Schiffbruch mit Zuschauer* (1979). Pentru a evidenția mai bine diferența dintre modernitate și epocile anterioare, trebuie să urmărim traseul metaforelor istorice.

Interesul filosofului german pentru metafore este fundamentat pe ideea că ele ne pot oferi o interpretare istorică mai bună, fapt care ne ajută să înțelegem nucleul epocilor, mai ales pe cel al modernității. Metaforele care ne interesează în mod special parcurg toată istoria europeană și trimit la viziunea teoretică producătoare de cosmologii² și care, prin tensiunea schimbării lor, reprezintă indicii temeinice că ceva profund este „calitativ” diferit. Pentru a înțelege o metaforă și, implicit, o epocă sau o componentă culturală³, trebuie să analizăm toată traiectoria metaforei și să înțelegem

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²În viziunea lui Blumenberg nu există cunoaștere în sine sau de dragul obiectului; sensul și finalitatea istorică a cunoașterii sunt reprezentate de schițarea cosmologiilor, a explicațiilor lumii, în interiorul căreia existăm și cu care relaționăm.

³Blumenberg folosește conceptul *kultur* în sens ideal, ca sumă a tuturor actelor umane, inclusiv a raporturilor noastre cu diverse abstracțiuni.

excursul ei antemodern. Dintre metaforele transistorice, notăm: metafora cerului înstelat, metafora naufragiului, metafora adevărului și metafora cărții. În acest articol ne vom opri la prezentarea structurii lor înainte ca ele să intre în modernitate.

În această ordine de idei, metafora cerului înstelat este considerată fundamentală, căci prin ea putem decripta sensul modernității, funcționalitatea și limitele ei. Ceea ce se poate spune, înainte de toate, despre această metaforă, este că are o vechime apreciabilă, întinzându-se de la Homer, până la cele mai recente scrieri moderne. Chiar dacă ea nu se regăsește între lucrurile necesare, nici habituale, nici imediate, nici derizorii, consideră Blumenberg, metafora în cauză este importantă tocmai prin prisma legăturii cu elementele care au constituit „lumea vieții”¹. Portretul ei corespunde perfect modelului antropologic, folosit în schița metaforologică: omul își însușește prin metaforă un plus de cunoaștere, care nu e necesar din punct de vedere strict biologic, căci acesta ar putea trăi „ca animal” și fără metaforă.

Traectoria metaforei în cauză a suferit schimbări dramatice, lucru care ne indică dimensiunea ei, dar și orizontul în care e pusă. Schimbarea ei, cu alte cuvinte, e proporțională cu schimbarea contextului paradigmatic. Angajată în explicația cosmică, ea nu reprezintă un scop în sine, ci un mijloc în realizarea unei cosmologii, necesar coerente, altminteri, ar duce la colapsul epocii.

În perioada Greciei Antice, această metaforă debutează având conotații sceptice, fapt ce indică existența unei distanțe ireductibile între spațiul zeilor și spațiul oamenilor. Cele două lumi nu sunt niciodată împăcate², iar ajutorul lui Prometeu arată dimensiunea conflictului dintre cele două spații, consideră Blumenberg. La nivelul viziunii asupra *θεωρία*, mitologizarea e o dimensiune suplimentară a acestei prăpastii, căci miturile intră în conflict cu observațiile directe ale cerului. Soluția greacă, ce are nevoie de depășirea miturilor³, este doar un compromis, eficient într-o mică

¹Pentru o altă perspectivă de interpretare, prin prisma relației dintre „obiectivizarea vieții” și cristalizarea „lumii vieții”, a se vedea Wilhelm Dilthey, *Construcția lumii istorice în științele spiritului*, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, pp. 88-89 și urm.

²Blumenberg, *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt. Die Zweideutigkeit der Mimmels Eröffnung der Möglichkeit eines Kopernikus*, Band 1, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1989, p. 24.

³Blumenberg afirmă direct că depășirea miturilor se produce prin metaforă (Blumenberg, *Theorie der Lebenswelt*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin, 2010, p. 137.)

măsură, prin intermediul contemplației¹, structurată pe două nivele, anume pe idealul observatorului aflat în pasivitate și pe conceptul realității comprehensibilă prin idei².

În opinia lui Hans Blumenberg, contextul grecesc are multe elemente presante și inconveniente dramatice. Dintre acestea face parte și ideea că lumea nu este antropocentrică, din moment ce omul nici măcar nu cuprinde, în căutarea fericirii, obiectele superioare, demne, ale Universului, ci ultimul își căuta *singur* admiratorii săi, ca și când omul ar fi o ființă secundă. Această condiție va fi asumată până în momentul afirmării stoicismului, când omul devine ființă de prim rang, dar și aici cu condiționări venite dinspre natură, adică de la traiul în conformitate cu ea, cu toate că, din alt unghi, se poate deduce că omul era plasat de natură tocmai în mijlocul ei, ca și cum ar fi cel mai privilegiat din Univers. Cu toate acestea, până la stoicism, trebuie să spunem că zeii sunt în spatele Universului, iar acțiunile acestora (sau lipsa lor, indiferența lor) au făcut ca ultimul să pară deformat, incoerent, chiar haotic³. Dezangajarea metaforei cerului din funcția stabilirii coerenței cosmologiei grecești, scoasă în evidență prin intermediul concepției pasive asupra teoriei și a agentului cunoscător, duce la imposibilitatea de a gira explicații care să fie altfel decât pesimiste. Cerul este, într-un fel, abandonat.

