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# LE STATUT DE L'ANIMAL DANS LE NEOPLATONISME : LES FONDEMENTS PHILOSOPHIQUES DE PLOTIN ET PORPHYRE

José María ZAMORA CALVO<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *For the early Neoplatonists, Plotinus and Porphyry, animals are included in the dimension of Intelligence, which comes from the One, or Good; so they are, in some respects, intelligent beings, although they do not use their intelligence much. The affinity between animals and men is based on the similarity of biological structure and the transmigration. In opposition to the Stoic doctrine, for Plotinus and Porphyry it is impious not to recognize a form of reason in animals; hence the wise, to purify his soul and resemble the divine, should abstain from eating animal flesh.*

**Keywords:** *Plotinus, Porphyry, animal, vegetarianism, animal sacrifice.*

Un des points capitaux inquiétant de nos jours les érudits versés dans le néoplatonisme réside dans l'interprétation de sa structure hiérarchique. Pour beaucoup de ces chercheurs, cette structure n'assigne pas strictement une position privilégiée aux êtres humains face au reste des animaux et face aux plantes, tout comme à l'intelligence, à l'âme et à la rationalité face au corps.

Notre intérêt se centre sur une ligne interprétative de la pensée actuelle appliquée à Platon, à Aristote et à la tradition platonicienne postérieure, que Corrigan (2005, 147-148) traite d'« inclusive » : la nature intelligible de la biologie. Une première partie de cette biologie intelligible peut être trouvée dans le *Timée* (30c-31b), quand Platon signale que tous les êtres vivants sont des parties du modèle intelligible inclusif à partir duquel le démiurge fabrique les multiples espèces du monde sensible<sup>2</sup>. Pour Platon, les plantes sont aussi des « animaux » ou

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<sup>2</sup> Dans la production du monde visible, le démiurge prend le « vivant parfait » (παντελής ζῷον) comme « modèle » (παράδειγμα, Platon, *Tim.*, 30c-31b). Toutefois, tous trois – le vivant parfait, le démiurge et le modèle – sont une seule chose. D'ailleurs, le démiurge correspond à l'aspect producteur – ordonnateur du vivant parfait, tout comme le modèle correspond à l'aspect paradigmatique (cf. Baltes 1996, 82 et 88-91 ; Broadie 2010).

des êtres vivants. D'ailleurs, l'animalité regroupe tout ce qui est vivant, animaux et plantes, puisqu'ils partagent une même structure élémentaire (cf. *Tim.*, 77a-c).

Chaque espèce possède son propre bien particulier, indépendamment de la rationalité humaine. L'intelligence est aussi bien « nôtre » que non-« nôtre » (cf. Plotin, *Enn.* V 3 [49] 3, 26-77). Et si tel est le cas, même si d'autres animaux possèdent un certain type de rationalité et que les plantes en sont totalement dépourvues, ils sont néanmoins inclus dans la dimension de l'Intelligence qui procède de l'Un-Bien. Tous les animaux sont dotés de raison ou d'une rationalité implicite de formes si différentes que les barrières entre ceux-ci s'estompent. Même les êtres humains ne sont pas tous pareillement rationnels. D'ailleurs, il y a plus de « classes de vie » qu'une séparation stricte et nette entre les espèces humaines et animales.

### I. La définition d'animal

L'animal, ou l'être vivant (*zôion*), chez Plotin et Porphyre, de même que chez Platon (*Phdr.*, 246c5)<sup>1</sup>, est défini par l'assemblage d'un corps et d'une âme : « Mais il faut de toute façon examiner l'âme se tenant dans le corps (qu'elle existe avant lui ou bien qu'elle soit en lui), puisque c'est de l'union de l'âme et du corps que résulte 'ce que l'on appelle le vivant'. » (Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 3, 1-3 ; trad. Pradeau 2010, 187)<sup>2</sup>. Et, de même que chez Platon, le terme *zôion* est dit « sous de nombreuses formes » (*pollachôs*). Ainsi, sont considérés comme « êtres vivants » les dieux, les

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N.B. Pour le grec ancien, nous avons utilisé le système de translittération suivant : êta = e ; oméga = o ; dzèta = z ; thèta = th ; xi = x ; phi = ph ; khi = kh ; psi = ps. L'iota souscrit est adscrit (par exemple ei ; et lorsqu'il s'agit d'un alpha, cet alpha est long = ai). L'esprit rude est noté h, et l'esprit doux n'est pas noté. Tous les accents sont notés.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brisson 1997, 227-229.

<sup>2</sup> Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐν σώματι θετέον ψυχὴν, οὐσαν εἴτε πρὸ τούτου, εἴτ' ἐν τούτῳ, ἐξ οὗ καὶ αὐτῆς <ζῶον τὸ σύμπαν ἐκλήθη>.

démons, les êtres humains, les animaux et les plantes. Pour cette raison, les termes « vie » (*zoé*) et « vivant » (*zôion*) sont homonymes, comme l'indique Porphyre dans la *Sentence* 12 :

« C'est n'est pas seulement dans les corps qu'il y a d'homonymie, mais la vie aussi fait partie des choses qui se disent en plusieurs sens ; autre en effet est la vie d'une plante, autre celle d'un être animé, autre celle d'un être intellectif, autre celle de la nature, autre celle de l'âme, autre celle de l'intellect, autre celle de l'Au-delà ; car il vit aussi<sup>1</sup>, lui, même si, parmi les choses qui viennent après lui, aucune n'est en possession d'une vie proche de lui. » (Trad. Brisson *et alii*, 2005, I, 313)<sup>2</sup>.

Si, pour Aristote, en restant dans le monde sensible, l'antérieur et le postérieur ne peuvent pas se trouver dans le même genre<sup>3</sup> ; pour Plotin et pour Porphyre, par contre, il est nécessaire d'introduire une hiérarchie entre l'antérieur, qui est de la compétence de l'intelligible ou des incorporels, et le postérieur, qui appartient au sensible ou aux corps.

L'âme d'un être humain est, selon Plotin, une réalité composée et mobile, qui ne peut pas être déliée de toutes les autres âmes<sup>4</sup> ; mais pas dans le sens de l'âme comportant des parties, sinon dans celui où elle se présente sous plusieurs aspects en fonction du « lieu » où il se trouve ou des activités qu'il exerce alors. À la cime de l'âme, que Plotin appelle « âme supérieure » et qui correspond à l'intelligence (*noûs*), l'âme humaine reste dans l'intelligible et peut descendre et s'installer dans un corps spécifique (*toiónde sôma*), pourvu d'une âme inférieure, d'une âme végétative (*phytikè psychè*)<sup>5</sup>. Le corps solide, généré par la partie inférieure

<sup>1</sup> Porphyre fait référence à l'Un: « car il vit aussi ». Toutefois, pour Plotin, celui qui donne la vie est « au-delà de la vie » (cf. *Enn.* VI 7 [38] 17, 10). La supériorité de ce qui donne sur ce qui est donné fait qu'il affirme dans certains passages que l'Un ne vit pas (cf. *Enn.* III 8 [30] 10, 30 ; III 9 [13] 9, 17), parce qu'il donne la vie (*Enn.* VI 7 [38] 17, 11-12).

<sup>2</sup> Οὐ μόνον ἐν τοῖς σώμασι τὸ ὁμώνυμον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τῶν πολλαχῶς· ἄλλη γὰρ ζωὴ φυτοῦ, ἄλλη ἐμψύχου, ἄλλη νοεροῦ, ἄλλη φύσεως, ἄλλη ψυχῆς, ἄλλη νοῦ, ἄλλη τοῦ ἐπέκεινα· ζῆ γὰρ κἀκεῖνο, εἰ καὶ μηδὲν τῶν μετ' αὐτὸ παραπλησίαν αὐτῶν ζῶν κέκτηται. Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* III 7 [45] 11, 48-50; I 4 [46] 3, 15-40.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Aristote, *Metaph.*, 999 a 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* IV 9 [8].

<sup>5</sup> Le corps spécifique ou qualifié (τὸ τοιόνδε σῶμα) est un corps qui est vivant, doté d'une âme inférieure, végétative. Toutefois, ce corps spécifique n'est pas

de l'âme du monde – la nature – dans le ventre de la mère, est d'abord un embryon, apte à recevoir dans la naissance une âme déterminée ou spécifique provenant de l'extérieur.

« Mais il faut définir le vivant soit comme étant ce corps particulier, soit comme la communauté du corps et de l'âme, soit comme une troisième chose différente, qui serait le résultat des deux premières<sup>1</sup>. Quoi qu'il en soit, il faut ou bien que l'âme impassible reste la cause de ces affections dans les corps, ou bien qu'elle éprouve elle aussi ces affections. » (Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 5, 1-7<sup>2</sup> ; trad. Pradeau 2010, 190).

L'âme qui définit un être humain est une âme qui est installée dans un organisme doté préalablement d'une âme végétative, participant à l'âme du monde mais dont une partie est encore liée à l'Intelligence. Ainsi, l'âme se déplace sans interruption entre deux pôles : l'Intelligence et l'organisme. Dans le ventre de la mère, l'embryon<sup>3</sup> se meut au sein d'une âme végétative à laquelle s'unit, à la naissance, une âme humaine qui, dans sa partie basse, la nature, sera responsable du mouvement local, de la sensation et de la réflexion, et dont une partie, l'intellect, demeure dans l'Intelligence.

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identique au composé corps et âme, qui est le corps vivant avec le pouvoir psychique qui l'anime (cf. Plotin, *Enn.* II 3 [52] 12, 30-2 ; IV 3 [27] 8, 1-3). D'ailleurs, comme l'indique Emilsson (1988, 76), le corps qualifié est le sujet des affections sensibles. Pour cela, l'affection n'est pas qu'un changement physique, car un corps spécifique, doté d'âme inférieure, est capable de sentir des affections (cf. *Enn.* IV 4 [28] 26, 14-16 ; IV 4 [28] 32, 1-17 ; IV 4 [28] 40 ; IV 9 [8] 3, 1-6). Cependant, le corps spécifique est seulement un des deux composants de l'« animal » dans le sens plotinien ; pour cela son exposition est remise à plus tard (*Enn.* I 1 [53] 5, 7, 14 ; cf. Igal 1982-1998, II, 190-191, n. 16).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Aristote, *de An.*, 408 b 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ἀλλὰ τὸ ζῶον ἢ τὸ σῶμα δεῖ λέγειν τὸ τοιόνδε, ἢ <τὸ κοινόν>, ἢ ἕτερόν τι τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν γεγενημένον. Ὅπως δ' ἂν ἔχη, ἦτοι ἀπαθῆ δεῖ τὴν ψυχὴν φυλάττειν αὐτὴν αἰτίαν γενομένην ἄλλω τοῦ τοιούτου, ἢ συμπάσχειν 1.1.5.5 καὶ αὐτὴν· καὶ ἢ ταῦτόν πάσχουσαν πάθημα πάσχειν, ἢ ὁμοίον τι, οἷον ἄλλως μὲν τὸ ζῶον ἐπιθυμεῖν, ἄλλως δὲ τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἐνεργεῖν ἢ πάσχειν.

<sup>3</sup> Comme le soutient Porphyre dans le traité *Ad Gaurum*, l'embryon, qui n'est rien de plus qu'un végétal, reçoit de l'extérieur, au moment de la naissance, l'âme qui le rendra animal. Sur la conception de l'embryon dans les premiers néoplatoniciens, voir Zamora Calvo 2016.



Pour Plotin, ce que nous pourrions nommer perception passive est une fonction humaine commune au reste du règne animal et végétal de différentes manières. Mais la perception, d'une manière plus significative, est cognitive et intellectuelle, le propre pouvoir de la perception surgissant donc quand on tient réellement compte de ce qui est perçu. La perception se transforme donc en une partie véritablement productive de la connaissance de soi. Si, selon toute vraisemblance, « nous » percevons réellement les choses, mais « nous sommes beaucoup » (*Enn.* I 1 [53] 9, 7), le cognitif, c'est-à-dire, le contexte intellectuel de la perception, permet l'ouverture à la constitution d'une authentique vie intérieure, c'est-à-dire, à « l'homme intérieur » (cf. *Enn.* I 1 [53] 10, 15)<sup>1</sup>.

La vie du corps animé est une image de la vie de l'âme<sup>2</sup>. Plotin se réfère au corps en tant qu'organisme d'un être vivant particulier, animal ou végétal, doté d'une individualité propre et, pour cela, déjà « déterminé », spécifique ou qualifié<sup>3</sup>. Pour le désigner, Plotin recourt à la terminologie aristotélique, *tò toiònde sôma*<sup>4</sup>.

Mais l'animal ne possède pas une âme humaine. Chez lui, l'image de l'âme est l'âme totale<sup>5</sup>, que ce soit de l'âme hypostase ou âme du monde, contrairement aux âmes particulières qui sont les nôtres. Plotin décrit l'organisme vivant comme un produit psychique. Le corps d'un être vivant particulier n'est pas une matière indéterminée, sinon déterminée par la raison, qui le pourvoit d'une configuration ; et cette configuration provient de l'âme ou, *stricto sensu*, de la faculté « descendue » de l'âme du monde ou de l'âme hypostase. Les facultés psychiques, que Plotin qualifie de « lumière » émise par l'âme, sont la sensation et la motricité qui viennent s'unir au corps et le rendent « déterminé », spécifique ou qualifié.

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<sup>1</sup> Plotin se base sur Platon (*Rép.*, IX, 589a-b). Précisément, dans cet « homme intérieur », « nous » sommes plus que rien (*Enn.* I 1 [53] 7, 16-17 ; cf. Corrigan 2005, 67-68).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* IV 3 [27] 10, 39-40.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 4, 24 ; 7, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Aristote, *de An.*, 412 a 27-28 et 412 b 5-6.), comme l'avait déjà fait Plotin dans le traité IV 4 [28]: *Sur les difficultés relatives à l'âme II.*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 7, 4.

« Admettons que ce soit le composé qui sente, du fait de la présence de l'âme : non pas parce que l'âme se donne elle-même au composé ou à l'autre élément du composé, mais parce que c'est elle qui, à partir du corps qualifié et d'une sorte de lumière venue d'elle-même, produit le vivant comme une chose distincte ; et c'est à cette chose distincte qu'appartiennent la faculté de sentir et toutes les affections dont nous avons dit qu'elles appartenaient au vivant. » (*Enn.* I 1 [53] 7, 1-6<sup>1</sup> ; trad. Pradeau 2010, 192).

Ce n'est pas « une âme de telle qualité » (= l'âme vraie) celle qui descend et est livrée au corps ou au composé animal, mais une image d'elle projetée par elle comme un scintillement<sup>2</sup>. Le composé n'est pas strictement l'union de l'âme et du corps sinon le composé du corps et d'une puissance provenant de l'âme, que Plotin appelle « lumière »<sup>3</sup>. Par conséquent, la présence de l'âme dans le corps ne veut pas dire qu'elle y réside comme « installée » dans un lieu, puisqu'elle n'a pas besoin de lieu et que seule sa puissance ultime pénètre les corps<sup>4</sup>.

De cette manière, Plotin rejette la définition aristotélicienne de l'homme comme animal rationnel. « Animal » signifie « un composé de corps et d'âme », mais le corps n'est pas une partie essentielle de l'homme. Par conséquent, cette définition ne recueille pas l'essence du *definiendum* (cf. *Enn.* VI 7 [38] 4, 10-18). À sa place, (1) Plotin propose de définir l'« homme » principalement comme l'« homme intelligible », ou l'âme humaine existante au niveau intelligible ; et (2) l'« homme » peut être utilisé par les niveaux inférieurs de l'âme qui procèdent ontologiquement de l'« homme intelligible » (cf. *Enn.* VI 7 [38] 6). De même, il différencie la perception et la nature comme deux étapes de cette descente (cf. Emilsson 1988, 26).

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<sup>1</sup> Ἡ τὸ συναμφοτέρον ἔστω τῆς ψυχῆς τῷ παρεῖναι οὐχ αὐτὴν δούσης τῆς τοιαύτης εἰς τὸ συναμφοτέρον ἢ εἰς θάτερον, ἀλλὰ ποιούσης ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ τοιούτου καὶ τινος οἷον φωτὸς τοῦ παρ' αὐτὴν δοθέντος τὴν τοῦ ζῶου φύσιν ἔτερόν τι, οὗ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα ζῶου πάθη εἰρηται.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 12, 21-26. Sur cet image de l'âme, voir Igal 1982-1998, I, 67 et 73.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* I 1 [53] 4, 14-16.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Plotin, *Enn.* IV 4 [28].

## II. L'abstinence de la consommation de viande animale

L'affinité entre l'animal et l'homme se base sur la similitude de la structure biologique et la transmigratio. Pour Pythagore et Empédocle<sup>1</sup>, les animaux sont semblables aux êtres humains non seulement parce qu'ils sont constitués des mêmes éléments, mais aussi parce que les âmes peuvent migrer à un autre être vivant, humain ou animal. Pour cette raison, tuer et manger des animaux équivaut à assassinat ou même à un acte de cannibalisme (cf. Clark 2013, 123).

Porphyre dédie *De l'abstinence*<sup>2</sup> à Firmus Castricius<sup>3</sup>, afin de lui montrer les raisons pour lesquelles il doit s'abstenir de la consommation de viande animale. Ce traité, qui constitue « la défense la plus vigoureuse du végétarisme depuis le monde antique » (Gilhus 2006, 64), fut écrit soit à une date postérieure à 263, année durant laquelle il s'incorpora à l'école de Plotin à Rome, où il connut Castricius, soit à Sicile, après 268<sup>4</sup>. La réprobation de la consommation de viande présente des traits à caractère initiatique. Porphyre indique ce qu'« il lui est possible de révéler (*exagoreúein*) » sur les sacrifices, dans un contexte profondément influencé par la doctrine pythagoricienne. Dans le livre I, il réunit une série d'arguments à faveur de la consommation de viande et une plaidoirie à faveur du végétarisme, condition nécessaire pour parvenir à l'union avec le divin, fin suprême de la philosophie. Dans le livre II, il analyse l'existence et la nécessité des sacrifices, base de l'argumentation anti-végétarienne. Bien que Porphyre ne condamne pas directement la consommation d'animaux, mais leur destruction, vu que la consommation exige la destruction préalable de l'animal, l'argument

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<sup>1</sup> L'éthique d'Empédocle vise à la constitution d'une communauté universelle d'êtres vivants qui habitent, contrairement aux néoplatoniciens, un monde non hiérarchisé, régi par *philia*, composé de différents accomplissements. Or, le végétarisme de Porphyre, contrairement à celui d'Empédocle, n'a pas un objectif universel, mais est une étape ascétique, marquée par la purification des passions, qui aspire au salut personnel (cf. Balaudé 1997, 50-52).

<sup>2</sup> Nauck 1963 [1886], 85-269 ; Bouffartigue, Patillon, Segonds et Brisson 1977-1995 ; Periago Lorente 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Il semble que Firmus Castricius, après avoir pratiqué l'abstinence, venait de l'abandonner (cf. Porphyre, *Abs.*, I, 1, 1 et 3 ; I, 21 et 3).

<sup>4</sup> En ce qui concerne la date de composition, Bouffartigue et Patillon (1977-1995, I, XVIII-XIX) proposent que le traité *De l'abstinence* ait dû être rédigé après 270, et non après 271.

porphyrien est de même dirigé contre l'anti-végétarisme (cf. Harden 2013, 81-82). Dans le livre III, il réfute la doctrine péripatéticienne et stoïcienne selon laquelle les animaux irrationnels ne sont pas assujettis aux devoirs de justice que les êtres humains doivent respecter lors des relations avec leurs congénères et il démontre que le végétarisme ne contrevient pas à la justice. Finalement, le livre IV est structuré autour de l'argument qui soutient que le végétarisme n'a jamais été respecté par aucun peuple.

Les livres I et II exposent les fondements de l'abstinence basés sur la structure de l'âme. Porphyre présente un modèle tripartite qui oppose une partie irrationnelle-matérielle à une autre rationnelle-intellectuelle (cf. Porphyre, *Abs.*, I, 43, 2-3). De cette manière, le schéma tripartite de l'âme – *epithymía*, *thymós*, *logismós* –, tel qu'il apparaît dans la *République* (435a-441c, 442c) de Platon<sup>1</sup>, s'adapte à une bipartition entre *alogía* et *logismós*. L'homme, comme image de Dieu, est identifié avec l'intelligence, son vrai moi. La partie rationnelle-intellectuelle, quant à elle, reste liée au corps pour son côté irrationnel-matériel et peut « s'assombrir » en entrant en contact avec les passions du corps.

Au début de *De l'abstinence*, Porphyre considère Pythagore comme un maître et déclare son intention de réfuter les thèses des nombreux adversaires qui s'opposent à la doctrine « des Pythagoriciens » (*Abs.*, I, 3, 3). De cette manière, l'école pythagoricienne, dans laquelle il inclut Empédocle, inspire non seulement les doctrines philosophiques du traité, mais aussi le contexte institutionnel qui marque la pratique du végétarisme. Mais Porphyre ne présente pas une simple défense de Pythagore et de sa doctrine (cf. O'Meara 1989, 28), mais aussi une étude analytique comparée sur le refus du massacre des animaux dans l'Âge d'Or grec et chez les égyptiens, les juifs, les indiens et les perses (cf. Steiner 2005, 110-111), offrant à ce travail une projection de futur, susceptible d'être appliquée à toute époque et à tout âge.

La défense du végétarisme qu'entreprend Porphyre dans le livre III s'insère dans un vaste contexte philosophique qui évoque fondamentalement la problématique de la relation entre l'âme et le corps, d'une part et, d'autre part, la relation qui s'établit entre les philosophes et l'ensemble de la communauté humaine, spécialement celle concernant les lois et la religion. Depuis une perspective défendant la protection et la

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Platon, *Tim.*, 69c ; *Phd.*, 246c.

purification du corps quant à un contact excessif avec la matière, la consommation de viande est intrinsèquement pernicieuse, parce qu'elle introduit dans l'homme les mauvais démons et les âmes des animaux morts (cf. *Abs.*, II, 43 et 47). Tuer des animaux dotés d'une âme de la même nature que la nôtre équivaut, en définitive, à tuer des êtres consanguins.

La parenté (*tò syggenés*) de tous les animaux est plus ancienne que l'agression : Pour les dieux, l'offrande de galettes élaborées avec des grains d'orge, de l'huile d'olive et du miel d'abeille est plus agréable que celle qui est effectuée avec des sacrifices d'animaux (cf. *Abst.*, II, 19, 2). Par contre, la meilleure offrande faite à la divinité est d'aller aux sacrifices en ayant l'âme sans trace de méchanceté (cf. *Abst.* II 19, 4), en gardant le cœur et l'esprit purs (cf. *Abst.* II 34, 2). De cette manière, la divinité se réjouit spécialement lorsque « le plus divin des éléments qui sont en nous se trouve en état de pureté (*katharôs*), car il lui est naturellement apparenté (*syggenêi pephykóti*). » (*Abst.*, II, 19, 4, 20-22, trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 87)<sup>1</sup>.

Porphyre affirme que les animaux sont comme nous en ce qui concerne la perception et l'organisation mais que leurs formes de perception surpassent les nôtres, ils sont dotés de mémoire (cf. *Abst.*, III, 10, 3) et ne sont pas complètement privés de *lógos*. Comme chez Plotin, la rationalité admet différents degrés (cf. *Abst.*, III, 8, 7-8) et, par conséquent, chaque espèce possède sa propre sagesse particulière. De même, les groupes d'animaux respectent entre eux ce qui est juste (*tò díkaion*)<sup>2</sup>. D'ailleurs, les nécessités réciproques des êtres humains et d'autres animaux établissent une justice innée entre nous ; et, si quelqu'un affirme qu'il n'y a pas de communauté (*koinonía*) ou de contrat entre nous et les autres animaux, il peut lui être répondu de manière plausible que nous ne passons pas non plus de contrats avec tous les êtres humains. De même, les autres êtres humains non rationnels ne le font pas.

« Mais les Pythagoriciens faisaient de la bonté envers les bêtes un entraînement à l'humanité et à la pitié (*toû philanthrópou kai philoiktírmonos*) » (*Abst.*, III, 20, 7 ; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995,

<sup>1</sup> ὥσπερ οὐ τῷ θειοτάτῳ γε τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν χαίροντα μάλιστα τὸν θεὸν διακειμένῳ καθαρῶς ἄτε συγγενεῖ πεφυκότι.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Porphyre, *Abst.*, III, 8, 1-11, 3.

II, 176)<sup>1</sup>. Pour Pythagore, les idées de justice et de parenté sont étroitement unies<sup>2</sup>. Porphyre trace une analogie entre la justice humaine et la justice animale car entre toutes deux, il existe une espèce de lien naturel inné et réciproque chez toutes les espèces. Les autres animaux, que nous attaquons et dont nous faisons un usage nuisible, n'ont pas été produits pour nous et « à cause de nous (*ou pròs hémâs*), mais comme nous (*hóspet hemeís*) conformément à la nature (*katà phýsin*) » (*Abst.*, III, 20, 5 ; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 176). Cette affirmation que les animaux sont *comme nous*, mais non *pour nous*, est un antécédent significatif d'un des principes fondamentaux de la pensée moderne sur les autres animaux.

Par conséquent, souligne Porphyre, en se basant sur Théophraste<sup>3</sup>, tout comme nous disons que tous les groupes humains ont un rapport entre eux, soit parce qu'ils ont les mêmes ancêtres, qu'ils prennent part à une alimentation, à des coutumes ou appartiennent à une race en commun, la parenté entre tous les animaux se base sur la physiologie et sur une structure psychosomatique communes : « parce que les principes de leur corps sont par nature les mêmes » et « beaucoup plus encore parce que l'âme qui est en eux n'est pas différente par nature » (*Abst.*, III, 25, 3)<sup>4</sup>. La parenté des affections démontre que, comme cela se produit avec les corps, certains animaux ont également des âmes parfaites et d'autres moins. Or, les mêmes principes sont, par nature, établis pour

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<sup>1</sup> οἱ δὲ Πυθαγόρειοι τὴν πρὸς τὰ θηρία πραότητα μελέτην ἐποιήσαντο τοῦ φιλανθρώπου καὶ φιλοκτίριμονος. Cf. Porphyre, *Abst.*, I, 23, 1 ; II, 31, 3 ; III, 26, 6. Cf. Plutarque, *Quaest. conv.*, VIII, 8, 3, 729E ; *De esu carnium*, II, 3, 997E ; cf. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 246, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jamblique, *VP*, 24, 108.

<sup>3</sup> Nous trouvons ici, de la section 1 à 3, un fragment d'une œuvre de Théophraste, peut-être intitulée *Sur l'intelligence et la conduite des animaux*. Ce fragment est repris par Bernays 1866, 96 et ss. ; Pötscher 1964, 95-99 et 182-185 (cf. Periago Lorente 1984, 176, n. 110). Selon Porphyre (*Abst.* II 22, 4), Théophraste considère que tuer et sacrifier des animaux inoffensifs est une injustice (cf. Gilus 2006, 62).

<sup>4</sup> αἱ γὰρ τῶν σωμάτων ἀρχαὶ πεφύκασιν αἱ αὐταί« et « πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον τῶ τὰς ἐν αὐτοῖς ψυχὰς ἀδιαφόρους πεφυκέναι. (= Théophraste, *De pietate*, Fr. 20 Pötscher).

tous. Porphyre, cette fois en se basant sur Plutarque<sup>1</sup>, se réfère particulièrement aux appétits et aux emportements, et même à ses raisonnements et, surtout, à ses sensations.

Contre l'objection disant que la consommation d'aliments d'origine végétale nous mène à enlever aussi quelque chose aux plantes, mais moins qu'en consommant des aliments d'origine animale, Porphyre réplique :

« On dira peut-être qu'aux plantes aussi, n'est-ce pas, nous volons quelque chose. Mais ce n'est pas le même genre de vol, car il n'est pas commis contre leur gré. En effet, même si nous n'y touchons pas, elles laissent d'elles-mêmes tomber leurs fruits ; et la récolte des fruits n'entraîne pas la destruction des plantes, comme c'est le cas pour les êtres vivants lorsqu'ils perdent leur âme. » (*Abst.*, II, 13, 1 ; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 82)<sup>2</sup>.

Entre les hommes et les animaux il y a une solidarité, comme le défend aussi Philon d'Alexandrie (*De animalibus*, 10)<sup>3</sup>. Même si, selon Corrigan (2014, 1055-1056), ce que nous trouvons fascinant dans le traité porphyrien *De l'abstinence* en raison de son actualité est ce qui suit : Nous

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plutarque, *De sollertia animalium* [*De Soll. An.* 959A-985C], cité par Porphyre dans *Abst.*, III, 23, 3-7. Le *De Soll. An.* est inclus parmi les œuvres de *Moralia* que Plutarque compose en suivant un schéma de dialogue et avec un clair intérêt didactique. Le contenu se centre sur l'étude du monde animal, où sont inclus depuis des points de vue moraux jusqu'à des questions sur l'éthologie et la psychologie des animaux, qui traite jusqu'à des matières diététiques. Sur le contenu de ce dialogue plutarquien, voir Tovar Paz 1991. Selon notre lecture, sur laquelle nous reviendrons dans de prochains travaux, Plutarque adopte une perspective philosophique médioplatonicienne, pour réfuter diverses théories stoïciennes sur la conception des animaux. Sur la défense des animaux chez Plutarque, cf. Steiner 2005, 94-103.

<sup>2</sup> καὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐασάντων, αὐτὰ μεθήσει τοὺς καρπούς, καὶ ἡ τῶν καρπῶν λήψις οὐ μετ' ἀπωλείας αὐτῶν, καθάπερ ὅταν τὰ ζῶα τὴν ψυχὴν πρόηται. (= Théophraste, *De pietate*, Fr. 7 Pötscher).

<sup>3</sup> Ἀλέξανδρος ἢ περὶ τοῦ λόγον ἔχειν τὰ ἀλογα ζῶα, 10 (Terian 1988). Sur la Loi et les interdits alimentaires dans le *De Specialibus Legibus* IV de Philon d'Alexandrie, voir Decharneux 2016, 109-112. La relecture philonienne de la Loi mosaïque est essentiellement philosophique. Sur les thérapeutes et leur genre de vie, par rapport au régime alimentaire, il apparaît qu'il s'agit particulièrement de rivaliser avec le genre de vie pythagoricien en insistant sur le végétarisme.

nous trouvons face à (1) une tradition iréniste, que Porphyre qualifie d'« immémoriale », car les hommes n'ont pas toujours vécu comme des carnivores ; (2) une solide tradition « légale », qui ne se base pas sur un contrat social, mais sur les liens familiaux entre humains et animaux, comme appartenant à un même foyer (*oïkos*) – ou, en d'autres termes, une relation écologique réelle, basée sur la « justice » au lieu de sur les « droits »<sup>1</sup> – ; et (3) une forme d'écologie dans un écosystème où chacun nécessite l'autre, qui surgit de la dimension de la partie rationnelle-intellectuelle de l'âme – fondée sur l'Intelligence et en dernier recours sur l'Un- Bien – et qui se répercute sur les pratiques immédiates ayant un lien avec la soutenabilité, la stabilité économique, la cohérence morale et la qualité de vie de tous les êtres vivants, qu'ils soient humains ou non humains<sup>2</sup>.

Par conséquent, le végétarisme est associé avec la manière pacifique d'habiter le monde, en se situant au centre de la proposition morale néoplatonicienne. Plotin et Porphyre proposent une perspective

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Porphyre, *Abst.*, I, 4, 2-3 : « Ainsi nous n'envisageons pas une parenté limitée aux hommes et aux dieux, mais nous entretenons des rapports d'appropriation (*οικείως*) avec les bêtes (*θηρία*), lesquelles n'ont aucun lien de parenté avec nous ; nous ne voulons pas, en les faisant servir soit à nos travaux, soit à notre nourriture, les considérer comme des êtres d'une autre race, exclus de notre communauté (*τῆς κοινωνίας*) comme on est exclu d'une citoyenneté (*καθάπερ πολιτείας*). Et si l'on traite ces créatures comme des hommes (*καθάπερ ἀνθρώποις*), en les épargnant et en ne leur causant aucun tort (*μὴ βλάπτων*), on assigne à la justice un rôle qu'elle ne peut tenir (*προσάπτων τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ὃ μὴ δύναται φέρειν*), on ruine son efficacité (*τὸ δυνατόν αὐτῆς ἀπόλλυσι*), et l'on gaspille ce que nous est approprié au profit de ce que nous est étranger (*καὶ διαφθείρει τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ τὸ οἰκείον*). » (Trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, I, 44-45). Porphyre emploie le terme stoïcien « familiarité », « appropriation ». Sur l'*οικείωσις* et le lien affectif entre les êtres rationnels, cf. Sorabji 1993, 123-133. Sur l'utilisation de ce terme dans la Stoa et, spécialement, sur la connexion entre l'*οικείωσις* sociale et la justice, voir le travail récent de Doyle Sánchez 2014, 381-436.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Porphyre, *Abst.*, III, 12, 3 : « Et la nature qui les a créés (*ἡ δημιουργήσασα*) les a établis dans le besoin des hommes et les hommes dans le besoin des animaux, inscrivant dans leur nature leur devoir de justice envers l'homme, et dans la nature de l'homme son devoir de justice envers eux (*τὸ δίκαιον ἔμφυτον αὐτοῖς τε πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ ἡμῖν πρὸς αὐτὰ κατασκευάσασα*) » (Trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 167).



cosmique de la vie, qui leur permet de réaliser une approche plus sensible de la vie des animaux et des plantes, en abolissant les aspects négatifs sur un ordre hiérarchique, où l'importance des êtres humains particuliers s'éclipse face au programme total. De cette manière, le Bien de la *République* est interprété en connexion avec la biologie du *Timée*.

La pensée hiérarchique reste sous tension à la proximité antihiérarchique de l'omniprésence de l'Un-Bien dans toutes les choses. Si les espèces font partie d'une biologie intelligible basée sur le *Timée* de Platon et sur *De l'âme* d'Aristote, les individus doivent faire partie de la biologie non seulement dans le monde intelligible, mais surtout dans l'activité providentielle et l'amour du Bien, c'est-à-dire, dans la fascination commune pour retourner au premier principe. En contraste avec les conceptions propres de notre monde contemporain, dans le néoplatonisme, la rationalité n'est pas le paradigme prédominant pour déterminer si les choses ont un sens. L'Intelligence, d'ailleurs, n'est pas « rationnelle » dans un sens moderne du terme et l'Un-Bien est encore moins « rationnel » que l'Intelligence. L'Un-Bien est aussi bien la source que le refuge de tous les êtres vivants – animaux, hommes et plantes – et non vivants.

### III. La capacité de raisonnement et du parler

Dans le livre III de son traité *De l'abstinence*, en suivant « l'opinion vraie » de Pythagore, Porphyre affirme que « toute âme qui est dotée de sensation et de mémoire est raisonnable » (*Abst.*, III, 1, 4)<sup>1</sup>. Si ceci est démontré, le disciple de Plotin étendra la justice à tout être vivant, contre les arguments brandis par les aristotéliens et les stoïciens contre la rationalité des animaux, ceux qui, « portés par leur égoïsme (*philautías*)<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> πᾶσαν ψυχὴν, ἣ μέτεστιν αἰσθήσεως καὶ μνήμης, λογικὴν ἐπιδεικνύντες. Pour les Pythagoriciens la sensation (αἴσθησις) constitue un des quatre composants d'une âme rationnelle, avec l'intelligence (νοῦς), la connaissance (ἐπιστήμη) et l'opinion (δόξα), (cf. Pseudo-Plutarque, *Placita*, I, 3, 8, 56, 23-25). Pour sa part, Jamblique (*VP*, 29, 164) insiste sur la fonction significative que exerce la mémoire (μνήμη), (cf. Burkert 1972, 74-75).

<sup>2</sup> Φιλαυτία (égoïsme). Aristote (*EN* 1168a29-30) dit que φίλαυτος est un terme péjoratif appliqué à ceux dont l'amour propre est plus fort que l'amour pour les autres. Philon d'Alexandrie l'emploie deux fois dans son traité *De animalibus* (10, 15 ; cf. Clark 2013, 164, n. 386). Porphyre recueille cette acception péjorative pour critiquer la conception stoïcienne d'un monde soumis à l'homme (cf. *Abst.*, III,

ils traitent d'irrationnels (*áloga*) tous les animaux sans exception, en voulant montrer de cette façon que leur carence totale de raisonnement (*tèn pantelê stéresin toû lógou*) est due à leur irrationalité (*dià tês alogías*).» (*Abst.*, III, 2, 4 ; notre traduction). Au contraire, pour Porphyre, non seulement on observe la raison chez tous les animaux, mais, pour beaucoup d'entre eux, ceci se produit aussi sur la base solide de pouvoir aspirer à la perfection. Porphyre nomme pensée (*diánoia*) « ce qui sonne en silence dans l'âme » (*Abst.*, III, 3, 2)<sup>1</sup>, c'est la raison pour laquelle, si on émet un son avec la langue, quelle qu'en soit la sonorité, les êtres vivants qui produisent ce type de sons sont alors dotés d'une capacité de raisonnement.