În diverse perioade ulterioare, metafora cerului a reunit mai multe conotații, la fel de grăitoare, ca și intervalul grecesc, pentru contextul în care apar. În gnosticism, de pildă, întrucât spațiul e privit ca o realitate demonizată – cu toate că marea problemă nu este presiunea exercitată de această realitate, ci de imposibilitatea explicării creației, în condițiile în care zeul face parte din lume –, de asemenea, cerul este văzut ca fiind negativ și malefic. Cea mai bună atitudine este păstrarea distanței față de acesta.

Altă turnură a metaforei corespunde viziunii creștinismului, care îi alocă cerului o calitate fiziognomică, devenind totodată obiect de cunoaștere al omului. Așadar, creștinismul reinstaurează privitorul cerului ca om activ, dornic și capabil să cunoască. Aceste calități ale lui provin în mare parte din resemnificarea „Cuvântului”, care capătă mai mult sens,

¹De fapt, așa se și traduce *θεωρία* (Peters, E. Francis, *Termenii filozofiei grecești*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1993, p. 272).

²Blumenberg, *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt. Die Zweideutigkeit der Mimmels Eröffnung der Möglichkeit eines Kopernikus*, Band 1, op. cit., p. 26.

³*Ibidem*, p. 40.

semnificație, importanță¹. Cu toate acestea, atrage atenția Blumenberg, activitatea cunoașterii, deși are legitimitate și potență, nu este neapărat optimistă, din moment ce viața terestră este una nefericită, nedesăvârșită, incompletă, limitată etc., imperfecțiune compensată tocmai prin viața de după moarte, privită de Blumenberg ca explicație creștină cosmologică incoerentă și inconsistentă.

O altă metaforă, așa cum am spus mai sus, este cea a adevărului. Ea dovedește, la rândul-i, ca mare metaforă transistorică, faptul că nuanțele s-au schimbat mult de-a lungul timpului, astfel că „în virtutea originii sale aristoteliciene, prin care definiția trebuia să fie interpretată în sensul unei *adecquatio intellectus ad rem*, Evul Mediu a descoperit o posibilitate suplimentară, aceea de a defini adevărul absolut în intelectul divin, ca *adaequatio rei ad intellectum*”². În logica filosofiei lui Blumenberg, metafora adevărului e utilizată și ca modalitate de evidențiere a direcției gândirii europene³.

Pe de-o parte, fiind atât de mobilă, metafora adevărului permite „un spațiu de manevră”, suficient de larg, astfel încât să satisfacă toate curentele filosofice⁴. Pe de altă parte, răspunsul la întrebarea „Ce este adevărul?”, prin intermediul „materialului terminologic”, nu satisface plenitudinea interogației, moment în care ne aflăm într-un cerc vicios. Circumscrierea întrebării, pătrunderea acestei plenitudini, ca să îl parafrazăm pe Blumenberg, se poate face, în schimb, prin urmărirea traseului istoric al metaforei luminii, nimic altceva decât *adevărul ca lumină*, aspect care ne situează în „densitatea ascunsă” a adevărului⁵ și într-o viziune ideală, din punct de vedere hermeneutic, prin faptul că definiția lui e suma înțelegerilor istorice⁶.

Blumenberg consideră că unul dintre punctele esențiale ale acestei evoluții, dincolo de Aristotel, este reprezentat de Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius. Acesta, mai mult decât alții, are o specială

¹*Ibidem*, p. 38.

²Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1998, p. 14.

³Monod, Jean-Claude, *Hans Blumenberg*, Editions Belin, Paris, 2007, p. 21.

⁴Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁵Într-un anumit sens, „densitatea intensiunii”, ca stare de fapt a „realității”, ca *ceva* ce premerge conceptualizarea, este o condiție a metaforizării.

⁶Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

„capacitate de absorbție culturală și autenticitate”¹. Lactantius este apreciat de Blumenberg prin metafora „vis veritatis”, unde adevărul capătă o proprietate naturală, care „nu se exprimă în mod imediat prin potențialitatea sa”. Mai mult decât atât, adevărul îi aparține lui Dumnezeu. Aportul lui Lactantius, în această viziune, este că, spre diferență de Toma d’Aquino sau de Vico, apartenența adevărului de Dumnezeu are sens juridic. Conotația pe care o alocă Lactantius relației de posesiune cu adevărul constă din teza că proprietatea față de adevăr se justifică sau are de-a face cu faptul de a-i sta la origine adevărului și de a avea puterea de a dispune „în mod suveran de această proprietate”².

O altă metaforă care apare cu rol principal în cristalizarea culturii europene este cea a naufragiului, care apare în Grecia Antică ca „teren de încercare pentru filosofi”. În această categorie intră și fabula lui Esop, în care personajul principal se trezește după un naufragiu și blestemă marea, numai că aceasta din urmă îi răspunde că este vina vântului pentru ceea ce i se întâmplă. Vântul, fiind de altă natură decât marea, este bănuțit că ar fi pe deplin responsabil de stârnirea valurilor. Blumenberg consideră că interpretul nu trebuie să se oprească la morala imediată a fabulei: responsabilitatea nu este a celui care acționează, ci a celui responsabil de acțiune, cel care o „comandă”. Mai degrabă, cititorul sau auditorul trebuie să observe că fabula e „frumoasă, dar imperfectă”, iar o atare imperfecțiune vine din faptul că „dezamăgește”, prin aceea că marea egalează pământul în semnificație, echivalând cu ușurință *φύσις*-ul, „cel mai convingător argument pentru greci”³. Dar cu toate acestea, vântul are și el un cuvânt de spus, spune Blumenberg, sugerând totodată faptul că lucrurile nu sunt încheiate, ba dimpotrivă, această metaforă „mobilizează” spiritul, cunoașterea etc. Faptul că metafora naufragiului este, în cele din urmă, ubicuă, nu mai trebuie demonstrat. Sunt suficiente relatările din literatură sau cazurile Apostolului Pavel, martor a trei naufragii și al lui Goethe, în modernitate, care e aproape de naufragiu, între Messina și Neapole.

Cel mai important lucru este că „pentru filosofi, acesta [naufragiul] este calea obligatorie”, Blumenberg punându-și întrebarea retorică: „Cum altfel poate cineva pricepe ultimele și penultimele lucruri, dacă nu a fost expus la ele?”⁴. Adecvată este aici metafora persoanei care nu știe să înoate,

¹*Ibidem*, p. 50.

²*Ibidem*.

³Blumenberg, *Die Sorge geht über der fluß*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1988, p. 7.

⁴*Ibidem*, p. 8.

a „neînătorului”, a „neinițiatului”, corelativă cazului filosofului, care capătă, prin încercări și, metaforic vorbind, naufragii, deprinderile înotului și se inițiază, totodată în cunoaștere. Dar în timp ce unii filosofi sunt „imuni la întreruperi”, adică se pot lăsa luați de furtună, duși în larg, după care revin într-o continuitate firească, desigur, într-o etapă superioară în privința gradului de cunoaștere, în schimb, alții vor să se asigure că „teritoriul e locuit”, că există semne care nu dispar în valuri, pentru a-l parafraza pe Blumenberg. Aceștia din urmă sunt cei care mizează pe „omniprezența virtuală a condițiilor”, pe stabilitate, constituind nimic altceva decât structura de rezistență a platonismului. Dar, pe de altă parte, arhitectura episodică a acestuia seamănă cu cazul destinului întrerupt de naufragiu și continuat apoi, care e o manieră proprie felului nostru de a fi. Acest lucru e vizibil nu doar în istoria ideilor sau a filosofiei, ci și în câmpul vieții obișnuite, precum, de pildă, în felul de a fi al imigrantului, care, după ce vine în țara de adopție, văzută ca un naufragiu, e consecvent „scrierii tăblițelor ca în țara de origine”¹.

Ca metaforă aflată în interiorul limbii, naufragiul este greu de „ancorat” în explicația filosofică exactă. De aceea, platonismul, consideră Blumenberg, redă o traiectorie fragmentară, episodică. „Trecerile”, „pragurile”, adică naufragiile, sunt „catastrofe, chiar și, sau mai ales, atunci când vor să vorbească de universal”².

O altă nuanță a metaforei naufragiului, extrasă tot dintre fabulele lui Esop, este cea care privește faptul că într-o corabie se întâmplă adesea ca inamicii să călătorească împreună. De aceea, unul dintre ei se duce în față, la provă, iar altul, în spate, la pupă. Atunci când corabia începe să se scufunde, „părțile” navei, ipostazele sale antropomorfe, dacă putem spune așa, se întrebă care parte se scufundă prima. Conform lui Blumenberg, „prova este răspunsul”, cheia de interpretare, ea fiind cea care vede inamicul, în spatele corăbiei, înecându-se, lucru care îi provoacă satisfacție, prin faptul că „dușmanul moare primul”³. Desigur, faptul că cineva poate îndura vicisitudini, inclusiv moartea, dacă are, anterior, satisfacția suferinței sau chiar moartea inamicului, reprezintă o morală imediată a poveștii. Totuși, mai mult decât atât, fabula are implicații și mai profunde, care rămân oarecum insondabile în „milieu”-ul grec, plecând de la faptul că

¹Ibidem.

²Ibidem.

³Ibidem.

„moartea celuilalt este o consolare minoră din moment ce moartea proprie pare inevitabilă” și, de asemenea, prin aceea că ne întrebăm ce gândește, spune sau face „celălalt”¹. Fabula lui Esop nu cunoaște subjonctivul, prin urmare, consideră Blumenberg, nu poate integra „sofisticații psihologice”². De aceea, ea utilizează o structură care se descrie prin „naïveté”. Dar cu toate acestea, capriciozitatea inamicilor poate fi interpretată și ca stare tranzitorie, astfel că, mai degrabă, ipostaza ultimă, cea care oferă șansa imortalizării, eternității, este centrul de greutate hermeneutic.