Dans ce même livre III de son traité, Porphyre apporte une série d'arguments soutenant la thèse selon laquelle les animaux parlent. Les animaux comprennent les mots de leurs maîtres et ils obéissent quand ceux-ci les appellent. Toutefois, comme l'indique Sorabji (1997, 370-373), les animaux non seulement comprennent leurs maîtres, mais comprennent peut-être aussi de même effectivement la langue grecque. Le texte est quelque peu ambigu car il pourrait indiquer que quelques animaux – Porphyre se réfère explicitement à corbeaux, pies, rouges-gorges et perroquets –, qui imitent notre parler grec, arrivent à l'apprendre et parviennent ainsi à comprendre leurs maîtres :

« Dès là que les animaux échangent des cris claires et pleins de sens, même s'ils ne sont pas intelligibles pour nous tous, et que de plus nous les voyons nous imiter, apprendre le grec et comprendre leur maître, qui aurait l'impudence de leur refuser la raison, sous le prétexte qu'il ne comprend pas ce qu'ils disent ? En tout cas les corbeaux et les pies, les rouge-gorges et les perroquets imitent les hommes, retiennent tout ce qu'ils entendent et répondent aux injonctions du maître qui les instruit. Beaucoup même grâce à ce qu'ils avaient appris ont dénoncé deux qui

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20, 1-2). Dans un passage antérieur il souligne : « C'est donc par glotonnerie (*διὰ τὴν λαίμαργίαν*) que les hommes refusent la raison aux animaux : mais les dieux et les hommes divins les respectent autant que les suppliants (*θεοῖς δὲ καὶ θείοις ἀνδράσιν ἐξ ἴσου τοῖς ἰκέταις τετίμηται*). » (*Abst.*, III, 16, 1).

<sup>1</sup> τὸ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ κατὰ σιγὴν φωνοῦμενον. Pour Proclus (*El. theol.*, 20, 13-18), les âmes des êtres humains n'ont pas essentiellement de pensée, mais peuvent y prendre part ; les âmes des animaux, par contre, ne peuvent pas y prendre part, parce que leurs âmes sont en fait propriétés des corps, c'est-à-dire, ne sont pas proprement des entités immatériels.

commettaient des fautes dans la maison.» (*Abst.*, III, 4, 4; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 156)<sup>1</sup>.

Selon la théorie aristotélicienne du langage, pour réaliser cette communication, les animaux doivent avoir dans leurs âmes les mêmes apparences (*phantasíai*) que leurs maîtres, car le locuteur communique les apparences que ses mots signifient, de telle sorte qu'ils pénètrent dans l'esprit de l'auditeur. Mais Aristote décrit les mots parlés comme des symboles établis par convention et nie explicitement le parler aux animaux. Il existe une différence subtile entre « indiquer » et « signifier » : même les sons inarticulés des animaux peuvent indiquer (*deloûn*) quelque chose ; toutefois, seule la voix humaine articulée signifie (*semaínein*) réellement quelque chose (cf. Aristote, *Int.*, 16 a 26-29). Pour sa part, Porphyre, qui suit habituellement les approches du Stagirite, se distancie sur ce point et défend particulièrement que les animaux, ou certains animaux, ont aussi un langage (cf. *Abst.*, III, 3, 1-8). Peu importe si tous les animaux n'imitent pas les hommes ni n'apprennent avec facilité le grec, si tous les hommes n'ont pas non plus l'aptitude d'imiter ou d'apprendre une autre langue différente de la leur (cf. *Abst.*, III, 4, 6) : par exemple, que tous ceux qui parlent grec comprennent les indiens, ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'ils ne soient pas dotés de langage. De même, Porphyre nous raconte que, quand il vivait à Carthage, il avait élevé une perdrix et qu'au fil du temps, grâce au contact continu avec les hommes, elle était devenue très docile et était parvenue à émettre une série de sons spéciaux tels que des réponses aux mots des hommes, différents à ceux qu'émettent habituellement les perdrix pour s'appeler entre elles. « Elle ne parlait pas quand nous nous taisions, mais seulement quand nous lui parlions. » (*Abst.*, III, 4, 7 ; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 157 ; cf. Sorabji 1993, 80-86 ; Heath 2005, 322, 328 ; Clark 2011, 46). Par conséquent, Porphyre soutient la thèse que quelques

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<sup>1</sup> Ὅταν δὲ [μὴ] πρὸς ἄλληλα φθέγγηται φανερά τε καὶ εὖσημα, εἰ καὶ μὴ πᾶσιν ἡμῖν γνῶριμα, φαίνεται δὲ καὶ ἡμᾶς μιμούμενα καὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶτταν ἐκμανθάνοντα καὶ συνιέντα τῶν ἐφεστώτων, τίς οὕτως ἀναιδῆς ὡς μὴ συγχωρεῖν εἶναι λογικά, διότι αὐτὸς οὐ συνίησιν ὧν λέγουσιν ; κόρακες γοῦν καὶ κίτται ἐριθακοί τε καὶ ψιττακοὶ ἀνθρώπους μιμοῦνται καὶ μέμνηνται ὧν ἂν ἀκούσωσιν καὶ διδασκόμενοι ὑπακούουσι τῷ διδάσκοντι, καὶ πολλοὶ γε ἐμήνυσαν δι' ὧν ἐδιδάχθησαν καὶ τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας κατὰ τὸν οἶκον. (Cf. Periago Lorente 1984, 144).

animaux parlent ou possèdent quelque chose de semblable à notre langage.

#### IV. Le sacrifice d'animaux

S'abstenir de manger de la viande (*tò sarkophageîn*), ce qu'implique une diète végétarienne<sup>1</sup>, est en étroite relation avec la définition de la relation que maintiennent les animaux et les êtres humains entre eux. Les hommes peuvent-ils sacrifier des animaux ? Et, si tel est le cas, peuvent-ils les manger ? Porphyre ne peut pas induire une interdiction du sacrifice cruel des animaux, conscient des obligations sociales et religieuses de son temps. D'ailleurs, le thème du sacrifice des animaux est au centre des pratiques religieuses aussi bien durant qu'à la fin de l'Antiquité. Pour cette raison, le philosophe de Tyr différencie le sacrifice de la consommation de viande : même s'il faut sacrifier des animaux, il n'est pas nécessaire qu'il faille les manger inévitablement et il essaye maintenant de démontrer « qu'il est nécessaire de ne pas les manger (*tò mē deîn esthíein*), même s'il est parfois nécessaire d'en sacrifier (*thúein anágkē poté*) » (*Abst.*, II, 44, 1 ; trad. Bouffartigue et Patillon 1977-1995, II, 110; cf. Neacșu 2014b, 114-115).

Or, les arguments les plus solides que brandit Porphyre à faveur du végétarisme ne se fondent paradoxalement pas tant sur la définition de l'animal, mais sur l'éthique néoplatonicienne des vertus : l'être humain ne doit pas se laisser dominer par les passions qu'un régime à base de viande rend propices. Néanmoins, l'abstention de manger de la viande n'est pas un régime adéquat pour la multitude impure, mais est seulement destiné au philosophe, qualifié de « prêtre du dieu suprême » (*Abst.*, II, 49, 1), comme moyen pour parvenir à s'assimiler à Dieu.

Dans son « œuvre de jeunesse », la *Philosophie des oracles*<sup>2</sup>, dont nous conservons les fragments grâce à Eusèbe et à Augustin, Porphyre essaye d'éclaircir, par la raison, une série de phénomènes apparemment anormaux ayant un lien avec le culte, tels la relation des dieux avec la fatalité ou le fait qu'ils ne disent pas toujours la vérité. Il élabore ainsi une compilation d'oracles qui maintiennent une relation avec des principes

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<sup>1</sup> Sur la diète végétarienne en tant que diète saine pour la purification chez Porphyre, voir Lejavitzer Lapoujade 2016, 118-119.

<sup>2</sup> Wolff 1962 [1856] ; O'Meara 1959 ; Haussleiter 1978-1979, 438-496 ; Smith 1993, 351-407 (fr. 303-350).

philosophiques. De même, il aborde, dans cette œuvre, l'activité prophétique, qui servira pour « la contemplation et la purification de la vie sous toutes ses formes ». L'utilité de cette compilation est dirigée à ceux qui, d'une manière douloureuse, ont traité d'« éclairer la vérité » en souhaitant qu'à un certain moment « une manifestation divine mette fin à leur incertitude par l'enseignement digne de foi de ceux qui parlent » (Porphyre, *Phil. orac.*, 303, 35-34 F Smith). Néanmoins, les pratiques oraculaires ne peuvent remplacer d'aucune façon l'effort qu'exige la recherche personnelle, basée sur une « illumination » de l'âme.

Pour les hommes qui sont tourmentés, la manifestation des dieux est capable de leur offrir le « repos » au lieu de la « connaissance ». Porphyre défend une correspondance fondamentale de la sagesse religieuse, que les grecs et les barbares pratiquent, avec l'authentique philosophie platonicienne, à la recherche de la purification et du salut de l'âme. De cette manière, Porphyre oppose sa vision du culte, qui accepte les dieux, à ceux qui, comme Jamblique, sacrifient la pratique de la philosophie en faveur des rites théurgiques. De même, dans le contexte de sa polémique antichrétienne, il réplique contre un culte exclusivement extérieur, comme cela est exposé dans l'Ancien Testament. Le sacrifice spirituel que défend la vie chrétienne s'oppose au culte sacrificatoire des juifs et des païens. Porphyre, par l'utilisation d'un langage semblable à celui de ses adversaires, décrit les caractéristiques d'un mode de vie différent, la vie philosophique, seule capable de mener celui qui la pratique vers le salut et la purification de l'âme.

Un aspect de la polémique de Porphyre sur les sacrifices peut être extrait de la *Préparation évangélique* (I, 10, 1-39) d'Eusèbe où il critique l'exemple des anciens qui font seulement des offrandes végétales aux dieux pour répondre à l'objection adressée aux croyants de ne pas immoler les biens de la nature à la divinité. Eusèbe s'oppose à la thèse de Porphyre qui avait réutilisé son raisonnement sur la pratique sacrificatoire pour s'interroger sur les sacrifices cruels dirigés et faits par les personnages de l'Ancien Testament et indiquer ainsi qu'ils ne correspondaient pas à la volonté primaire de leur Dieu.

Précisément, pour argumenter contre Porphyre, qui situait les animaux entre les êtres rationnels, Eusèbe, en se basant sur Gn 1, 11. 24 et 9, 3, affirme que les animaux ont une origine et une substance identique à celle des arbres et des plantes, et donc « ceux qui sacrifient des êtres vivants ne commettent aucune faute » (*PE*, I, 10, 13). Pour Eusèbe, les

sacrifices ont une inspiration divine, ce qui explique leur valeur de substitution à faveur de ceux qui offrent les victimes. Ces immolations, selon l'apologiste, annoncent le sacrifice expiatoire réalisé pour le monde entier par le Christ (cf. Leviells 2007, 159-160).

Dans la *Philosophie des oracles*, Porphyre juge de manière positive le Dieu transcendant de la Bible, dans un contexte marqué par la polémique contre les chrétiens et le culte qu'ils vouent à un homme. Le Dieu transcendant des hébreux, dans son absolue antériorité à tout être déterminé, ne contredit pas son caractère créatif comme démiurge du monde intelligible et du monde sensible au moyen de la sagesse. Par conséquent, Porphyre se place dans une perspective syncrétiste pour élaborer un éloge à la sagesse, où un oracle à Apollon est mis en rapport avec les hébreux, les chaldéens et d'autres peuples orientaux, comme les égyptiens, les phéniciens, les assyriens et les lydiens (cf. Eusèbe, *PE*, IX, 10, 1-5 = Frs. 323-324 F Smith).

Chacun des trois livres de la *Philosophie des oracles* aborde une forme spécifique, en suivant l'ordre de composition du texte : le livre I, destiné au peuple ; le livre II, au débutants ; et le livre III, aux philosophes mûrs. La première forme est dirigée à la partie inférieure de l'âme, où ressort l'importance des cultes traditionnels, y compris la pratique du sacrifice des animaux et les rituels théurgiques ; et les deux autres formes sont conçues, respectivement, pour le débutant et pour le philosophe néoplatonicien aguerri.

Dans le livre I de la *Philosophie des oracles* 314 F (Eusèbe, *PE*, IV, 8, 4-9, 2) Porphyre admet la pratique du sacrifice des animaux :

« Accomplis des sacrifices, mon ami, toi qui est venu sur ce chemin fréquenté, don des dieux,  
 Sans oublier les Bienheureux : tue des victimes que tu sacrifieras  
 Tantôt aux dieux qui résident sur la terre, tantôt à ceux du ciel,  
 Tantôt encore aux souverains même de l'éther et de l'air qui envoie la pluie,  
 Ainsi qu'à tous ceux de la mer de des enfers. »<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Porphyre, *Phil. orac.* 314, 18-22 F (Smith 1993, 361) :  
 ἐργάζεο, φίλε, τήνδε θεόσδοτον ἐς τρίβον ἐλθῶν,  
 μηδ' ἐπιλήθεο τῶν μακάρων, θυσίας ἐναρίζων  
 πῆ μὲν ἐπιχθονίοις, πῆ δ' οὐρανίοις, ποτὲ δ' αἰθήρης  
 αὐτοῖσιν βασιλεῦσι καὶ ἥερος ὑγροπόροιο

Dans la première ligne de ce fragment : « Accomplis des sacrifices, mon ami, toi qui est venu sur ce chemin fréquenté, don des dieux », Porphyre emploie le participe grec *elthón* dans le contexte d'une discussion sur le sacrifice des animaux, en accord avec l'interprétation tripartite que propose Simmons (2015, 36-41). Si, effectivement, il aborde les hommes sans éducation, issus du peuple, dans le livre I, la première ligne a un rapport avec la personne qui sacrifie les animaux aux dieux, où « qui est venu » indique qu'elle « est initiée » à « ce chemin fréquenté [déjà battu], don des dieux ».

Tout le passage, d'ailleurs, traite du sacrifice des animaux, et Eusèbe lui-même introduit la question, dans un cadre polémique, pour essayer de démontrer la contradiction suivante dans l'œuvre de Porphyre : dans le traité *De l'abstinence* il rejette et condamne cette pratique, et dans la *Philosophie des oracles* il la défend. Or, bien que le contexte soit apologétique et qu'on ne trouve pas toujours chez lui une analyse herméneutique précise, Eusèbe lui-même est probablement conscient de l'absence de contradiction entre les deux œuvres. Le sacrifice des animaux est rejeté comme un chemin viable pour les philosophes (*De l'abstinence*), mais il est confirmé, au moins dans le livre I de la *Philosophie des oracles*, comme la voie religieuse pour le salut des âmes des hommes.

De même, Porphyre analyse la méthode du sacrifice des diverses espèces d'animaux qui doivent être sacrifiés à plusieurs types de divinités – par exemple, les oiseaux aux dieux du ciel, ou les quadrupèdes aux dieux terrestres et infernaux –, il apporte même des instructions sur les parties des animaux sacrifiés que les fidèles doivent manger.

Dans le livre I de la *Philosophie des oracles* 315 F (Eusèbe, *PE*, IV, 9, 3-7), le philosophe de Tyr se demande s'il est possible de découvrir les « significations symboliques » (*tà sýmbola*) dans la pratique de chacun des sacrifices : « Sera-t-il nécessaire d'expliquer les symboles des sacrifices qui sont évidents pour une personne intelligente ? Les animaux de quatre pattes qui vivent sur terre sont pour les dieux terrestres, parce que les choses qui se ressemblent s'assemblent. »<sup>1</sup> Ainsi, Porphyre n'exclut

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ἡδὲ θαλασσαιῶσι καὶ ὑποχθονίοισιν ἅπασιν·

(Trad. Zink 1979, 129 ; cf. Nieto Ibáñez 2011-2015, I, 157).

<sup>1</sup> Porphyre, *Phil. orac.* 315, 27-30 F (Smith 1993, 363) : Ἄρ' οὖν δεήσει ἐξηγήσασθαι τῶν θυσιῶν τὰ σύμβολα τῷ εὐσυνέτῳ δῆλα ; τετράποδα μὲν

pas en elle-même la pratique du sacrifice des animaux pour les gens, mais il est nécessaire d'assigner une série de significations symboliques à plusieurs éléments ayant un rapport avec cette pratique. Ainsi, par exemple, comme nous le voyons dans le passage récemment cité, les animaux quadrupèdes sont « pour les dieux terrestres », parce qu'il y a une similitude entre ceux qui vivent sur terre et il est nécessaire de faire les sacrifices à ces dieux « sur les autels » (*ánō epì bomôn*) » (315, 35 F), puisqu'ils sont sur terre ; par contre, il faut faire les sacrifices aux dieux souterrains « dans une excavation et dans une tombe (*en bóthroi kai en taphêi*) » (315, 37 F), car c'est précisément là qu'ils habitent ; les oiseaux, pour leur part, sont offerts à d'autres dieux, parce que « tout court (*pánta theî*) » (315, 38 F) ; ou il est requis un nombre spécifique de victimes : ainsi, par exemple, le nombre trois symbolise « le corporel et terrestre (*sqmatikoû kai geódous*) (315, 34 F) » en raison de ses trois dimensions (cf. Wolff 1962 [1856], *ad loc.*).

Le salut est dirigé au peuple sans formation philosophique, qui suit le polythéisme traditionnel, y compris le sacrifice des animaux et les rites théurgiques. Ces pratiques purifient seulement le niveau inférieur de l'âme, qui concerne exclusivement la pratique des vertus politiques<sup>1</sup>. L'exercice de ces vertus, dans l'architecture hiérarchique de l'éthique néoplatonicienne, représente la première étape dans la divinisation de l'âme et garantit le salut des villes et les bénéfices perpétuels des dieux.

La sotériologie tripartite se réfère à la hiérarchie des vertus néoplatoniciennes de la manière suivante : (1) la première classe = premier niveau, promu par le polythéisme traditionnel, inclut le sacrifice d'animaux et la théurgie ; (2) la seconde classe = second niveau, qui agit comme un gond entre les niveaux un et trois, dont l'objectif, tel que cela apparaît dans la *Lettre à Marcella*, consiste à détacher l'âme de la conception traditionnelle et religieuse pour la purifier des passions et pour qu'elle puisse ainsi commencer son chemin de retour vers la contemplation de la véritable réalité<sup>2</sup>; et les classes trois et quatre,

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γὰρ τοῖς χθονίοις καὶ χειροαῖα· τῷ γὰρ ὁμοίῳ χαίρει τὸ ὅμοιον. Notre traduction ; cf. Zink 1979, 133 ; Nieto Ibáñez 2011-2015, I, 159.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Porphyre, *Sent.*, 32, 6-32. Sur les vertus politiques dans le néoplatonisme, voir Zamora Calvo 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Les vertus purificatrices consistent à se détacher des choses du monde sensible, à s'abstenir des actions qui sont exécutées avec le corps et à refuser de partager



ensemble, contiennent le point de vue philosophique avancé, car, à partir de (3) la troisième phase, l'âme n'est pas altérée par les passions et peut se dédier à considérer la réalité ; et finalement, (4) la quatrième phase peut être considérée comme l'étape finale de ce processus.

Par conséquent, nous pouvons déduire, à partir de l'exégèse des fragments conservés de la *Philosophie des oracles*, que dans ce traité de jeunesse, Porphyre traite des sacrifices des animaux afin de guider l'âme vers la purification et la recherche d'une voie de salut dans le cadre du polythéisme traditionnel.