În acest sens, înțelegerea mesajului subtil al poveștii presupune dezideratul de a te situa înaintea (sau deasupra, în sensul figurat) naufragiului, încrezător, în același timp, față de orice naufragiu potențial.

O altă metaforă antemodernă este cea a cărții. Ea se găsește în relație permanentă cu metafora lumii sau cu cea a naturii. Prin faptul că lumea are nevoie de explicitare, metafora cărții va fi întotdeauna centrală. Lumea, ca și natura, „presupune o operație analitică”³. Aici este și diferența de bază dintre metafora cărții și cea a lumii, precum și breșa prin care sunt operate modificări și intervenții, care aduc plusvaloare lumii. Fiind o descriere, cartea tinde către analiticitatea lizibilității, o condiție naturală, în sens larg, a lumii, fapt ce o face pe ultima să existe, generându-i mișcare și *sens*. Acest lucru se realizează în Grecia Antică, însă, cu mențiunea că, deși funcționează ca mișcare de interpretare a lumii, ea nu satisface așteptările legate de rezultat. De aceea, se recurge la extinderea lizibilității lumii și la funcționalitatea „citirii” acestei sfere, prin asigurarea generalizării literelor la întregul Univers. Grecii asistă, așadar, la „alfabetizarea lumii”, un fenomen care tatonează chiar ideea că Universul însuși este codificabil și decriptabil⁴. Ca proces de „alfabetizare”⁵, el nu este unul nou, căci au existat situații întâlnite și în alte interpretări filosofice ale lumii, cum este cazul atomismului, unde unitățile, mărimi care trebuiau „reprezentate la fel

¹*Ibidem*, p. 9.

²*Ibidem*, 10.

³Blumenberg, *Lizibilitatea lumii*, trad. Maria-Magdalena Anghelescu, Editura Tact, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, p. 36.

⁴*Ibidem*.

⁵Pe de altă parte, modernitatea inventariază și alte modalități de „citire” a lumii, dincolo de alfabet; în legătură aceste perspective, îndeosebi cea a lui Berkeley este deosebit de importantă pentru Blumenberg, prin faptul că lumea nu este ceea ce ne arată limbajul, ci și ceea ce se oferă intuiției noastre. Ideea centrală este că limbajul poate fi evitat, ceea ce conduce la eludarea lui *genius malignus* al lumii, căci „nu poate exista înșelătorie, unde nu se afirmă nimic” (a se vedea Blumenberg, *Lizibilitatea lumii*, *op. cit.*, p. 153).

de concret ca ideile și formele, adică drept figuri¹, pot fi comparate cu litere sau cu cuvinte ale Universului². Dar, abia în perioada târzie, „alfabetul” lumii capătă o anumită naturalețe.

Metaforele analizate mai sus redau, după cum am văzut, cadrul complex al istoriei, oferind o viziune ce poate sonda determinațiile intelectuale sau psihologice, stările de spirit, așteptările, angoasele și mai tot orizontul uman în anumite epoci. De aceea, metoda lui Blumenberg, concentrată pe metafore transistorice, este foarte utilă în cadrul acestui proiect.

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¹Blumenberg, *Lizibilitatea lumii*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

²Totuși, în altă parte, Blumenberg ne spune că „metafora alfabetică” și „metoda reductivă a teoriei atomiste”, au anumite puncte de convergență (Blumenberg, *Lizibilitatea lumii*, *op. cit.*, p. 39). Deși prima nu o justifică pe ultima, îi poate servi ca funcție de întărire a coerenței, o poate ajuta în construcția clară a realității; coerența alăturării de cuvinte sau de litere putea arăta, consideră Blumenberg, faptul că Universul – compunerea lui plecând de la unitățile cele mai mici către agregatele cele mai mari – nu este hazard; dar și invers, comparația putea dăuna, căci Universul nu presupune ceea ce legea micro-semnificațiilor (atomilor) admite, în compunerea lor, adică semnificația și comprehensivitatea; metafora cărții, în sens imediat, presupune reproducerea sensului, prin recompunerea unităților (literelor), iar din acest fapt rezultă extensiunea sistemului.

PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF REVERSE LOGISTICS

Janusz GRABARA¹, Ștefan VLĂDUȚESCU², Sebastian KOT³

***Abstract:** The basic rules of philosophy are present in our everyday life. It is also present in the economy, culture and social life. Even the performance of enterprises has some of its rules, so philosophy is important as an element of each activity. This paper presents the link between philosophy and reverse logistics. The link between them is similar to loop. In both fields of knowledge there is something on the beginning, than its life-cycle is ending but there is still something after this end. On that basis, the philosophy is also present in reverse logistics activities, because they set some processes which lead from point of final destinations of products or wastes to the point of origin.*

***Keywords:** philosophy, reverse logistics, life cycle.*

1. Introduction

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. It is distinguished from other ways of addressing fundamental questions (such as mysticism, myth, or the arts) by its critical, generally systematic approach and its reliance on rational argument. There is also the philosophy of science, which is concerned with the assumptions, foundations, methods and implications of science. In addition to these central problems for science as a whole, many philosophers of science consider these problems as they apply to particular sciences (e.g. philosophy of biology or philosophy of physics). Some philosophers of science also use contemporary results in science to draw philosophical morals.

In further part of the article there is the classical part of philosophy shown together with the conceptions of reverse logistics and life-cycle assessment. It is giving the overview for linking the philosophy with logistics activities and showing the elements of philosophy as a part of them.

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2. Paradigms of Asian and European Philosophy

Today, the reincarnation coming from Hindu tradition¹ seems to be very popular in our society. People from all over the world have continually searched for the answers about present life and after-life. Also, there are many various religions which promote many different views about reincarnation. One of the oldest in the world is Hinduism. This religion has influenced our culture more than any other doctrine, with the exception of Christianity. Hinduism doctrine was established from the ancient times, first, it was explicated in the Upanishads (c. 1000 BC – AD4), which are philosophico-mystic texts were received as the essence of the Vedas.

The idea that the soul' reincarnation is linked to karma directly was first mentioned in the Hindu books of the Upanishads. The idea that individual souls (jiva-atmas) have come from one planer of existence carry with their impressions (samskaras) from the former state of being. These souls' karmic aggregations are taken to the next life and the result is a causally-determined state of being. In Hinduism doctrine, liberation from samsara, the close circulation of death and rebirth, is considered as an ultimate goal of the existence on the Earth. It's been known as a Moksha Mahasamadhi, in other words – Nirvana, in Hinduism.

As was mentioned before, this is the basic tenets of Hinduism. Reincarnations in Hinduism are called as transmigration. This is the belief that the soul can digress as well as progresses. A good life results in rebirth to a higher-quality life form, and a bad life to a lower-quality life form. This forward and backward progression is based on the Law of Karma, in which good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished. The ultimate goal in the Karmic cycle is for the soul to progress to the highest level of existence and become as one with the universe. And this is what should be considered before buying this into mythical philosophy.

Also, in ancient Greek, some philosophers believed in reincarnation. It is called classical Greek Philosophy² where Pythagoras was probably the first Greek philosopher to advance the reincarnation idea. It's not been known exactly how the reincarnation doctrine arose in Greece. Most of the scholars don't believe that the idea was borrowed from Egypt, or was

¹ Dennis D., *Living, Dying, Grieving*. Edition by Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Sudbury 2009.

² Vlastos G., (2004) *Socrates, Plato, and their traditions*. Princeton University Press, 2nd edition, United Kingdom.

transmitted in some way from ancient Hindu thinkers of India. It is easiest to assume that reincarnations doctrine had been never extinguished were utilized for philosophic and religious purposes. The orphic religion first appeared in Thrace upon the semi-barbarious north-eastern frontier.

The above philosophy frameworks might be also useful to present how some systems at today world perform. The good illustration of the most popular system, based on philosophical rules, is ecosystem. In ecosystem¹ all live organisms, the big ones and the small ones, have conditional terms to each other. One specie eats another, which is eaten in turn by other. This process is called food chain. Any food chain has his beginning in plants, as they are the only organisms which can produce the food by own. These plants are called producers. The food which they produce can provide the energy live to the all consumers (animals). This energy, in food chain, is directed from the plants to the primary consumers (first-row consumers), like animals, who eat plants, and from there (animals) to secondary consumers (second-row consumer), who eat in turn primary consumers. The second-row consumers provide the energy life to the third-row consumers, by eating the secondary consumers. Every food chain has a decomposer or saprobionts organisms in its parts. These organisms eat the rests of dead plants and animals. By eating, they breaking down the dead organic matter. And this is the way, how the basic chemicals are coming back to the ground to build new basic substances as proteins for example.

3. Main concept of reverse logistics

The most popular definition of reverse logistics is given by Council of Logistics Management, which said that reverse logistics is the term often used to refer to the role of logistics in recycling, waste disposal, and management of hazardous materials; a broader perspective includes all relating to logistics activities carried out in soured reduction, recycling, substitution, reuse of materials and disposal².

¹ Stuart F., Matson P., Mooney H. (2002) *Principles of Terrestrial Ecosystem Ecology*. Springer Science+Business Media, Stanford.

² Dekker R., Fleishmann M., Inderfurth K., Wassenhove L., (2004) *Reverse Logistics. Quantitative Models for Closed-Loop Supply Chain*. Springer, Berlin-Heidelberg; Pokharel, S., Mutha, A. (2009). *Perspectives in reverse logistics: a review*. Resources, Conservation and Recycling, 53(4), 175-182.