## V. Conclusions

Pour les premiers néoplatoniciens, tout comme pour Platon, les animaux sont, d'une certaine manière, des êtres intelligents, même s'ils utilisent peu leur intelligence. L'âme des animaux, ainsi que celle des êtres humains, est dotée d'une partie rationnelle. Rien n'empêche, par conséquent, qu'un animal, ou de l'espèce que ce soit, puisse remonter dans la chaîne pour arriver à devenir un humain, homme ou femme.

Or, si les animaux peuvent monter ou descendre cette chaîne marquée par la transmigration des âmes, ils devraient avoir une certaine responsabilité morale, c'est-à-dire, d'une certaine manière des droits et des devoirs. Dans l'architecture hiérarchique de la psychologie platonicienne, seules les âmes des êtres humains, femmes et hommes, et celles des animaux sont soumises à un système rétributif qui les fait monter ou descendre en fonction de la qualité ou de la spécificité de l'exercice de leur activité intellectuelle. Dans les pôles, supérieur et inférieur, de cette structure psychique, à l'écart de ce cycle, sont situés respectivement les dieux et les démons, au-dessus, et les plantes, au-dessous. De cette manière, contrairement aux âmes des dieux et des démons, les âmes des êtres vivants, aussi bien hommes qu'animaux,

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ses passions. Voilà pourquoi ces vertus s'identifient avec les « purifications » et correspondent à l'âme qui s'éloigne du corps pour se diriger vers l'être vrai, c'est-à-dire, vers l'intelligible (cf. Porphyre, *Sent.* 32, li. 16-17 et 23). L'acquisition de ces vertus a lieu dans cette vie, puisqu'il s'agit de vertus propres de l'âme humaine, c'est-à-dire, de l'âme unie à un corps. Précisément, le but de ces vertus réside dans le détachement des choses sensibles. Or, les vertus purificatrices ne doivent pas être recherchées pour elles-mêmes, mais comme un processus cathartique, conçu comme une progression et dont la fin est de permettre l'accès à la contemplation. Sur ce sujet, voir Neacșu 2014a, 54-55.

habitent des corps destructibles ayant des formes diverses et, à la différence des âmes des plantes, sont dotées d'une partie rationnelle.

Si les animaux sont dotés d'une âme rationnelle, tout comme les êtres humains, ceux-ci ne peuvent pas sacrifier des animaux pour les manger, puisque par cet acte ils deviendraient cannibales – au moins, selon Porphyre, en ce qui concerne les philosophes et non le peuple –. S'ils exercent les vertus purificatrices, les êtres humains devraient, pour leur alimentation, se limiter à la consommation de végétaux, puisque ce sont des êtres dotés d'une âme similaire (*syggenés*) à celle des êtres vivants, mais complètement dépourvue de la partie rationnelle (cf. Platon, *Tim.* 76e-77c). L'âme des végétaux se borne à la partie du désir (*epithymía*).

Face à cette conception, pour les stoïciens, le fait de reconnaître toute forme de raison chez les animaux est impie et, pour cela, l'homme peut s'en nourrir ; pour Plotin et Porphyre, par contre, le fait de ne pas reconnaître chez les animaux une forme de raison est impie ; d'où le fait que le sage, pour se purifier et s'assimiler au divin (cf. Platon, *Thét.*, 176a-b ; Plotin, *Enn.* I 2 [19] 3, 5-6 ; 20-21 ; 5, 2 ; 6, 3 ; Porphyre, *Abst.*, I, 54, 6 ; III, 26, 10, 13 ; III, 27, 5 ; *Sent.*, 32, 32), ne doit pas consommer de viande animale. L'abstinence de manger de la viande animale est un moyen de fuir de ce qui contamine. Par elle, Plotin et Porphyre aspirent à la purification de l'âme et, plus concrètement, celle de sa partie rationnelle-intellectuelle.

La défense et la préservation de la vie chez tous les organismes que proposent les premiers néoplatoniciens syntonise de manière surprenante, plus que nous pourrions être amenés à penser de prime abord, avec ce qui est exprimé dans la célèbre phrase, adoptée comme emblème par le mouvement écologiste et employé aussi dans le domaine de la santé : « penser globalement, agir localement ». Pour les néoplatoniciens, la biologie, comme tout le reste dans le cosmos, a une nature intelligible et reflète la puissance infinie de l'Un-Bien. Cette découverte, bien qu'attendue, est encore négligée dans nos conceptions modernes et postmodernes du monde. La perspective néoplatonicienne de la diversité biologique est inclusive, ce qui nous permet d'explorer différents modèles d'animalité et de rationalité.

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## DE L'ANCIEN ET MODERNE SCEPTICISME CHEZ HEGEL

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**Abstract:** *The objective of this article is to analyze the differences between the two forms of skepticism as conceived by Hegel, i.e. ancient and modern skepticism. We shall examine this in the first part of this work and in the second, we shall see how for Hegel, ancient skepticism is in fact a moment of philosophy and not its enemy, as was the case for Sextus Empiricus. Finally, in the third part, we will explore the paradox at the heart of this Hegelian distinction. This paradox lies in the fact that Hegel seems to misinterpret skepticism as Greek philosophers such as Pyrrho first conceived it, abolishing all appearances or phenomena as a result. Therefore, ancient skepticism, according to Hegel, has more resemblance to nihilism than to the way of life as purported by the ancient skeptics themselves.*

**Keywords:** *Hegel, Sextus Empiricus, Schulze, Skepticism.*

« Tel qu'il apparaît, ce Scepticisme est certes quelques chose  
De tout à fait imposant. En tout temps, et aujourd'hui  
Encore, le Scepticisme a passé pour le plus terrible  
Adversaire de la philosophie, il a passé pour invincible... »

- Hegel<sup>2</sup>

Le thème du scepticisme semble avoir une importance considérable dans la philosophie hégélienne. Il s'agit, depuis l'époque d'Iéna, d'une source récurrente de réflexion. Il a été, d'abord, le sujet de l'article publié en 1802, « *La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie* », où Hegel analyse deux formes du scepticisme – l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme – tout en critiquant le travail de G. E. Schulze et, ensuite, il a été aussi le sujet d'un des chapitres les plus massifs des *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*. En outre, dans ses ouvrages principaux, Hegel a traité le scepticisme dans l'introduction et dans certains passages de *La phénoménologie de l'esprit* et aussi dans quelques paragraphes de *l'Encyclopédie*. Ainsi, nous pouvons

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<sup>2</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Virin, 1975, vol.4, p. 759.

nous demander, pourquoi le scepticisme est une préoccupation constante pour le philosophe allemand ? Comme l'écrit G. Marmasse :

« L'intérêt de Hegel pour le scepticisme n'est guère étonnant, puisque, selon le mot de l'historien de la philosophie Stäudlin en 1794, il s'agit de la maladie de l'époque. Depuis le *Traité de la nature humaine* et la *Critique de la raison pure*, le scepticisme en tant que mise en question de la capacité e l'esprit à connaître le vrai est une position théorique à l'égard de laquelle toute philosophie est conduite à se situer [...]. En un mot, comme figure de contestation, le scepticisme contraint la philosophie à s'expliquer sur les conditions et l'ampleur de la connaissance valide<sup>1</sup>. »

Comme nous l'avons dit, la première fois que la différence entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme est analysé par Hegel, c'est dans l'article de 1802, c'est-à-dire cinq ans avant la publication de la *phénoménologie* et quinze ans avant la publication de l'*Encyclopédie*. Or, malgré tout le temps qui a passé de la première publication aux autres, il est possible d'affirmer que ses thèses centrales sur le scepticisme soient restées plus ou moins inchangées. En fait, Hegel lui-même, dans le § 39 de l'*Encyclopédie*, nous renvoie à son article de 1802<sup>2</sup>. Ainsi, il est possible d'affirmer, comme le fait C. Godin, que Hegel, depuis la période d'Iéna, est « en possession de ses thèses centrales sur cette question : l'opposition du scepticisme ancien et du scepticisme moderne, le rejet radical de ce dernier, [et] l'acceptation du scepticisme ancien comme moment nécessaire de la philosophie »<sup>3</sup>.

L'objectif de ce travail est d'expliquer l'opposition hégélienne entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme et le rapport de celui-là à l'égard de la philosophie. Ce travail est donc divisé en trois sections. Dans la première partie nous allons analyser les différences entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme. Nous verrons comment le scepticisme ne peut pas être considéré comme une doctrine du doute, l'opposition entre le « doute » (*Zweifel*) et le « désespoir » (*Verzweiflung*) et finalement nous verrons qu'être sceptique consiste, en fait, à se « désespérer » (*verzweifeln*) de toute donnée ferme de l'entendement et de cette façon arriver à un sentiment

<sup>1</sup> MARMASSE G., « Hegel et le scepticisme antique durant la période d'Iéna », *Cahiers philosophiques de Strasbourg*, 2007, n° 22, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Voir: HEGEL G.W., *Encyclopédie des sciences philosophiques*, Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2012, §39, p. 301.

<sup>3</sup> GODIN C., « La figure et le moment du scepticisme chez Hegel », *Les Études Philosophiques*, Presses Universitaires de France, 2004, p. 341-346.



« d'être inébranlable et de repos en soi ». Dans la deuxième partie, nous montrons pourquoi Hegel, à la différence de Sextus Empiricus, conçoit le scepticisme non pas comme l'ennemi de la philosophie, mais un de ces moments. Finalement, dans la troisième, et dernière partie, nous allons aborder la question de l'interprétation hégélienne de l'ancien scepticisme. Autrement dit, nous allons aborder la question de pourquoi Hegel, contrairement aux sceptiques grecs, a-t-il aboli les phénomènes et les apparences et a fait ainsi du scepticisme ancien un sorte de « nihilisme ».

### I. La distinction entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme

Une analyse de la différence entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme chez Hegel pose d'emblée un problème assez embarrassant : dans *La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie*, Hegel veut opposer, comme nous l'avons dit, l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme, tout en critiquant la notion de scepticisme de Schulze. La démarche qu'il propose est, en fait, double : « d'une part il condamne de manière directe le scepticisme de Schulze comme contradictoire, d'autre part il le récuse de manière indirecte en soulignant ce qui l'oppose au scepticisme antique<sup>1</sup> ». Or, cet article de 1802 apparaît dans l'ensemble de la philosophie hégélienne comme une sorte d'« embarras » à cause précisément des objectifs qu'il propose. Le problème consiste dans deux choses. Premièrement, Hegel semble commettre un contre-sens en ce qui concerne le scepticisme ancien : pour lui, ce scepticisme paraît consister dans la récusation absolue de toute connaissance sensible (ce qui équivaut à un nihilisme<sup>2</sup>) et, deuxièmement, afin de défendre son interprétation du scepticisme, Schulze, lui aussi invoque le scepticisme ancien. De cette façon :

« Schulze se réclame du scepticisme antique pour appuyer la distinction qu'il établit entre le crédit qu'il faut apporter aux données sensibles et le doute qu'il faut avoir à l'égard des jugements philosophiques. Plus encore : Hegel récuse l'interprétation de Schulze non pas avec une désinvolture qui finalement expliquerait son erreur mais au contraire textes à l'appui et de manière extrêmement argumentée. L'ouvrage de 1802 est dans cette mesure

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<sup>1</sup> MARMASSE G., « Hegel et le scepticisme antique durant la période d'Iéna », *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Sur ce point voir l'introduction de J.P. Dumont à : HEGEL G.W., « La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie », Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1972, p. 7 et suivants. .

d'une lecture éprouvante, car il montre, au moins au premier abord, un Hegel qui se discrédite en défendant méthodiquement une position indéfendable<sup>1</sup>. »

Or, au-delà de cette problématique – laquelle nous allons aborder plus en détail dans la troisième partie de ce travail – ce qu'il faut commencer à retenir ce sont les caractéristiques qui distinguent l'ancien scepticisme du moderne et qui sont déjà esquissées dans cet article de 1802. Le haut scepticisme, dira Hegel dans *l'Encyclopédie*, ne peut être confondu avec le scepticisme moderne. Celui-ci, dont le représentant le plus notoire est peut-être Hume, consiste seulement à nier la vérité et la certitude suprasensible, en désignant le sensible comme ce à quoi nous avons à nous tenir. En effet, le scepticisme « de Hume » prend pour base « la vérité de l'empirique, du sentiment, de l'intuition, et conteste à partir de là les déterminations et lois universelles, pour cette raison qu'elles ne sont pas justifiées par la perception sensible<sup>2</sup> ». En revanche, le haut scepticisme – lequel n'est autre que l'ancien scepticisme –, « était si éloigné de faire du sentiment, de l'intuition, le principe de la vérité, qu'il se tournait bien plutôt avant tout contre le sensible<sup>3</sup> ». Autrement dit, le scepticisme ancien nie les données sensibles, alors que le scepticisme moderne s'appuie sur elles. Hegel reproche au scepticisme moderne cette affirmation du sensible qui fait de lui un « dogmatisme du sensible » et par conséquent, « un faux scepticisme<sup>4</sup> ».

Néanmoins, bien que le scepticisme ancien puisse « mettre en doute » les données sensibles, ce n'est pas pour cela que l'entreprise sceptique puisse être caractérisée comme une « doctrine du doute ». Dans l'addition 2 au §81 de *l'Encyclopédie* Hegel écrit : « le scepticisme ne peut être considéré simplement comme une doctrine du doute, il est bien plutôt absolument certain de sa chose, c'est-à-dire du caractère de néant de tout ce qui est fini<sup>5</sup> ». Pourquoi Hegel dit-il cela ? Nous pouvons énumérer trois raisons et, en même temps, nous pouvons continuer à distinguer l'ancien du moderne scepticisme.

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<sup>1</sup> MARMASSE G., « Hegel et le scepticisme antique durant la période d'Iéna », *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Encyclopédie des sciences philosophiques*, *op. cit.*, §39, p. 301.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> GODIN C., « La figure et le moment du scepticisme chez Hegel », *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Encyclopédie des sciences philosophiques*, *op. cit.*, §81, add. 2 p. 515.

Premièrement, dire que le scepticisme est une « doctrine » pose déjà un problème, parce qu'il n'est pas une doctrine : à la différence du dogmatisme, le scepticisme ne veut pas établir des dogmes ni être un système. Il s'agit d'« une philosophie qui ne peut [...] être appelée un système, et qui ne veut pas en être un<sup>1</sup> ». En fait, nous pouvons comprendre le scepticisme comme négation du dogmatisme, lequel pose et fige une chose en la distinguant de son contraire et, de cette façon, il arrive à la déterminer. Or, comment cette identité fixe sur elle-même peut penser le contraire ? Être dogmatique, au sens propre, consiste à maintenir fermement dans l'entendement ces déterminations par l'exclusion des déterminations opposées et, ainsi, l'essence du dogmatisme consiste donc à ériger comme principe absolu une de ses déterminations particulières ou finies. En revanche, le scepticisme ne veut point établir un principe absolu ni établir des dogmes. Sa finalité, comme l'a décrite Sextus Empiricus, consiste dans

« la tranquillité en matière d'opinions et la modération des affects dans les choses qui s'imposent à nous. Car ayant commencé à philosopher en vue de décider entre les impressions et de saisir lesquelles sont vraies et lesquelles sont fausses en sorte d'atteindre la tranquillité, il tomba dans le désaccord entre partis de forces égales ; étant incapable décider, il suspendit son assentiment. Et pour celui qui avait suspendu son assentiment, la tranquillité en matière d'opinions s'ensuivit fortuitement<sup>2</sup>. »

Ainsi, le scepticisme vise la suspension de tout jugement, ce qui revient à être *l'épochè*<sup>3</sup>. Comment le sceptique peut-il achever cette

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<sup>1</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1975, vol. 4, p. 759.

<sup>2</sup> EMPIRICUS S., *Esquisses pyrrhoniennes*, traduit par Pierre PELLEGRIN, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1997, p. L I, 12, [27], p. 70-71.

<sup>3</sup> Dans ses *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, Hegel, en citant Sextus Empiricus, résume la démarche générale du scepticisme de la façon suivante : « on peut opposer le sensible au sensible et le pensé au pensé, ou le sensible au pensé ou le pensé au sensible », c'est-à-dire mettre en lumière en eux une contradiction mutuelle. Ou montrer au sujet de tout déterminé « que l'un a autant de valeur et de validité que son opposé », ou qu'il est indifférent autant à la conviction et à la non-conviction; de sorte que le premier résultat <auquel on aboutit > est que tous deux ont également validité, donc que chacun est seulement un paraître, - « ce qui par conséquent donne naissance à l'épochè » (la suspension de l'assentiment, de l'admission de quelque chose comme vrai), "d'où naît alors la liberté par rapport à

suspension ? Il le fait à travers des *tropes* ou *les modes de la suspension de l'assentiment*. Il s'agit d'au moins dix tropes qui ont été légués, d'après Sextus Empiricus, par les sceptiques anciens, plus particulièrement par Énésidème, et de cinq tropes légués par les sceptiques modernes, notamment Agrippa et ses partisans<sup>1</sup>. Pour Hegel, toutefois, ces sont un arsenal d'« armes » qui montre que toute thèse est contingente et peut être réfutée par son contraire. En eux « se trouvent contenus les défauts de toute métaphysique d'entendement [...]. Ces tropes concernent la philosophie dogmatique, qui a pour manière de poser un seul principe comme détermination, dans une proposition déterminée<sup>2</sup> ».

Deuxièmement, le scepticisme n'est pas une doctrine du doute parce que, en fait, il ne doute pas. Le doute, écrit Hegel dans les *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, « n'est qu'incertitude » et, au contraire, « le Scepticisme ancien ne doute pas [...] son doute est pour lui certitude<sup>3</sup> ». Ainsi, le sceptique qui cherche la quiétude ou tranquillité d'âme, ne peut pas douter, car celui-ci n'est que l'inquiétude du cœur. Celui qui doute se trouve dans une situation de « malaise », parce que le doute comporte facilement un déchirement du cœur et de l'esprit : « il rend inquiet, il est dualité de l'homme en lui-même, il est source malheur<sup>4</sup> ». Mais le scepticisme ancien est toute autre chose : dans la certitude de sa négation il ne cherche pas à parvenir à la vérité, il est sûr dans la non-vérité. Il n'y a donc de l'indécision, car, au contraire, il est décision pure et « ce qui est décidé là n'est pas pour lui une vérité, mais la certitude de soi-même. C'est le repos, la fermeté de l'esprit en lui-même, aucun habit de deuil<sup>5</sup> ». En conséquence, être sceptique, à proprement dit, consiste à désespérer complètement de tout donnée ferme de l'entendement pour achever un résultat de repos et d'être « inébranlable en soi »<sup>6</sup>.

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tous les mouvements de l'âme.» HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, op. cit., p. 776-777.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. EMPIRICUS S., *Esquisses pyrrhoniennes*, op. cit., p. L I, 14, [36], p. 75 et L I, 15, [164].

<sup>2</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, op. cit., p. 799.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 763.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. HEGEL G.W., *Encyclopédie des sciences philosophiques*, op. cit., p. §81, add.2, p. 516.