Other authors describe the concept of reverse logistics systems that support waste management and recycling processes, pointing to the growing pressure of political spheres sanctioned relevant legislation to ensure the safety and environmental protection. This approach extends the scope of modern logistics systems.¹

In another definition the term reverse logistics is used in the field of waste disposal, which means the creation of logistic chains connecting the waste disposal site². The elements of logistics in the field of waste disposal are: separate their waste, their transport and storage as well as recycling allows users to share re-recycled. Particular importance is given to making the links between the worlds of disposal, and spheres of production and consumption. Such extension generates new conceptual importance of logistics tasks in the rendering process to include, the selection of raw materials and production due to the recyclability or biodegradability, and the introduction of technological processes of raw materials recycled. Is also an important aspect of the law that forces the use of inspection procedures regarding the obligation of recovering products and packaging for reuse.³

In other words, reverse logistics is a process of movement of goods with final destination to the point of birth in order to recover the value or proper disposal. Processing and renewal of products can also be incorporated into the definition of reverse logistics. It is necessary that the reverse logistics was seen as more complex and as something more than just re-use and recycling of packaging materials for packing. The re-design of packaging to using less material, or reducing energy consumption and transportation emissions are important activities, but rather are an issue of concern "green" logistics. The distinction allows simple rule according to which if any products or materials are not sent back, this action is not likely to reverse logistics operation. Reverse logistics also includes processing of returns of damaged or defective goods, from seasonal inventory, restock,

¹ Coyle J. J., Bardi E. J., Langley C. J. (2002), *Logistics Management*. PWE, Warszawa 2002; Ravi, V., Shankar, R. (2005). *Analysis of interactions among the barriers of reverse logistics*. Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 72(8), 1011-1029; Tabor, J., Modrak, J. (2015). *Occupational Safety Management in Selected Logistics Systems*. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 12(2), 161-169.

² Budica, I., Busu, O. V., Dumitru, A., Purcaru, M. L. (2015). *Waste management as commitment and duty of citizens*. Polish Journal of Management Studies, 11(1).

³ Gołemska E (2001) *Kompendium wiedzy o logistyce*. PWN, Warszawa.

the use of waste, end-of goods and surplus stocks. It also applies to recycling programs, hazardous materials, management of obsolete equipment and capital recovery.¹

In reverse logistics can be distinguished two categories, first is known as closed-loop, and the second as open-loop systems. In opposite to logistics, in which supply chains are based, in forward order, on successive linkage between producer and distributor, in reverse logistics, its residual-recovery chains are based mainly on collector and recycler backward linkages. The close-loop system is created when the recycled residuals are returned to the earlier producer using the same supply chain. This type of reverse distribution system is required to implement the following steps: the first one – when the companies respond mainly to legislative, customers and any other requirements. The second one – when the companies are more sophisticated and develop environmental programs and collaborating with the governments in the design of improvement environmental guidelines and regulations. Open-loop systems takes the place when the residuals are passed to one or more third parties, the simple example of this system can be the collections services for the newspapers, packaging and beverage containers, when the residuals are collected into homogenous categories prior to reprocessing².

The reverse logistics' literature is remaining some very important reasons and benefits in favor of the application and use reverse logistics practically.³

At first, perceptions of product returns as a competitive advantage. Because trade is faced with ever greater competition in the market, belong to take into account every possibility, which is likely to achieve competitive advantage. This conceals the potential adoption of returned goods policy, which is the best, never-ending source of profit and increase customer loyalty behavior.

Return of goods not only as a necessary business expenses incurred. Typically, product returns and associated costs are seen as a necessary expense. However, the costs associated with returns, in fact, although not

¹ Rogers D., Tibben-Lembke R., (1999) *Reverse logistics challenges*. University of Nevada, Reno

² Blumberg D., (2005) *Introduction to management of reverse logistics and closed loop supply chain processes*. CRC Press, Florida, USA

³ Grabara J., (2013) *Sustainable Logistics Management*. Editura Universitatii "Lucian Blaga" din Sibiu, Sibiu.

insignificant, are not significantly high and also counts as a determinant of business items on the market.

Removal the return channel in not favorable, and it is slow, inefficient and expensive. Recovering value from returned products is a difficult task, especially when the return channel will be closed. Although these channels are widely used, they often lack the ease and efficiency. The end result is, however, about 10 to 20% of the recovered costs, because then the product loses value at every step, while on his way leading to the end point. Returns products provide a vast amount of information about the product, and of customers, sellers and other participants in the supply chain. For example, can provide information about the current status of products, ease of use, hidden manufacturing defects or the expectations of customers.

Number of returned products. A particularly important factor for companies operating online who are experiencing an exceptionally large lot of returned goods. This is the result of experimentation by customers purchasing products impulsively. To counteract, companies set up a hotline to inform customers about the reimbursement of expenses only when they provide the good reason for return the product.

The costs of returning the products to a manufacturer to a large extent borne by the vendor. Vendors often return the large lots of goods to the producer without any specific reasons, only for their comfort. This transfer results in the necessity of increasing prices from the manufacturer, which is intended to recover losses incurred as a result of returns. Therefore, companies are increasingly switching from reimbursement policy for all costs and set fees for the sellers of certain goods in return, which effectively discourages sellers to practice such activities.

Contracted companies are conduct very effectively with the return products. Some retailers and manufacturers do not have the internal capacity for storage, processing and disposal of the return of goods. Therefore, they hired third parties to conduct such activities for them. In the result they can provide a better service for customers, lower costs and greater flexibility possible. Contracted companies have developed specialized contract processes proceeding with the repayments or make investments in this direction, which improves their image as a partner and simultaneously improves the activities related to product returns received.

Returns management products is the possibility of gaining and maintaining customer loyalty. This is very important due to growing

competition. Reverse logistics is causing magnificent increase on-online and is using modern technology and development in the case of returns goods.

From the above definitions of reverse logistics can be concluded that the process of reverse logistics is a kind of “transmigration of souls”. In reverse logistics is strongly emphasized the element of re-provisioning. It means that the products life cycle does not end at the time of its “death”, but depending on the characteristics and purpose of the product, it might be put into a recycling process to re-designed for its use, or in the case of its complete consumption product’s life ends at the landfill. Recycling process to which the product is subjected can be compared to the process of reincarnation, as a result of which, as a new product, but having the same “soul” begins its next cycle of life. In the second case, when fully used product goes to landfill, its path is similar to a road that follows the soul, at the end which it achieves the highest level of “existence”, where the product is fully used, after which it has been put in a process of rendering and become a part of the environment.

4. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

The main definition of LCA is that life-cycle assessment is a technique to assessing the environmental aspects and potential impacts associated with a product, by compiling an inventory of relevant inputs and outputs of a product system, evaluating the potential environmental impacts associated with those inputs and outputs and interpreting the results of the inventory analysis and impact assessment phases in relation to the objectives of the study¹.

LCA studies the environmental aspects and potential impacts throughout the product’s life from raw materials acquisition through production, use and disposal. The general categories of environmental impacts needing consideration include resource use, human health and ecological consequences. Life-Cycle Assessment may be concentrated on the fields of compare, analyze and aid design.

The literature lists major concepts LCA which are following²:

¹ ISO 14040. *Draft: Life Cycle Assessment – Principles and Guidelines*

² Vigon B. V., (2004) *Life Cycle Assessment. Inventory Guidelines and Principles*. Lewis Publishers, United Kingdom; Qingxin, F., Hongguang, A., Chao, M. (2007). *Life Cycle Assessment*. Environmental Science and Management, 6, 050.

- Life-cycle assessment is a tool to evaluate the environmental consequences of a product or activity holistically, across its entire life
- There is a trend in many countries toward more environmentally benign products and processes
- A complete life-cycle assessment consists of three complementary components: inventory, impact and improvement analysis
- Life-cycle inventories can be used both internally to an organization and externally, with external applications requiring a higher standard of accountability
- Life-cycle inventory analyses can be used in process analysis, material selection, product evaluation, product comparison and policy-making

Life cycle assessment is the most important element of reverse logistics. By its analysis it is possible to get the knowledge when to start the reverse logistics processes and also how they should look by knowledge about raw materials needs on the life cycle beginning. Based on life cycle all reverse logistics processes are organized in such way to perform the best in the closed cycle of production. The same as in philosophy – the main goal is to keep as much matter in the cycle as it is possible.

A good example illustrating the connection between the ongoing philosophy of reincarnation, life cycle is the following diagram showing the flow (reincarnation) of packaging:

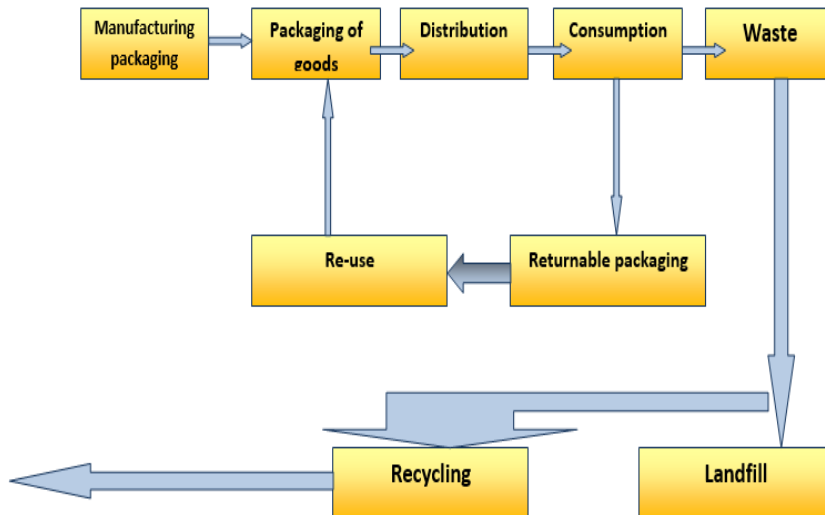


Fig. 1 – Flow (reincarnation) of packaging.

Source: Author's elaboration "Compounds reincarnation of computerized logistics packages"

As is clear from the presented diagram, used packaging undergoing, mentioned above, "transmigration of souls" process. This means that some packages will be processed and reached a new personality in the form of a new product, created from raw material, while others packages, especially these fully used, will be sent to a landfill.