Le scepticisme, le vrai scepticisme, vise un état de repos en soi, d'ataraxie, qui ne peut être achevé en doutant, mais à travers du désespoir. La différence entre un scepticisme et l'autre c'est que le sceptique moderne espère, à cause d'un désir de l'esprit, que son doute soit résolu, c'est-à-dire, qu'une des déterminations entre lesquelles il oscille soit affermi en lui comme « ferme et vrai ». Il se trouve donc dans un état de malaise, tandis que le sceptique ancien, en se désespérant de tout, demeure tranquille dans la fermeté de l'esprit en lui-même. Ainsi, « c'est ce désespoir de tout qui différencie le scepticisme ancien du scepticisme moderne, et c'est lui qui fait du premier le seul véritable scepticisme : dans le doute, le sceptique moderne ne s'abstient pas, une (ré)solution y mettra fin<sup>1</sup> ».

Troisièmement, le scepticisme est absolument certain du caractère de néant de tout ce qui est fini, car il ne veut pas, comme nous avons le dit, établir un principe particulier ou fini comme principe absolu. Pour le scepticisme tout est changeant puisque l'essence de toutes les choses est de se supprimer (ce qui revient à dire qu'il n'y a rien en soi). Je peux dire d'une chose qu'elle est, mais en même temps, je dois poser son non-être ou son contraire. Par exemple : je peux dire du miel quand je le goûte qu'il est doux mais aussi qu'il est amer ou que le maintenant est présent mais le présent est déjà passé. Cette négativité de toute détermination constitue la caractéristique du scepticisme. Dès lors le sceptique substitue, dans le domaine de la connaissance, l'être par l'expression du paraître en tant que « la forme de l'étant et du savoir de l'étant est entièrement réduite à néant<sup>2</sup> ». En conséquence, je ne pourrai pas dire d'une chose qu'elle est, mais qu'elle *paraît* être et qu'en paraissant elle disparaît.

Finalement, Hegel accuse donc le scepticisme moderne, et en particulier à Schulze, de poser comme fondement, et en dernière instance comme cause de la connaissance phénoménale, une hypothétique chose en soi, à partir de laquelle les sceptiques modernes dénoncent la fragilité de cette même connaissance. En revanche, le scepticisme ancien montre la fragilité de cette connaissance à partir des contradictions mêmes du sensible sans besoin de ne poser aucun fondement « qui serait dehors de la connaissance<sup>3</sup> ». Le sceptique fait ainsi du phénomène son critère, comme

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<sup>1</sup> GODIN C., « La figure et le moment du scepticisme chez Hegel », *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, *op. cit.*, p. 759.

<sup>3</sup> Pour plus d'information sur ce point voir: MARMASSE G., « Hegel et le scepticisme antique durant la période d'Iéna », *op. cit.*, p. 3-4.

l'indiquait déjà Sextus Empiricus<sup>1</sup> et, à la différence du sceptique moderne, « il reste dans la subjectivité de l'apparaître < Ercheinens >. Mais ce phénomène n'est pas pour lui une *chose* sensible derrière laquelle il doit y avoir, comme l'affirment le dogmatisme et la philosophie, d'autres choses encore, je veux parler des choses suprasensibles<sup>2</sup> ».

## II. Le scepticisme comme moment de la philosophie

Une fois que nous avons vue les distinctions entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme, il nous faut ensuite examiner le rapport que le premier a par rapport à la philosophie. En fait, en plusieurs passages Hegel montre comment le scepticisme a été toujours présenté comme l'ennemi de la philosophie. Dans *La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie*, il écrit que Sextus Empiricus montrait « le scepticisme séparé de la philosophie et dirigé contre elle<sup>3</sup> ». Dans ses *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, il écrit que « tel qu'il apparaît, ce Scepticisme est certes quelque chose de tout à fait imposant. En tout temps, et aujourd'hui encore, le Scepticisme a passé pour le plus terrible adversaire de la philosophie, il a passé pour invincible<sup>4</sup> » et, finalement, dans l'addition 2 du §81 de *l'Encyclopédie*, le philosophe allemand écrit :

« Si d'ailleurs le scepticisme est encore de nos jours souvent considéré comme un ennemi irrésistible de tout savoir positif en général, et par conséquent aussi de la philosophie pour autant qu'en celle-ci on vise à une connaissance positive, il est au contraire à remarquer que c'est en fait seulement la pensée finie, relevant de l'entendement abstrait, qui contient en elle le sceptique comme un moment, à savoir comme le dialectique<sup>5</sup>. »

Alors, l'ennemi hostile de la philosophie, comment peut-il se rapprocher à celle-ci d'une façon non destructive ? Au contraire de Sextus Empiricus, Hegel soutient que le scepticisme est « foncièrement un < auf's innigste Eins > avec toute philosophie vraie<sup>6</sup> ». Il est, plus précisément, un

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<sup>1</sup> Cfr. HEGEL G.W., « La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie », , Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1972, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, *op. cit.*, p. 759.

<sup>5</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Encyclopédie des sciences philosophiques*, *op. cit.*, p. §81, add. 2, p. 516.

<sup>6</sup> HEGEL G.W., « La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie », *op. cit.*, p. 34.

moment de la philosophie<sup>1</sup>. Ainsi, « la pensée centrale de Hegel sur le scepticisme fut de l'arracher à sa contingence singulière [...] pour le lier à l'absolue nécessité de la figure-moment de la philosophie comme devenir conscient de l'Esprit<sup>2</sup> ». Or, il y a une distinction importante entre l'un et l'autre : la philosophie, à la différence du scepticisme, ne reste pas dans le résultat négatif de la dialectique. En fait, il faut d'abord dire que le scepticisme est la dialectique de toute déterminé, c'est-à-dire que « dans toutes les représentations du vrai, la finité est susceptible d'être mise en évidence, puisqu'elle recèle une négation et par conséquent une contradiction<sup>3</sup> ». Tant qu'une chose recèle une contradiction, elle « se dissout, [et] donc n'est pas<sup>4</sup> », laissant le sceptique dans le résultat purement négatif de la dialectique. Le sceptique méconnaît ainsi son résultat puisqu'il en reste au résultat comme à un négatif<sup>5</sup>.

Mais, pourquoi Hegel dit-il que la philosophie ne reste pas au côté négatif de la dialectique comme le scepticisme ? Le philosophe allemand veut sortir de ce cadre négatif pour aboutir dans le côté positif de la dialectique, où se trouve la philosophie, mais il y a un problème, car le vrai sceptique ne cède jamais à la positivité, qui se trouve au début du dogmatisme. Toutefois, le sceptique « méconnaît que cette négation est pareillement affirmative, est un contenu déterminé en lui-même ; le négatif est en effet négation de la négation, il est plus précisément, l'affirmation infinie, la négativité se rapportant à elle-même<sup>6</sup> ». Il faut donc utiliser la négation de façon non-thétique et nier la négation, mais ceci pose une autre sorte de problèmes parce que dans le cadre classique de la logique aristotélicienne la négation de la négation résulte en la restitution de l'affirmation :  $\neg(\neg A) = A$ . Hegel veut trouver une forme de la négation qui ne soit pas la restitution de l'affirmation, mais qui soit une négation qui produit. Par conséquence, elle doit être aussi une négation déterminante. Pourtant, si je dis A je ne peut pas dire en même temps  $\neg A$ , puisque la détermination est suspension du contraire. D'ailleurs, le principe fondamental de non contradiction pose que A et  $\neg A$  ne peuvent être dites

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<sup>1</sup> cfr. HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, op. cit., p. 760.

<sup>2</sup> GODIN C., « La figure et le moment du scepticisme chez Hegel », op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 760.

<sup>4</sup> cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 761.

<sup>5</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, op. cit., p. 761.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

en même temps ; je ne peux pas affirmer  $A$  et  $\neg A$ , et si je transgresse ce principe, le discours tombe sur lui même. Néanmoins, la démarche sceptique « consiste d'une façon générale à opposer à tout contenu déterminé, affirmé ou pensé, son autre<sup>1</sup> ». Autrement dit, même si la loi de non-contradiction nous empêche de dire  $A$  et  $\neg A$  en même temps, le sceptique n'a aucun obstacle pour dire  $A$  et  $\neg A$ . Alors, qu'est-ce qu'il faut faire pour retrouver une négation qui ne soit pas la restitution de l'affirmation ni l'exclusion du contraire ?

La solution de Hegel est de libérer le principe de non-contradiction de la loi d'alternative, de telle façon qu'on pourrait affirmer avec les sceptiques  $A$  et  $\neg A$ , mais son but est maintenant trouver une médiation concrétée et riche entre les termes qui les met en rapport. Par exemple, si je dis  $A = A$ , dans la logique traditionnelle, ce n'est qu'une tautologie. Or, pour Hegel, le fait de reconnaître  $A = A$  implique déjà une médiation, car le signe « = » est une prise de distance qui nous fait penser les choses autrement. De la même façon, la négation de la négation met en relation les termes  $A$  et  $\neg A$ . Mais ici, nous trouvons un autre problème, parce que, comment penser une négation qui ne soit pas destructrice, mais qui met en relation les termes ? Le terme allemand *Aufhebung* porte un double sens : ce mot veut dire en même temps *conservation* et *suppression*. La contradiction entre les termes est résolue par un mouvement dialectique, où l'*Aufhebung* est la synthèse supérieure des termes. Ainsi, d'abord, « en dépassant le principe de contradiction, le scepticisme s'ouvre d'emblé à la philosophie<sup>2</sup> » et celle-ci, par la négation de la négation, n'en reste plus dans le résultat négative de la dialectique comme le fait le scepticisme. Cette négation de la négation n'est pas la négation à la façon des sceptiques, non plus la restitution de l'affirmation comme chez Aristote, mais elle est la négativité, c'est-à-dire, elle produit et elle est déterminée.

### III. Le scepticisme pyrrhonien et le scepticisme hégélien

Plus haut nous avons parlé d'un problème « embarrassant » qui se pose lorsque nous essayons d'analyser le scepticisme chez Hegel. Nous allons maintenant aborder plus en détail cette question. Ce problème consiste dans le fait que Hegel voit le scepticisme ancien comme une sorte de négation de toute la connaissance sensible, c'est-à-dire comme un

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 778.

<sup>2</sup> GODIN C., « La figure et le moment du scepticisme chez Hegel », *op. cit.*



nihilisme. Dès lors, il critique le scepticisme de Schulze, lequel « défend un empirisme d'inspiration empiriste qui oppose les faits de la conscience, considérés comme irrécusables, au fondement inconnaissable des connaissances phénoménales. [...] Il dénonce le dogmatisme latent de toute philosophie – y compris de la philosophie kantienne – et affirme finalement la vanité de la philosophie et de toute prétention à la connaissance rationnelle.<sup>1</sup> ». Ce fondement inconnaissable, nous l'avons dit, est la présupposition d'une chose en soi qui serait derrière des phénomènes et est, en dernière instance, la cause de la connaissance.

Néanmoins, une lecture des textes anciens permet de voir que la position de Schulze n'est pas si éloignée de celle des philosophes grecs. La tâche du scepticisme, telle qu'elle a été décrite par Sextus Empiricus dans ses *Esquisses pyrrhoniennes*, c'est de créer un phénoménalisme, où il y a une confiance du sensible. En effet, « pour les Sceptiques, l'être sensible a certes validité, mais comme phénomène, pour se régler sur lui dans la vie, mais non pas pour le considérer comme vérité<sup>2</sup> ». Cette confiance dans le sensible se doit au simple fait que nous sommes ici, incarnés dans un corps, dans un monde où il faut vivre et agir. Ainsi, nous pouvons comprendre que le scepticisme vise, non pas le monde sensible en tant que telle, mais l'entendement et les jugements que nous pouvons en faire. En ce sens, le scepticisme est « plutôt une direction pour vivre droitement, pour penser juste, – et non pas la préférence de certains dogmes<sup>3</sup> » ; c'est là la raison pour laquelle Sextus disait que « [...] nous vivons d'une manière non dogmatique suivant la règle de l'expérience commune et en prenant pour critères les phénomènes<sup>4</sup> ». De la même manière, le scepticisme de Schulze vise les jugements philosophiques, ce que Hegel écrit lui-même, bien que de façon en peu plus indirecte, dans *La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie* :

« M. Schulze expose cette conception du scepticisme à l'objection que voici : à l'entendre, il n'est rien de ce que *l'expérience enseigne*, en particulier *l'ensemble des sensations externes*, qui puisse être objet de doute et de toutes les

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<sup>1</sup> MARMASSE G., « Hegel et le scepticisme antique durant la période d'Iéna », *op. cit.*, p. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> HEGEL G.W., *Leçons sur l'histoire de la philosophie*, *op. cit.*, p. 768.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 767.

<sup>4</sup> Sextus Empiricus, H.p., I, 23. Cité dans HEGEL G.W., « La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie », *op. cit.*, p. 31, note 24.

*sciences il n'y a que la philosophie qui puisse l'être [...], alors qu'au contraire l'ancienne skepsis s'étendait à l'expérience et à la philosophie, et la plus ancienne s'étendait au moins à l'expérience [...]*<sup>1</sup>. »

Or, comme nous venons de le montrer, et au détriment de Hegel, les textes classiques viennent à l'appui de Schulze. Comme l'écrit B. Faquet,

« En effet, les Pyrrhoniens du fait de leur origine cyrénaïque ne mettent à aucun moment en cause l'existence et la présence des représentations sensibles ou des affections. Pour eux le doute ne porte que sur l'interprétation qu'il convient de donner à ces impressions, et à leurs yeux, l'attitude dogmatique consiste à dépasser le témoignage des sens pour se prononcer sur la nature en soi imaginée comme la cause de l'impression ressentie. [...] Mais Hegel méconnaît tout à fait cette dimension de la tradition pyrrhonienne [...]. C'est pourquoi il affirme, mais à tort, que le champ de l'ancienne skepsis s'étendait à l'expérience, alors qu'en réalité la skepsis refuse seulement la possibilité de tenir un propos dogmatique honnête sur la nature en soi des causes de la représentation<sup>2</sup>. »

Dans cet article nous avons montré, d'abord, les différences entre l'ancien et le moderne scepticisme d'après Hegel. Nous avons commencé par voir comment le scepticisme s'oppose au dogmatisme en tant que ce dernier vise l'établissement de dogmes fermes dans l'entendement. Ensuite nous avons montré comment le scepticisme n'est pas une doctrine doute, parce que celui qui doute se tient encore dans l'espoir qu'une des déterminations entre lesquelles il oscille soit affirmé comme vrai. De la même façon, le scepticisme qui vise un sentiment « d'être inébranlable en soi » ne peut pas douter car celui-ci est une source de malheur.

Le sceptique ancien se désespère de toute donnée ferme de l'entendement et il arrive ainsi au repos et à la fermeté de l'esprit. Après, nous avons vu comment le scepticisme est un moment de la philosophie et comment celle-ci ne reste dans le résultat négatif de la dialectique, mais dû à la négation de la négation – la négativité – elle arrive à la positivité, c'est-à-dire au moment positif de la dialectique. Finalement, il reste donc la question ouverte de pourquoi Hegel a vu le scepticisme ancien comme un nihilisme. S'agit-il d'une erreur historique ? Est-ce que c'était une mauvaise

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

interprétation qui est arrivée jusqu'à lui<sup>1</sup> ? Les textes anciens montrent que les sceptiques comme Sextus Empiricus et Pyrrhon n'ont jamais aboli le phénomène comme critère de repère dans la vie quotidienne. En effet, « en nous attachant aux choses apparentes, nous vivons en observant les règles de la vie quotidienne sans soutenir d'opinions, puisque nous ne sommes pas capables d'être complètement inactifs<sup>2</sup> ».

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<sup>1</sup> Dans la préface à la traduction de *La relation du scepticisme avec la philosophie*, J.-P. Dumont expose les causes qui ont amené à Hegel à « réécrire » l'histoire du scepticisme et il en donne deux raisons historiques et une dernière, plus profond et qui se divise en deux formes: la dénonciation de l'entendement fini voué à l'éparpillement dans la multiplicité et l'affirmation positive de l'unité de la philosophie. Pour plus d'information sur ce point voir *Ibid.*, p. 7-13.

<sup>2</sup> EMPIRICUS S., *Esquisses pyrrhoniennes*, *op. cit.*, p. L I, XI, [23], p. 69.

# DIE PHÄNOMENOLOGIE VON BLAUSTEIN: DIE AUSGEWÄHLTEN ASPEKTE DER KRITIK DER HUSSERLSCHEN VERSTÄNDNIS DES ACTES

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**Abstract:** *This article is a comparative analysis the views of Leopold Blaustein and Edmund Husserl. Main problem approached in the article is the concept of an intentional act, around which orbit many other issues connected with phenomenological method, such as: intentional messages, theory of tones, and intentional fullness. The last part concentrates on the concept of the intentional act in a more broad way and aims to answer whether an intentional act is always simultaneously a perception and interpretation of experiences.*

**Keywords:** *intentional act, intentional fullness, experience, intentional message, theory of tones.*

Das Ziel dieses Artikels ist die komparatistische Analyse von zwei philosophischen Standpunkten: von Leopold Blaustein und von Edmund Husserl. Diese Analyse betrifft die phänomenologische Auffassung des Actes. Gegenstand des Nachdenkens sind die ausgewählten Aspekte der aktischen Charakteristik. Ich stelle die Hypothese, dass die Diskurse von Blaustein sowohl die starke, konstruktive Kritik der phänomenologischen Gründen darstellen, als auch unzureichend in manchen Fällen sind.

Leopold Blaustein (1905-1941 oder 1943), der Schüler von Kazimierz Twardowski in die Lvov-Warschauer-Schule war ein außerordentlicher, eingehender, kritischer Anhänger der Phänomenologie von Edmund Husserl (1959-1938). In seiner Doktordissertation: „Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung“, zieht er fachmännische und sehr fruchtbare Analyse mancher Komponente der Husserlschen phänomenologischen Methode voll, die der frühen Phase des Schaffens von Husserl betreffen.

Die Forschungsgebiete, die ich in dieser Arbeit entfalte, beinhalten die Kritik von Blaustein hinsichtlich des intentionalen Inhalts. Ich berühre auch das Thema bezogen auf die Theorie der Abschattungen und der augenscheinlichen Fülle. Die anfänglichen Überlegungen sind im

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Wesentlichen die detaillierte Analyse und Charakteristik des intentionalen Actes.

In dem letzten Teil der Arbeit nehme ich das Problem des intentionalen Actes in dem mehr allgemeinen Kontext auf. Ich beziehe mich auf die Konzeption des Eindrucks, den Blaustein als den Gegenstand präsentierenden versteht. An diesem Platz zeigte ich die Kritik von Blaustein zum Thema der Behandlung der intentionalen Acten, zugleich als die Auffassung und die Interpretation der Eindrücke.