5. Conclusion

This article aim was to show how reincarnation aspect might be connected to reverse logistics as a very important part of its subject. There was used an example of philosophical elements used in logistics policy and operations, specifically in the processes of reverse logistics. It has been known that reverse logistics was not contemporary discovered, it has roots in philosophy's ancient times. Just as philosophical in approach, the reverse logistics has the elements of "life after death." This is due to the fact that its actions are based on analyzing the life cycle of products. This cycle begins with the appearance of an idea for a new product through all phases of its creation and distribution, and ends with the consumption of the product. End of product life is not always equivalent to its total uselessness. Products ending his life may be defection products, defective, obsolete, etc. They can also be by-products becoming waste time. However, given the desire to preserve increasingly closed-circuit terminating life products are restored to life in full or in a part. This is the basic premise is the reverse logistics, the activities aim to maximize the recovery value of these products. They may, therefore, be renewed, recycled or processed to recover their old form or recovery of materials which constitute the raw material for new products. This is part of closely linking the philosophical approach of reverse logistics, which involves the circulation of matter in a closed cycle.

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RECENZII

R. G. Collingwood, *Eseu despre metoda filosofică*, traducere de D. G. Stoianovici, București, Ed. Humanitas, 2015.

Robin George Collingwood (1889 – 1943), profesor la Pembroke College și apoi la Magdalen College, ambele la Oxford, a devenit celebru odată cu lucrările sale în domeniul epistemologiei, filosofiei istoriei, esteticii și nu numai, ideile sale circulând în anii 1950-1960 în dezbaterile despre metodele și obiectivele științele sociale, fiind de asemenea angajat împotriva filosofiei analitice, așa cum era proiectată de regulă la acea vreme, împotriva metafizicii tradiționale, împotriva neoempirismului, etc. Lucrarea de față, *Eseu despre metoda filosofică* (Ed. Humanitas, 2015), apărută sub traducerea lui D. G. Stoianovici, are la bază dezideratul autonomiei filosofiei, cu metode și obiective specifice.

Printre temele abordate se numără clasele logice, raportul dintre definiție și descriere, calitatea și cantitatea. O discuție importantă o reprezintă diviziunile și granițele asumate de metafizică și logică, pe de o parte, și separarea netă a empirismului de raționalism, pe altă parte. Pentru Collingwood, presupuzițiile făcute în „cunoașterea geometrică” despre pătrate (ex. o lege oarecare, precum: „orice pătrat are diagonalele congruente”) nu sunt contradictorii față de lipsa „accesului cognitiv” în cazul pătratelor. Adică aceste presupuziții se pot lipsi de „realitate”, imaginarea unui pătrat fiind doar un mijloc de operaționalizare a acestor axiome, concepte abstracte, etc.

În aceeași ordine de idei, Collingwood se întreabă dacă o știință, cum este metafizica, fără a găsi obiectele sale în lumea perceptibilă, poate pretinde *existența* în lumea inteligibilă. Concluzia filosofului britanic este următoarea: „O atare credință reprezintă o concepție metafizică înțesată de dificultăți, un lucru mai greu de înțeles decât ideile geometriei elementare, o teorie la care grecii au fost conduși în urma reflecției asupra cunoștințelor lor matematice – altfel spus, o teorie la care grecii ca nație, și oricare dintre noi ca indivizi, au ajuns după ce au dobândit un bagaj solid de cunoștințe matematice, nicidecum înainte” (p. 107).

În ceea ce privește empirismul, Collingwood apreciază că, deoarece el ține de domeniul faptelor, riscăm să credem că enunțurile lui nu au elemente ipotetice (așa cum cunoașterea matematică sau geometrică posedă din plin), ca și când „faptele nude în toată varietatea lor multiformă” nu prezintă nicin interes, nici pentru omul de știință, nici pentru cel simplu.

Ipoteticul, însă, este prezent și în judecățile de natură empirică. „Entitatea tuberculoză”, de pildă, presupune un cadru fix de descriere, dar și cazurile potențiale de pacienți. Importanța ipotetivului este și mai generoasă câtă vreme luăm în calcul aportul lui în formarea altor medici, chiar dacă în realitate nu vor întâlni astfel de cazuri. Prin urmare, conchide Collingwood, „propozițiile universale pe care le formulează o știință empirică au un caracter ipotetic asemănător celui al propozițiilor matematice” (p. 110).

Filosoful englez identifică două tipuri de propoziții categorice: unul al enunțurilor factuale și altul al enunțurilor factuale aplicate. Corpul științei este intermediar între aceste extreme. Dar filosofia se află în afara acestei zone intermediare, fiind ocupată cu propozițiile categorice. Explicația pentru acest lucru nu este doar istorică (toți marii filosofi au postulat acest deziderat al propozițiilor categorice), ci și de natură psihologică (oricine studiază filosofia este sigur că studiază un obiect existent). De altfel, chiar și științele sunt *angajate* față de obiectul lor. De pildă, logica, al cărei obiect, gândirea, „oferă o exemplificare a ceva ce nu poate fi conceput decât ca real; a ceva a cărui esență implică existența” (p. 119).

Lucrarea lui Collingwood este o bună unealtă de a înțelege cauza ezitărilor și, în special, a crizei de azi a filosofiei, la care aceasta a ajuns datorită neînțelegerii temeiului său real. Fără conștientizarea propriului său temei, filosofia actuală se va lupta în zadar cu alte științe, negăsindu-și nici granițele care să o diferențieze de acestea, nici obiectele specifice de cunoscut și nici mijloacele de realizare a unei atari cunoașteri.

(Ionuț Răduică, University of Craiova)

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