In meinem Artikel werde ich die Meinung von Blaustein über die Husserlsche Verstandnis des Begriffs des intentionalem Inhalt betonen. In „Logischen Untersuchungen“, im § 16 vom fünften Teil, unter dem Titel „Unterscheidung zwischen descriptivem und intentionalem Inhalt“ drückt Husserl die folgende Ansicht aus:

„Wir werden drei Begriffe von intentionalem Inhalt unterscheiden müssen: den intentionalen Gegenstand des Actes, seine Materie (im Gegensatz zu seiner Qualität), endlich sein intentionales Wesen“<sup>1</sup>.

Den oben genannten drei Begriffen der intentionalen Inhalten fügt Blaustein drei weitere Begriffe hinzu: bedeutendes Wesen des Actes, die ideale Bedeutung und die ideal erfüllte Bedeutung.

Im Gegensatz zu Husserl, ordnet Blaustein nur der Materie des Actes den Status des intentionalem Inhaltes zu. Er versteht diesen Inhalt als Determinante von der Eigenheiten des Gegenstandes. Zu diesem Gegenstand steuert der Act. Dank dem intentionalen Inhalt erkennt der Act den bestimmten intentionalen Gegenstand. Den anderen Bestandteilen des Actes verweigert der polnische Denker die Rangstufe von intentionalem Inhalt. Und so ist ihm nicht der Gegenstand des intentionalem Actes, der Husserl begreift folgend: „der Gegenstand, so wie er intendirt ist, und schlechthin der Gegenstand, welcher intendirt ist“<sup>2</sup>. Vielleicht führte diese Aussage Blaustein zu der Annerkenung des gemeinten Gegenstandes als Gegenstandes des Actes.

Das intentionale Wesen ist auch kein intentionaler Inhalt. Den Inhalt, laut „Logischer Untersuchungen“, machen Materie und Qualität aus. Sie sind der beschreibende Inhalt des Actes. In Husserls Meinung, sind Materie

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<sup>1</sup> E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen, Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*,

Halle a. S., Max Niemeyer 1901, s. 375.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, s.376.

und Qualität jedoch keine Bestandteile, die aus der Vollständigkeit des deskriptiven Inhaltes bestehen. Wenn wir ein Paar Acten mit der gleichen Qualität und gleichen Materie nehmen, koennen sie weiterhin deskriptiv divergieren. Es impliziert den Unterschied der Vorstellungen. Deswegen schlägt der Phänomenologe vor, sie als „intentionales Wesen“ zu nennen.

In seiner Doktorarbeit ist Blaustein anderer Meinung. Er meint, dass der deksriptive Inhalt des Actes sein Bereich zu der Materie und Qualität einschränkt. Das erlaubt jedoch nicht, sie als intentionaler Inhalt zu betrachten. Auch nicht als intentionales Wesen, weil sie für ihn allein Bestandteile des deskriptiven Teiles des Actes bedeuten.

Eher schwacher Argument ist für dem polnischen Philosoph die Einbeziehung der Eindrücke zu dem deskriptiven Teil des Actes. Er erläutert deswegen: „Die Acten mit gleicher Qualität und Materie untereinander abweichen können, betreffen diese Unterschiede jedoch (...) die relativen Eigenheiten, nämlich den Besitz der solchen oder anderen präsentierenden Inhalte, weil sie etwas generisch unterschiedlich von dem Act sind“<sup>1</sup>.

Das Fazit von Blaustein befestigen seine Argumente, betreffend die Charakteristik der Eindrücke. Den einzigen Grund der Anerkennung der Materie und Qualität als intentionales Wesen ist die Tatsache des Unterschiedes der Eigenheiten in dem Act. Dieser Unterschied kann in dem Fall der Acten von der gleichen Materie und Qualität hervortreten. Diese Eigenheiten sind das Ergebnis der Markierung durch den Act konkreten praesentierenden Inhalt (die Eindrücke in dem Sinn des Husserls).

Das Verfahren der Identifizierung des bedeutenden Wesens des Actes mit dem intentionalen Inhalt ist ausserordentlich unklar. Die Qualität und Materie, zusammengesetzt in dem Act, sind noch nicht das Ganze des Actes. Husserl zeigt dies deutlich. Für ihre gemeinsame Auffassung führt Husserl den Termin des intentionalen Wesens ein. In „Logischen Untersuchungen“ führt er zusätzlich den Begriff des bedeutenden Wesens ein (das bedeutende Wesen fasst nicht ganz den phänomenologischen Gehalt des Actes auf). Das bedeutende Wesen betrifft diese Acte, die die

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<sup>1</sup> L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia (Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung)*. In: *Polska fenomenologia przedwojenna. Antologia tekstów (Die polnische Vorkriegsphenomenologie. Die Anthologie der Texte)*, Red. D. Bęben, M. Ples-bęben, Katowice 2003, s.208.

bedeutende Funktion erfüllen. Diese Acte weisen die Bedeutung der Ausdrücke auf. Ideale Bedeutung wird durch die ideirende Abstraction des bedeutenden Wesens erstellt. Blaustein stimmt hier mit Husserl nicht überein. „Sollte man die Bedeutung als den ganzen Act oder nur als seine Materie betrachten – es ist für mich die zweifelhafte Frage“<sup>1</sup>. Wenn wir zu die früheren Abmachung zurückkommen, die über die Materie und Qualität als ausschließliche Bestandteilen des Actes sprechen, müssen wir seine definitive und wichtige Feststellung äussern: das Verständnis der Bedeutung ist hier unwichtig. Die Bedeutung kann entweder als die Materie oder als der ganze Act verstanden werden. Trotz allem wird sie der intentionale Act. Der Act wird konstituiert als temporal.

Husserl führt in „Logischen Untersuchungen“ das ideale Konzept der Bedeutung vor. Wir können es als folgende Formel auffassen:

„Das Subject *S* richtet sich intentional auf den Gegenstand *P*, durch die Bedeutung *Z*. Das Subject *S* trifft die mentalen Intention vom konkreten, mentalen Inhalt (die Materie) *T*, und *Z* ist die Gattung (species) dieses Inhaltes *T*“<sup>2</sup>.

Die obige klare Definition ist nicht für Blaustein genug überzeugend. Er will nicht weiterhin die Bedeutung als intentionalen Inhalt des Actes akzeptieren. Zum Teil kann er zu der Definition der Bedeutung *in specie* neigen. Er erhebt jedoch Argument, dass dieser ontologischer Status der Bedeutungen das Fehlen der Gemeinschaft mit dem Act in realem Sinn impliziert. Ist dieser Anschauung zutreffend? In dieser Phase ist es schwierig zu bewerten. Husserl erklärt diese nicht.

Untersuchen wir näher die Blausteinsche Polemik mit der Theorie der Abschattungen und der Anschauungsfülle von Husserl. Der deutsche Denker äussert sich zu diesem Thema ganz allgemein. Das ist Resultat seiner unbeendeten Forschungen in diesem Bereich. Zusätzlich, um zu Blaustein zurückzukommen, hat man den Eindruck, dass er Husserl ziemlich frei interpretiert und den Leser über seine Interpretationen und Rekonstruktionen nicht informiert.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 208-209.

<sup>2</sup> A. Chrudzimski: *Teoria intencjonalności Romana Ingardena (Die Theorie der Intentionalität von Roman Ingarden)*. In: „Edukacja Filozoficzna“ („Philosophische Bildung“) 1998, nr 25(1998), s.249-262. [http://www.roman-ingarden.phils.uj.edu.pl/pliki/arkadiusz\\_chrudzimski\\_teoria\\_intencjonalności.pdf](http://www.roman-ingarden.phils.uj.edu.pl/pliki/arkadiusz_chrudzimski_teoria_intencjonalności.pdf), 03.12.2016.

Die Frage der Abschattungen erwähnt Daniel Sobota in seinem Buch "Źródła i inspiracje Heideggerowskiego pytania o bycie" ("Die Quellen und Inspirationen in der Heideggerschen Fragen nach dem Sein"). Er tut es bei der Gelegenheit der Theorie der Intentionalität. Nach Sobota beruht die Wahrnehmung eines Gegenstandes in seinem Erscheinen in "den Abschattungen". Das gemeinte Object ercheint in dem leiblichen Selbstsein<sup>1</sup>. Die Abschattungen sind also das schlechte Aussehen dessen, vorauf das quellenhaft konstutiuende Bewusstsein hinzielt. In dieser Perpektive erscheinen die Abschattungen in den "Ideen", wir begegnen ihnen auch in der "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft".

In diesem zweiten Buch lesen wir: „Die niedersten Farbendifferenzen, die letzten Nuancen, mögen der Fixierung spotten, aber «Farbe» im Unterschied von «Ton» ist ein so sicherer Unterschied, wie es ist aller Welt nichts noch Sichereres gibt. (...) Ausgeschlossen bleiben dabei die letzten «Nuancen», die dem Ubestimmbaren «des Flusses» angehören“<sup>2</sup>. Deswegen sind die Abschattungen „die Repräsentanten“ dessen, was ist gemeint; diese Abschattungen betreffen sowohl die Gegenstände unserer Sinne als auch das weit verstandene psychische Leben.

Es sollte betont werden, dass das Ding (z.B. die Gegenstände unserer Sinne) immer als Ganzes anerkannt wird. Es ist so, trotzdem erscheint der Gegenstand nur als einzele Anschauung. In diesem Moment dieser Diskussion stimmt Blaustein Husserl zu: „Jede Vorstellung besteht aus einer genzen Reihe der Bestandteiles (...), es ist das Bündel der teilweisen Intentionen, zusammengesetzt in die Einheit der Intention“<sup>3</sup>.

Es muss betont werden, dass die Erscheinung mit den verschiedenen Anschauungen oder Abschattungen die Stufe der Wesenschau ausmacht: wir sollen auf diesem Weg *eidōs* auffassen und schnappen. *Eidōs* ist die

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<sup>1</sup> D. Sobota: *Źródła i inspiracje Heideggerowskiego pytania o bycie (Die Quellen und Inspirationen in der Heideggerschen Fragen nach dem Sein)*. Vol. I, Bydgoszcz 2012, s. 329-330.

<sup>2</sup> E. Husserl, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, s.315- 316, <https://www.sdvigpress.org/dox/108183/108024.pdf>, 01.02.2017.

<sup>3</sup>L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia (Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung)*. In: „Archiwum Towarzystwa Naukowego we Lwowie” (Das Archiv der Polnischen Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft in Lvov). Abteilung II. Vol. II. Heft I, Lwów 1928, s. 57.



ideale allgemeine Eigenheit und gehört zu einem individuellen Sein. Das eidetische Anschauen ist kein Anschauen im engeren Sinn. Es ist soeben „das Sehen des Wesens“. Hierbei kann man sie nicht als gebunden an die sinnliche Erfahrung verstehen.

Wir kommen jetzt zu Blausteinschen Theorie der Abschattungen. Sie ist nicht speziell ausgebaut. Blaustein zeigt die zwei Typen der Abschattungen: imaginative und perceptive. Die ersten konstituieren die anschauliche Fassung des gemeinten Gegenstandes. Bei den zweiten Abschattungen erscheint der Gegenstand *originaliter* und höchstselbst. Der Gegenstand präsentiert sich jedoch immer nicht voll. In seinem Bericht schreibt Blaustein, dass das Objekt in den Abschattungen während der Vollbringung der äusseren Wahrnehmungen intendiert ist: wir appercipiren diese unterschiedlich in jeweiligen Wahrnehmungen – z.B. je nach dessen, wie die Seite des präsenten Gegenstand uns ercheint oder wie das Objekt weit ist<sup>1</sup>. Die Bemerkungen von Blaustein, die für die Konzeption der Abschattungen gelten, betreffen den absoluten repräsentativen Kontext. Dieser Kontext stützt sich bei Husserl auf die Relation der Ähnlichkeit. Hier ist der Typ der Repräsentation abweichend. Er ist anders in dem Fall der Selbstpräsentation des Dinges und anders bei dem Zeichen und in dem Bild. Der polnische Philosoph fundiert seine Kritik folgend: „diese Ansicht erweckt den Argwohn, weil sie bei Husserl unter einer anderen Bezeichnung als Theorie der Zeichen *resp.* die Theorie der Bilder fundiert, die (...) er selbst der harten Kritik unterworfen hat“<sup>2</sup>. Was genau erweckt bei dem Autor der Dissertation diese Bedenken, das erklärt er nicht mehr.

Wenn Blaustein über die augenscheinliche Fülle schreibt, meint er die Gedankengänge von Husserl, die im Paragraf 21 „Logischer Untersuchungen“ zu finden sind. Dieser Paragraf hat den Titel: „Die «Fülle» der Vorstellung“. Die Fülle ist für den Urheber der Phänomenologie der elementare Bestandteil der Vorstellungen, neben der Materie und Qualität<sup>3</sup>. Dank ihr fasst der intentionale Act seinen Gegenstand

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, s.57.

<sup>2</sup> L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia*. In: *Polska fenomenologia przedwojenna. Antologia tekstów, op.cit.*,s.211.

<sup>3</sup> A. Chrudzimski meint, dass die Konzeption der Erfüllung in ihrer die Voraussetzungen die Verteilung zwischen den jeweiligen Prozessen des Bewusstseins initiiert hat (hauptsächlich nur zwischen das reine das Denken und

als „selbst-sein gegeben“ auf. Sie ist der actische Eigentumbesitz, mittels welchem der Gegenstand zeugt sich auf dem Wege der Vorstellung durch die analogische Auffassung. „Die complete Fülle als Ideal ist also die Fülle des Gegenstandes selbst, als Inbegriff der ihn constituirenden Bestimmtheiten“<sup>1</sup>. In diesem Kontext schreibt Husserl über zwei Typen der Intentionen: der intuitiven Intenzion und der, ihr materiel unterordneten, sygnitiven Intention. Die Aufgabe der zweiten Intention ist "das Hinweisen" auf den gemeinten Gegenstand des intentionalen Bezuges. Die intuitive Intention fuehrt zu seiner Vorstellung. Alle beide Intentionen stimmen miteinander als Einheit der Ausfüllung. Diese Einheit beruht auf der spezifischen Identifikation des Gegenstandes. Es ist die Identifikation „in welcher das intuitive, nicht das signitive Glied den Charakter des erfüllenden, und dann auch des im eigentlichsten Sinne Fülle gebenden hat.“<sup>2</sup>.

Der polnische Philosoph achtet für nicht gerechtfertigt das Konzept von Husserl, der besagt, dass die augenscheinliche Fülle aus dem Repräsentant des intentionalen Gegenstandes und der intuitiven Bestandteile der Materie besteht. Blaustein vertritt die Meinung, dass der intuitive actische Gehalt sowohl der Komplex der Eindrücke als auch „die unselbstexistirenden Bestandteile des unselbstexistirenden Teils des Actes“ ist. Es leitet bis dem Nachweis zu, dass dem Act nicht etwas gehört kann, was nicht im Wesentlichen seinen Teil ist.

Husserl, basierend auf der Theorie der Fülle, gebraucht den Begriff des erkenntnismässigen Wesens. Dieses Wesen gilt für den objectivirenden Act und besteht aus der Materie, der Qualität und dem Inhalt. Dieser Inhalt präsentiert das Object auf die intuitive Weise (Blaustein benennt ihn der intuitiven Repräsentant). Dasselbe erkenntnismässige Wesen kann zu mehreren objectivirenden Actes gehören. In dieser Situation sind diese Acten miteinander identisch. Diegleichen Acten präsentieren „dieselbe“ Idee. Die Kritik von Blasutein, des erkenntnismässigen Wesens, betrifft den

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die Wahrnehmung). Dieses Konzept setzt die Identifikation der „Rein Gemeinten“ voraus. A. Chrudzimski: *Intencjonalność z fenomenologicznego punktu widzenia (Die Intentionalität von dem phänomenologischen Stadtpunkt)*. In: *Wprowadzenie do fenomenologii. Interpretacje, zastosowania, problemy (Die Einleitung in die Phänomenologie. Die Interpretationen, die Einführungen, die Probleme)*. Vol I. Red. W. Płotka, Warszawa 2014, s.334.

<sup>1</sup> E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen, op.cit.*, s.548.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

intuitiv präsentierenden Inhalt. Das Mitglied der Lvov-Warschauer-Schule ist der Befürworter der Ansicht, dass der Act nur aus der Materie und Qualität besteht. Der Inhalt, der das intuitive präsentiert, gehört einfach nicht zu dem erkenntnismäßigen Wesen.

Wie ich der Einleitung bemerkt habe, geht meine Arbeit die phänomenologische Extension des Begriffs des Actes an. Blaustein führt die Beschreibung der Theorie von Husserl aus und polemisiert üblicherweise mit dieser Theorie. Wir kommen jetzt mit unseren Analysen in eher allgemeiner Weise über. Wir stellen uns die Frage: wie kommt das phänomenologische Verständnis des intentionalen Actes als der Auffassung der Eindrücke zustande? Ich beginne mit Husserl, dessen Theorie der intentionalen Acten durch die Konzeption von seinem Lehrmeister Brentano inspiriert ist. Die Eindrücke sind der Gegenstand der intentionalen Acten. Dergleichen findet der Prozess der Erkenntnis auf dem Niveau des psychologischen Nachdenkens statt. Es liegt auch die andere Art der Eindrücke vor. Der epistemische Zugang zu ihnen braucht nicht für seinem Verlauf der psychologischen Reflexion. Hier fehlt der intentionale Bezug des Actes zu den Eindrücken. Husserl nennt sie „naiv“ und bestimmt sie als „die deskriptive Inhalte“, die als auf der Vorstellung gestützt gelten<sup>1</sup>. Das Erfassen und Auffassen (als die Domänen des Actes) der Eindrücke durch den Act ist die phänomenologischen Bedingtheit des Auftretens der Wahrnehmung. Husserl schreibt in „Logischen Untersuchungen“: „Inhalte verschiedene Gegenstände wahrgenommen wären. Die Deutung selbst läßt sich aber nie und nimmer auf einen Zuflufs neuer Empfindungen reduciren, sie ist ein Actcharakter, eine „Weise des Bewußtseins“, des „Zumutheseins“. wir nennen sie Wahrnehmung des betreffenden Gegenstandes“<sup>2</sup>. Die prinzipielle Aufgabe des Actes und des Eindrucks ist die Konstitution des Gegenstandes in dem reinen Bewusstsein. Der polnische Philosoph schreibt Husserl nach: „Der intentionale Act entsteht erst damals, wenn wir zu dem Inhalt als zu dem

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<sup>1</sup> L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia* ((*Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung*)). In: „Archiwum Towarzystwa Naukowego we Lwowie“, s. 30-32.

<sup>2</sup> E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, op.cit., s. 361.

Gegenstand tendieren, wenn wir in den Gedanken haben"<sup>1</sup>. Der Act, ausgestattet in Intention, anders gesprochen - intentionale Entsprechung besitzend, macht die Eindrucksvorstellung aus. Damit muss man auf den wesentlichen Unterschied aufmerksam machen, welcher zwischen der Vorstellung und dem Erlebniss besteht.

Der Standpunkt, dass die intentionalen Acten existieren, war unter den Husserlchen Zeitgenossen nicht besonders populär. Einer von jenen, welche die intentionalen Acten bezweifelten, war Natorp. In seiner Doktorarbeit führt Blaustein die Argumente von Husserl bei, welche die These des Vertretes der Marburger Schule beseitigen. Der Schoepfer der Phänomenologie gebraucht den Begriff des Tones: der intentionale Act entscheidet darueber, ob sein Inhalt mir in einer Aussonderung von den anderen, zusammen mit ihm hervortretenden, Bestandteilen gegeben ist; ob aber meine Bemerkung sich allein auf diesen Ton richtet. Ein anderer Argument von Husserl betrifft die Interpretation dergleichen Eindrücke, die in verschiedenen Acten eintritt. Diese Interpretation, je nach ihrem Charakter, kann schlechterdings auf unterschiedliche Objekte der Wahrnehmung verweisen. Der deutsche Denker benutzt auch den gegensätzlichen Argument, welches sich mit der Konzeption des Identitätsbewusstseins verbindet: ganz verschiedene Eindrücke können diejenige Eindrücke sein, welche auf denselben Gegenstand verweisen.

Husserl schreibt darüber:

„Ich sehe ein Ding, z. B. diese Schachtel, ich sehe nicht meine Empfindungen. Ich sehe immerfort diese eine und selbe Schachtel, wie immer sie gedreht und gewendet werden mag. Ich habe dabei immerfort denselben «Bewusstseinsinhalt» — wenn es mir beliebt, den wahrgenommenen Gegenstand als Bewusstseinsinhalt zu bezeichnen. Ich habe mit jeder Drehung einen neuen Bewusstseinsinhalt, wenn ich, in sehr viel passenderem Sinne, die erlebten Inhalte so bezeichne. Also sehr verschiedene Inhalte werden erlebt, und doch wird derselbe Gegenstand wahrgenommen. (...) Wir erleben ja das «Identitätsbewusstsein»"<sup>2</sup>.

Wie Blaustein behauptet (abstrahierend davon, ob es zutrffender Nachweis ist), führen die obigen Reflexionen des deutschen Philosophen

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<sup>1</sup> L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia* ((*Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung*)). In: „Archiwum Towarzystwa Naukowego we Lwowie“, s.31.

<sup>2</sup> E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen, op.cit.*, s.361.

zu der Feststellung, dass die intentionalen Acten sowohl die Auffassung als auch die Interpretation der Eindrücke sind. Die Eindrücke sind hier verstanden als die sinnlichen Inhalte. Sie sind mir *explicité* gegeben. Dank ihnen richtet sich der Subject zu den bestimmten Gegenständen. Die sinnlichen Inhalte sind einfach die präsentierten Inhalte. Dank der Komplexe der Eindrücke kann ich in Richtung der Wahrnehmungsobjekte intendieren. Der präsentierte Inhalt ist gleichsam der Maßstab der Bestimmungswörter des Wahrnehmungsgegenstandes. Sie können, z.B. eine grüne Farbe der Tafel und ihre rechteckige Form. Die Materie des Actes ist „der Platz“ der Entstehung dieser Gegenstandseigenheiten. Die Frage, welche man stellen soll, ist folgend: worauf beruht die Funktion des Actes, welche die Auffassung der Eindrücke ist? Sie besteht in der „Zuschreibung“ dem Gegenstand der gewissen Charakteristik, anhand ihm zugeschriebenen Eigenheiten.

Worauf beruht demnach die Interpretation der Eindrücke zufolge dem polnischen Philosophen? Blaustein schreibt in „Husserlsche Lehre von dem Act, dem Inhalt und dem Gegenstand der Vorstellung“: „Aber meistens in der Materie des Vorstellungsactes „schreibe“ ich dem Gegenstand viel mehr Eigenheiten zu, als mich dazu der präsentierte Inhalt befugt“<sup>1</sup>. Es geschieht so dann, wenn z.B. mir nur sich eine Seite des Gegenstandes in dem Wahrnehmungsactes präsentiert. Mein Erkenntnisprozess reicht über die Grenze der üblichen Auffassung des Eindrucks hinaus, durch welche ich entgegen bestimmter Eigenheiten der erfassenden Objekts intendiere. Die Interpretation gilt für das Ganze des präsentierten Inhaltes. Ich gemeine damals den Gegenstand als das Ganze. Ich interpretiere dann die eine Seite und kompiliere mit den restlichen Teilen, welche mir nicht aktuell gegeben sind.

In dem weiteren Teil, seine Meinung verstärkend, greift der polnische Philosoph auf die zwei Typen der Vorstellungen zurück: absolut adäquaten Vorstellungen und relativ adäquaten Vorstellungen. Bei diesen zweiten Vorstellungen führen die intentionalen Acten die doppelte Rolle voll: sie sind sowohl die Auffassung als auch die Interpretation der Eindrücke. In diesen Vorstellungen, auf dem Weg von dem einseitigen Verlauf „(...) jeder der Bestandteile des präsentierenden Inhaltes entspricht dem bestimmten

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<sup>1</sup> L. Blaustein: *Husserlowska nauka o akcie, treści i przedmiocie przedstawienia*. In: *Polska fenomenologia przedwojenna. Antologia tekstów, op.cit.*, s.195.

Bestandteil des Gegenstandes“<sup>1</sup>. Wir sind gewissermaßen „gezwungen“ zu dem Erkenntnismühe und zu dem Verstoss ausserhalb das, was unmittelbar durch die Eindrücke gegeben ist. Wir können als Beispiel der Interpretation und der Auffassung der Eindrücke in den intentionalen Acten die geometrischen Blocks in dem dreidimensionalen Raum angeben – in der Vorstellung dieses Blocks sehen wir nur eine seiner Seiten.

In Bezug auf die absolut adäquaten Vorstellungen: sie sind für Blaustein das ausreichende Beispiel der Auffassung der sinnlichen Inhalten. In dem Fall dieser Art der Vorstellungen haben wir den beidseitigen Zusammenhang: nicht nur jeden von den Bestandteilen des sinnlichen Inhaltes, in der Materie von dem intentionalen Acte, das Gegenüber des Bestandteiles von dem vermeintlichen Gegenstand ausmacht, aber auch in dem umgekehrten Zusammenhang hervortritt: „jeder dem Bestandteil des Gegenstandes **entspricht** (M.G.) dem Bestandteil von dem praesentierenden Inhalt“<sup>2</sup>. Beispiel der absolut adäquaten Vorstellungen sind die Wahrnehmungen der einfachen Eindrücke: die Töne, die Geschmäcke, die bunten Flecke. Der Gegenstad des Actes ist identisch mit dem präsentierenden Inhalt.

In dem Falle der so antizipierten Gegenstände nimmt die Intention nur den, auf solcher Weise antizipierten, Gegenstand. Der in absolut adäquaten Vorstellungen präsentierende Inhalt transzendiert nicht ausser die wahrgenommene Gegenstände. Diese Gegenstaende sind keine Vermittler, welche auf die Auffassung und die Interpretation von Etwas erlaubt wuerden, was sich nicht direkt prasentiert. Am Ende seiner Erwägungen betont Blaustein das eigentliche Verstehen des Begriffs "des Erfassens" der Eindrücke, welche die, oben erwähnte, seine Explikation sein soll. Seine Erwägungen nach ist jeder, die intentionale Entschprechungen besitzende Act eine Auffassung des präsentierenden Inhalts. Jedoch sind nicht alle intentionale Acten die Interpretation der Eindrücke.

In dem ich zu der Zusammenfassung und zu der kritischen Analyse Blausteins Anschauungen übergehe, kann ich ihm die philosophische Begabung und den Scharfsinn der geführten Forschungen nicht widersprechen. Er ist einer von wenigen Kritikern Husserls, welche so zutreffend den Kern seiner Vorhaben erfasst haben. Trotz des Eindruckes,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

als ob seine Erwägungen nicht beendet seien, haben jedoch seine Reflexionen einen grossen philosophischen Potential. Die Selbständigkeit und Entschiedenheit in seinen Urteilen erwecken Bewunderung, besonders auch angesichts seines jungen Alters. Es ist nur zu bedauern, dass er sich vor allem auf den frühen Schriften von Husserl stützt: hauptsächlich auf den "Logischen Untersuchungen" und auf den "Ideen", ohne jedoch den Uebergang von einem Werk zu dem anderen präziser zu zeigen. Manchen Thesen von Husserl fehlt auch Aktualisierung, welche in den späteren Werken des Phänomenologen enthalten sind.

Ungeachtet des oben erwähnten Eindrucks, dass die Blausteinschen Analysen unbeendet und nicht entwickelt bleiben, halte ich sie für wertvoll. Die Problematik des Actes in der Phänomenologie und in der ganzen Erkenntnistheorie ist dermassen breit und voll von Zweifeln, dass Blaustein Anerkennung für seine Mut und Muehe verdient. Die in meinem Artikel und, sowohl als auch in seinem Werk, enthaltenen Erwägungen betreffen grundsätzlich die terminologischen Entscheidungen. Wir leisten, nach Husserl und nach Blaustein, den Nachsinn, was der intentionale Act und seine Funktion ist; woraus der intentionale Inhalt besteht?; was soll man unter anschaulichen Fülle und unter Theorie der Abschattungen verstehen?

Einerseits besitzen Erwägungen von Blaustein hohes Niveau der philosophischen Reflexion, andererseits ercheinen bei ihm recht allgemeine und oberflächliche Fragmente. Ganz sicher beabsichtigte er die Fortsetzung seiner Forschungen, welche leider durch den Krieg unterbrochen worden sind.

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# WHAT IS POSSIBLE AND WHAT IS PERMITTED: HINTIKKA AND PRIOR

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**Abstract:** *Hintikka's theorem is controversial, since it provides that what is not possible is not permitted. However, a demonstration of it is to be found in an old document authored by Prior and that, nevertheless, was published just in 2012. In this paper, I analyze the system presented by Prior in that document and argue that it can be an interesting research instrument, as several very reasonable ideas can also be proved by means of it. Likewise, based on the mental models theory, I review the psychological reasons that, despite that, can lead individuals to reject Hintikka's theorem. In addition, some reflections about how the theorem should be understood and its potential are included as well.*

**Keywords:** *Hintikka's theorem, mental models, obligations, permissions, Prior system.*

## I. Introduction

The study of the relationships between approaches such as that of Kripke (1959, 1962, 1963a, 1963b, 1965), which are focused on modal logic, and frameworks such as that of von Wright (1951, 1956, 1963), which refer to deontic logic, is always relevant. In this way, a theorem as controversial as that of Hintikka can be an interesting opportunity to research in that direction. Indeed, the theorem links modal and deontic logic by providing that, if something is not possible, that is not permitted. There is no doubt that an asseveration such as this one is hard to accept for most of the individuals, since the relationship between what is possible and what is permitted is not obvious. However, we can find a demonstration of the aforementioned theorem in an old work written by Prior that was recovered and published in 2012 (Prior, 2012), and analyzed and commented on by Øhrstrøm, Zeller, and Sandborg-Petersen that very year in the same journal (Øhrstrøm et al., 2012). That demonstration seems to be really coherent and convincing. Besides, the system provided by Prior allows deriving a number of consequences that are absolutely reasonable and consistent with ideas coming from common sense, such as, for

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example, that not everything is permitted, not everything is obligatory, not everything is possible, not everything is necessary, at least something is permitted, at least something is obligatory, at least something is possible, and at least something is necessary. So, an explanation of why, in spite of this, people tend to reject the theorem appears to be necessary.

Thus, in this paper, I will try to show, firstly, that, true, those consequences can be drawn from Prior's system without difficulties, and then, assuming a current psychological theory about reasoning, the mental models theory (e.g., Johnson-Laird, 2012, 2015; Johnson-Laird, Khemlani, & Goodwin, 2015; Khemlani, Lotstein, Trafton, & Johnson-Laird, 2015; Orenes & Johnson-Laird, 2012), to account for why, nonetheless, it is hard for individuals to admit Hintikka's theorem. Likewise, I will propose several suggestions on the way we must understand the theorem to more easily accept it. My main reflection will be that the conditional is materially interpreted in Prior system, which means that the theorem should be applied only when something is really impossible, and that it is necessary to remember that, if what is impossible becomes possible, the theorem can be ignored.

To do all of this, I will begin describing the main points of Prior's system that need to be taken into account to check that, indeed, the consequences indicated above can be deduced from it. Then, I will explain the exact way such consequences can be derived. Thirdly, I will comment on some relevant theses of the mental models theory and show why, if we assume them, we can understand the reasons that can lead people to reject the theorem. Finally, as said, I will include my interpretation of which the real sense and meaning of Hintikka's theorem can be.

## II. Prior's system: A link between modal and deontic logic

A complete description and analysis of Prior's system can be found in Prior (2012) and Øhrstrøm et al. (2012), two works published the mentioned year in the journal *Synthese*. For that reason, I will not explain the system in detail here. I will only refer to the aspects of it that are interesting for this paper. Firstly, it must be said that Prior assumes standard propositional calculus, that is, as far as I understand it, Gentzen's (1934, 1935) framework. However, he adds to it the modal operators of necessity, '□', and possibility, '◇', and the deontic operators of permission, 'P', and obligation, 'O'. As it is well known, these operators can be defined as follows (see, for example, Øhrstrøm et al., 2012, p. 450):

$\Box\alpha =_{df} \neg\Diamond\neg\alpha$  [that is, 'α is necessary' is equivalent to 'not-α is not possible']

$O\alpha =_{df} \neg P\neg\alpha$  [that is, 'α is obligatory' is equivalent to 'not-α is not permitted']

Where, obviously, '¬' means negation.

On the other hand, the system has also rules and axioms, but those that are important for this paper are mainly this rule:

( $\forall$ 1) If  $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$  is a thesis, then  $\forall x (\alpha) \rightarrow \beta$  is also a thesis

[With not exactly the same symbols, ( $\forall$ 1) is rule ( $\forall$ 1) in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 451)].

Where ' $\rightarrow$ ' stands for the conditional and ' $\forall$ ' the universal quantifier.

And this axiom:

(A1)  $O\alpha \rightarrow P\alpha$

[With other symbols, (A1) is the first axiom in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 451)].

Another point that it is relevant to mention is that the system, as said, enables to derive Hintikka's theorem, which can be expressed in this way:

(HT)  $\neg\Diamond\alpha \rightarrow \neg P\alpha$

[With different symbols, the theorem is also to be found in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 451); in particular, it is step (12) in that paper].

But to demonstrate (HT), an additional assumption is necessary:

(AS)  $\neg\forall x P x$

[With other symbols, this is step (6) in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 451)].

As it can be checked, (AS) expresses one of the consequences that, as indicated above, can be derived in the system (not everything is permitted). Actually, Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 453) state that Prior proposed that there are two possibilities:

1.- To consider (AS) to be an axiom and, along with other rule of the system, to draw the inference rule that Hintikka really proposed:

(HR) If  $\neg\alpha$  is a theorem, then so is  $\neg P\alpha$

[With a different symbol for negation, (HR) is (HR) in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 452)].

2.- To consider (HR) to be a rule and draw (AS).

Following Øhrstrøm et al., Prior preferred the second option. Accordingly, his system, as shown below, indeed, allows deriving that not everything is permitted.

Finally, it is also necessary to address the fact that, although the system is mainly based on standard propositional calculus, it uses, as mentioned, the universal quantifier too. So, I think that it is justified to assume in it the definitions of quantifiers as well. This is not about transforming the system replacing propositional calculus by first-order predicate calculus. The idea is only accepting that, given that the universal quantifier is used, it can also be admitted that the usual transformation rules referring to quantifiers are valid too. As it is well known, some examples of those rules are the following:

( $\exists N$ ) If  $\neg \exists x \alpha$  is a thesis, then so is  $\forall x \neg \alpha$

Where ' $\exists$ ' is the existential quantifier.

( $\exists I$ ) If  $\alpha(a)$  is a thesis, then so is  $\exists x \alpha(x)$

Where ' $a$ ' refers to any constant.

( $\forall N$ ) If  $\neg \forall x \alpha$  is a thesis, then so is  $\exists x \neg \alpha$

( $\exists E$ ) If  $\exists x \alpha(x)$  is a thesis, then, if, after supposing  $\alpha(y)$ , a formula  $\beta$  can be derived,  $\beta$  is a thesis as well (provided that  $x$  is free neither in  $\alpha(y)$  nor in any hypothesis on which  $\beta$  depends)

These elements are enough to show that the consequences indicated above can be deduced in Prior's system, and that, therefore, it is, at least in a sense, reasonable. I explain this in detail in the next section.

### III. Some consequences of Prior's system

True, as said, if it is assumed that (HR) is a rule of the system, it can be derived from it that not everything is permitted. In this way, this first consequence does not really need to be proved here, since Øhrstrøm et al. (2012) already includes the derivation, which is akin to this:

[1]  $P\beta \rightarrow P\beta$  (Propositional calculus)

[2]  $\forall \beta (P\beta) \rightarrow P\beta$  (From 1 &  $\forall 1$ )

- [3]  $\forall\beta (P\beta) \rightarrow P\alpha$  (From 2)  
 [4]  $\forall\beta (P\beta) \rightarrow P(a \cdot \neg a)$  (Substitution 3)  
 [5]  $O\neg(a \cdot \neg a) \rightarrow \neg\forall\beta (P\beta)$  (Contraposition 4)  
 [6]  $O\neg(a \cdot \neg a)$  (From propositional calculus & HR)  
 [7]  $\neg\forall\beta (P\beta)$  (From 5 & 6)

[With not exactly the same symbols, [1-7] are steps (14-20) in Øhrstrøm et al. (2012, p. 453)].

Where ‘&’ represents conjunction. But the derivation can continue and deduce, in step [13], that not everything is obligatory either.

- [8]  $\neg Pa$  (From 7,  $\forall N$ , &  $\exists E$ )  
 [9]  $\neg P\alpha \rightarrow \neg O\alpha$  (Contraposition A1)  
 [10]  $\neg Pa \rightarrow \neg Oa$  (Substitution 9)  
 [11]  $\neg Oa$  (From 8 & 10)  
 [12]  $\exists\beta \neg O\beta$  (From 11 &  $\exists I$ )  
 [13]  $\neg\forall\beta O\beta$  (From 12 &  $\exists N$ )

That not everything is possible, i.e., that  $[\neg\forall\beta \diamond\beta]$ , is something that is provided by the fact that the system assumes standard propositional calculus. In that calculus, a formula such as, for example,  $[a \cdot \neg a]$  is not possible, since, if it were, it would cause the system to be inconsistent (for a discussion on what the that formula can exactly mean in Prior’s system, see Øhrstrøm et al., 2012, p. 452). As far as the fact that not everything is necessary, the deduction is easy:

- [14]  $O\neg a$  (From 8)  
 [15]  $O\neg a \rightarrow P\neg a$  (Substitution A1)  
 [16]  $P\neg a$  (From 14 & 15)  
 [17]  $P\alpha \rightarrow \diamond\alpha$  (Contraposition HT)  
 [18]  $P\neg a \rightarrow \diamond\neg a$  (Substitution 17)  
 [19]  $\diamond\neg a$  (From 16 & 18)  
 [20]  $\neg\Box a$  (From 19)  
 [21]  $\exists\beta \neg\Box\beta$  (From 20 &  $\exists I$ )  
 [22]  $\neg\forall\beta \Box\beta$  (From 21 &  $\exists N$ )

Step 22 shows that, indeed, that is so. But the system enables to deduce that at least something is permitted, i.e., that  $[\exists\beta P\beta]$  too. That is evident if step [16] is taken into account and we consider the negation of an action to be an action as well (for a discussion on the possibility of the negations of the formulae standing for actions being actions too, see Øhrstrøm et al., 2012, p.

452). Likewise, it can also be said that step [14] provides that at least something is obligatory, i.e., that  $[\exists\beta O\beta]$ . In the same way, it can be assumed that step [19] clearly reveals that at least something is possible, i.e., that  $[\exists\beta \diamond\beta]$ . Finally, formulae such as  $[a \cdot \neg a]$  can also be useful to prove that, in the system, it is truth that at least something is necessary, i.e., that  $[\exists\beta \square\beta]$ . True, if  $[\neg\Diamond(a \cdot \neg a)]$ , then  $[\square\neg(a \cdot \neg a)]$ .

Therefore, Prior's system seems to be a system that allows deriving theorems that make sense and that are coherent with reality. But, if this is so, why is Hintikka's theorem very hard to accept? Maybe the answer to this question is in the fact that the human mind does not necessarily work according to logical systems. This is an idea with which, at least, most of the current psychological theories about reasoning seem to agree. I will not explain here how all of these theories can account for why Hintikka's theorem is difficult to admit for people. I will just indicate an example that can be illustrative enough. I will do that in the next section.

#### IV. The mental models theory and Hintikka's theorem

My example is, as mentioned, the one of the mental models theory. This theory raises the idea that reasoning has nothing to do with logical forms. People only consider the semantic possibilities related to the sentences and come to conclusions by reviewing and comparing them. In this way, its proponents think that their theory can explain many experimental results that standard logic cannot. For instance, the difficulties linked to the disjunction introduction rule, which are explained in Orenes and Johnson-Laird (2012) and in papers such as, for example, López-Astorga (2015a, 2016).

As it is well known, that rule in standard calculus provides that, from a formula such as  $[\alpha]$ , a formula such as  $[\alpha \vee \beta]$  can be drawn (where 'v' means disjunction). The problem with this rule is that, in experimental reasoning tasks, people tend to reject it, since they often consider the inferences based on it, that is, the inferences with just a premise and a conclusion consisting of a disjunction in which one of the disjuncts is precisely that premise, to be incorrect. However, in Orenes and Johnson-Laird's view, the reason of these results is obvious. Let us suppose that we have a premise such as  $[p]$ . The conclusion  $[p \vee q]$  cannot be accepted because, if the disjunction is inclusive, refers to three possibilities:

[I]  $p \ \& \ q$

[II]  $p \ \& \ \neg q$

[III]  $\neg p \ \& \ q$

These are clearly the cases in which that conclusion can be true. But the problem is [III]. In it, [p] is false and this is in contradiction with what is stated in the premise. So, following Orenes and Johnson-Laird's arguments, it can be claimed that, because the conclusion is linked to a possible scenario in which the premise would not be true, individuals tend to think that the inference is not valid.

But the theory also holds that human reasoning pays attention to the meanings and previous knowledge. For this reason, in my view, it can be said that, by virtue of their personal experience, individuals can think that, in the case of the relationship between what is possible and what is permitted, the four combinations of possibilities are, in principle, acceptable:

[IV] Possible & Permitted

[V] Possible & Not-permitted

[VI] Not-possible & Permitted

[VII] Not-possible & Not-permitted

Thus, the key point is that, given that [HT] is a conditional, it could only be accepted if the cases matching [VI], i.e., cases in which something is not possible and, nevertheless, it is permitted, were ignored. However, people do not seem to be able to ignore [VI]. This is so because it is very easy to find instances of it. For example, it is not possible to be 500 years old, but that is not forbidden. In this way, it can be thought that the reason why individuals do not often accept [HT] is that there are many cases such as that.

Of course, this account based on the mental models theory is not the only possible explanation. As mentioned, there are other theories explaining human reasoning in cognitive psychology field, and, probably, it would not be very difficult to offer an account similar to the previous one based on them. Nonetheless, to do that is beyond the aims of this paper. In my opinion, the example of the mental models theory is clear enough to show that psychological explanations of why people tend to consider [HT] being in a mistake can be proposed. What appears to be more important is whether or not, given that [HT] does not seem to be linked to the way the human mind works (at least, if it is analyzed from relevant current theories

such as that of the mental models), it can be useful in science, epistemology, logic,... to some extent. I try to respond this question in my final reflections.

## V. Conclusions

Perhaps we need to understand the theorem in other way. Actually, to ask whether or not something that is not possible is permitted appears to make no sense. Nobody can do what is impossible. So, it is not permitted in a way. True, it is not permitted, at least, by nature. If this is taken into account, the problems to accept [HT] described here from the mental models theory can disappear, as, if in [VI] 'permitted' is considered to include the possibility to do the action really, that model can be removed and thought to be inconsistent (it would describe a scenario in which something is possible and impossible at the same time).

On the other hand, as indicated, Prior's system assumes standard logic, which means that it also assumes the material interpretation of the conditional usually attributed to Philo of Megara (see, e.g., Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoneae Hypotyposes* 2.110, *Adversus Mathematicos* 8.113, 8.245; Bocheński, 1963, p. 89; López-Astorga, 2015b, p. 10; Mates, 1953, p. 44; O'Toole & Jennings, 2004, p. 479). As it is well known, according to this interpretation, when the antecedent of a conditional is false, the conditional in entirety is true, whether the consequent is true or false. This is so because the truth table of the conditional in standard logic provides that

$$v(\alpha \rightarrow \beta) = 0 \text{ if and only if } v(\alpha) = 1 \text{ and } v(\beta) = 0$$

Where ' $v$ ' refers to the truth-value of the formula following between brackets, '1' means 'true', and '0' is false.

In this way, if something that is now impossible changes that status and becomes possible, the situation also changes, since that means that, after the change, it can be both permitted and not-permitted. So, if, for example, it were possible to be 500 years old in the future, in all likelihood, it would be permitted. It is just that, in the meantime, it is forbidden, even if only in a metaphysical sense. Thus, it is not a problem either that the contraposition of [HT] is  $[P\alpha \rightarrow \diamond\alpha]$ , as, on an ontological level, there are not actions that are permitted and are not possible (as said, the actions that are not possible cannot be done de facto).

Therefore, it seems interesting to continue to research Prior's system and its implications. Perhaps the most relevant activity to do is to define



what 'permission' means in it and not to forget that the system understands the conditional in a material way. From this point of view, it can be claimed that Prior's framework has a great potential and that it can lead us to suggestive conclusions in different both philosophical and scientific fields. The proposal hence is to give it further study.

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLIGIBILITY AND TRUTH IN BASIC ARITHMETIC PROPOSITIONS

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**Abstract:** *The argument of this paper is that truth and intelligibility are co-dependent in basic arithmetic propositions. A basic arithmetic proposition (bp)<sup>2</sup> may be defined as an arithmetic proposition that is so simple that it can both be understood and seen to be true upon simple inspection. An example of a basic arithmetic proposition is  $1 + 3 = 4$ . For the mathematically adroit, a more complex arithmetic proposition or mathematical equation may be, for that subject knower, a basic arithmetic proposition. In order to understand a basic arithmetic proposition (bap) one must see it as true. In order to see a bap as true, one must understand it. The validity of the arguments in this paper is independent of any particular philosophy of arithmetic one adopts (logician, formalist, intuitionist).*

**Keywords:** *Understanding, intuition, truth.*

To begin with, we shall define a basic arithmetic proposition to be an arithmetic proposition, the truth of which is evident upon self-inspection. Evidence by self-inspection is another way of saying that the truth of the proposition in question is self-evident. A basic arithmetic proposition does not require proof to ascertain or assay its truth value. To put this point in another way, a basic arithmetic proposition is self-certifying. This does not mean that it cannot be proved through the analysis of an entire system of arithmetic or through the understanding of the ciphers and operational symbols in use. It only means that once the language of arithmetic is understood (symbolic value of the ciphers and the meaning of the operational symbols), the proposition does not *require* further proof. This is the meaning of self-evidence.

It should be clear from the above analysis that the knowledge of a basic arithmetic proposition that is being referenced is the direct knowledge *of* the meaning and truth of that proposition and not the indirect knowledge that one possesses when one says that one knows *that* the proposition in question is true or false, meaningful or meaningless. In

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<sup>2</sup> A basic proposition is referred henceforth as bp without the addition of the indefinite article 'a'.

the knowledge of propositions of which we speak, (the former case), the knowledge is a direct knowledge of the truth, falsity, meaningfulness or meaninglessness of the proposition in question. It should be apparent that the 'of' and 'that' description of the types of knowledge discussed bears a resemblance to Russell's classification of knowledge into knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description.

It should be noted at the outset that in the sense of direct knowledge that is being utilized, that it is taken for granted that the subject knower is capable of already understanding *the language of arithmetic* (the knowledge of the conceptual reference or the meaning of its symbols) and the knowledge of the meaning of the operational symbols in use (plus, minus, equal signs, *et cetera*). Having said that, the knowledge with which this discussion is concerned is the knowledge that takes place after the knowledge of the language of arithmetic, (heretofore to be referred to as la), has been understood. The knowledge and the understanding of la does not form part, in *sensu stricto*, of the knowledge and understanding of the propositions in question because the knowledge and understanding of the propositions in question takes place after the knowledge and understanding of la has taken place.

It should be pointed out at the outset of this discussion that it does not matter whether the arithmetic propositions in question are said to be analytic truths or synthetic *a priori* truths in the Kantian sense. In either case, the points being made in this present discussion remain untouched. If the basic arithmetic propositions are analytic truths, their analytic truth is nonetheless the condition of their intelligibility. If they are synthetic *a priori* truths, their synthetic truth is nonetheless the condition of their intelligibility. If for Kant, they require a performative activity in order to be cognized, that activity, either in the carrying out or in the witnessing of it, post carrying out, must still be cognized. In either case, the point remains the same. Cognition is dependent upon the existence of truth conditions being recognized. The carrying out of the operation in question cannot be a blind or mechanical activity. If basic arithmetic propositions are analytic truths, such an issue is not avoided because the analyticity of the proposition nonetheless requires cognition. This discussion does not take

sides with arithmetic propositions being analytic or synthetic *a priori* truths.<sup>1</sup>

We may take the foregoing as a partial answer to the question of the issue of whether truth is a quality of the syntheticity or the analyticity of a proposition. The partial answer is that it does not matter in the end whether the truth that is discerned is due to the fact that the terms of the propositions are so defined or to the fact that we must perform the operational direction in order to reach the truth of bp. *In either case, the necessary truth remains to be discerned.* In the case of taking the side of performative truth (synthetic in the Kantian sense), we must still discern the truth that emerges from our synthetic activity. In the case of taking the side that the truth is a matter of how we define our terms, we must still see the truth that emerges from understanding the definitions that we have given to the symbols in use, both the ciphers of arithmetic and the operational signs. In either case, whether truth is known after a performative action or simply upon inspection of the terms, it is a property of bp. In both cases, truth remains to be discerned and thus is a property of the understood proposition. In the one case, the truth is known after we have carried out the instruction given by the operational sign; in the other case, the truth is known as soon as the defined terms are understood. In both cases, the truth is a property of the cognized proposition.

The degree of difficulty or complexity of such propositions might vary with respect to the subject knower. For example, to an Einstein or an idiot savant, a high order proposition might be a basic proposition. For ordinary minds, basic arithmetic propositions are in the range of simple propositions such as  $1 + 1 = 2$ . In basic arithmetic propositions such as  $1 + 1 = 2$ , it is impossible to understand such a proposition without seeing that it is a true proposition. The truth of the proposition is a condition of its intelligibility.

It may be argued that I can know that  $1 + 1 = 2$ , an example of bp, because I have simply memorized it as a true proposition from first grade in primary school. There are different uses of the term 'knowledge' or in the verb 'to know'. In the usage employed here, 'to know' is to understand with complete lucidity or, in other words, to be internally aware of the

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<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of this issue, Cf., Robert Elliott Allinson, Chapter Two, "Everything about the synthetic *a priori* has not been said," *Space, Time and the Ethical Foundations*, Ashgate, 2002.

certainty of the truth of the proposition. The terms 'to know' and 'to understand' or 'to see' are used convertibly. When I see that  $1 + 1 = 2$ , I understand that the two separate parts, when added together, *must* add up the the sum of the third part. The use of the terms 'understanding' or 'knowledge' in this context is restricted to an unrestricted intelligibility or a full transparency. The terms 'understanding' or 'knowledge' are only employed when one is simultaneously aware of the truth that one understands or knows.

It makes no difference in the knowing or the understanding of bp whether this knowledge or understanding is considered to be an understanding or knowledge by intuition, by the laws of logic, by definition, or by any other means. It is the intelligibility of bp with which we are concerned, not the epistemic means by which the proposition is known or understood. It is important to be clear that when we say that we know bp to be true that we are not referring to a common agreement that we all make by convention in order to communicate such a commonplace proposition. Such a use of the term 'understanding' or 'knowledge' has to do with the agreement to use bp in a certain agreed upon fashion as a place marker in a system of symbols. However, conventional agreement is not the sense of the terms 'understanding' or 'knowledge' that is in use in this context.

When we understand bp, we are referring to the internal *comprehension* of the content of bp. It is only upon comprehension that bp makes sense. Otherwise, there is no difference between bp and another proposition such as 'all swans have long necks'. Without comprehension of a specific and unique meaning, bp would have no meaning. Without comprehension, bp would function as a chess move made by a computer in a chess game.

Such an internal comprehension could be referred to as an 'intuition', but such a description possesses no value. To call the internal comprehension an 'intuition' does not add to the understanding of *how* such an understanding is possible. It only adds the cloud of now having to define what an 'intuition' is. We take, therefore, the internal comprehension of the unique content and meaning of bp as primary. By primary, we mean that it cannot be further reduced. Internal comprehension may be argued as said before to be due to the laws of logic or to the use of the meaning we ascribe to certain symbols in a system. But, regardless of what justification we give to how or why we comprehend, the comprehension is nonetheless

required in any case if we are said to understand the proposition. It is in this sense that Aristotle said that *nous* or intuition was necessary to understanding, but the addition of this term is unnecessary if we make 'comprehension' our basic term. Aristotle was making the same point that is made here, but the addition of the term 'nous' or 'intuition', though it may have been a feature of added lucidity to him, only adds to our current difficulty. In addition, it shifts attention from the needed fact or existence of comprehension to a faculty of knowledge—'intuition'—which makes for an uninformative addition and adds a further layer of incomprehension. We can make the same point without the addition of 'nous' by making 'comprehension' or 'understanding' primary or irreducible. How or why we understand is a separate question.

We need to understand bp in order to say anything else about it. The point to emphasize here is not by what system or method one arrives at understanding or truth, but *how understanding or truth is possible in the first place*. Understanding is possible only when the conditions of necessary truth exist. In order to see that bp is true, we must understand it to be true. When we see that bp cannot be otherwise than it is, that  $1 + 1$  cannot = 3, bp becomes intelligible. Understanding or comprehension in mathematics is dependent upon the content of the proposition being necessarily true, that is, from the impossibility of its being otherwise. The truth is contained in and comes from the proposition. There is no system, whether logicist, formalist or intuitionist, that accounts for the truth of the proposition in question.<sup>1</sup> The evidence for the truth of the proposition is presented by the proposition. This is the proper meaning of self-evidence. Self-evidence is not ascertained by some mysterious force. Self-evidence is explained by the fact that the proposition, if cognizable, is a true proposition. Truth, that is, a true relationship among the concepts of which the symbols are the ciphers, is the evidence and at the same time the content of the intelligibility of the proposition.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Though Russell was a logicist, he also held that individual simple propositions of arithmetic [bp] were self-evidently true on their own: "All arithmetic, moreover, can be deduced from the general principles of logic, yet the simple propositions of arithmetic, such as 'two and two are four', are just as self-evident as the principles of logic." Cf., Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943, Seventeenth Impression, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> The position advanced here is to be distinguished from the intuitionism of Brouwer. Brouwer adapted Kant's concept that arithmetic involved an immediate

Comprehension is an irreducible and basic term and cannot be further comprehended via any particular system such as formalist, logicist or intuitionist. The reason for this is that the understanding and the truth of the proposition in question is derived from understanding the meaning of the symbols in use which is only possible when the symbols in use depict a true relationship that exists between the concepts of which the symbols are the ciphers. According to this, a false proposition cannot be understood. How or why it is false can be understood and *that* its being false can be understood, but the content of its falsity, or its false content, cannot be understood because no concepts exist which correspond to the ciphers in use. Its false content *per se* contains no meaning and hence is not cognizable.

This explanation goes further than a simple intuitionist explanation which would not account for why false propositions cannot be understood or cognized. It is not intuition that grasps truth or gathers in truth, but the truth of the proposition is what provides the cognitive content. If intuition were the instrument for grasping or gathering truth, why is it that intuition cannot grasp a false proposition? The intelligibility or the truth of a proposition must come from the intention or meaning of the proposition. What is relevant for our present purposes is the understanding that intelligibility is dependent upon truth in understanding basic propositions in arithmetic. Of course, in extra-arithmetic propositions, it may be said that certain truth is not necessary for understanding. For example, one might say, "I understand you are Caucasian." But this "truth" requires further investigation. For example, what constitutes someone being 'Caucasian'? Does that mean that one is capable of tracing your blood line back to your first forebear? If I cannot do that, do I know that you are Caucasian? My "knowledge" that you are Caucasian, upon further

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awareness of time. While the position advanced here has to do with the conditions of the truth of bp and not with the foundations of arithmetic *per se*, it is not completely correct to say that arithmetic is based on time. It is based on space as well since the basic operation of incremental increase or decrease is understood with reference to space. Space is also required for algebra, the basic operation of which is transposition and the basic relationship of which is identity and difference. The identification of arithmetic with time probably arose from the fact that ordinal numbers require time. Without succession, which is a mode of time, the concept of an ordinal number could not arise. This leaves the question open as to which operation is more basic, numbering or counting.



investigation, becomes murky. I no longer understand exactly what I mean when I say, "You are Caucasian". In *bp*, there is no such murkiness that is possible. The understanding is completely transparent and hence counts as knowledge.

It is now time to more fully address the question of the relationship of understanding to truth. In *bp*, we cannot understand *bp* without at the same time seeing or knowing that *bp* is a true proposition. The understanding of *bp* is impossible without understanding the content of *bp*. The content of *bp* cannot be understood unless *bp* is true. As mentioned earlier, it is easier in this case to display the truth of this claim by illustrating how a false *bp* is incomprehensible. If we make the claim that  $1 + 1 = 3$ , such a *bp*, heretofore to be referred to as a false *bp*, or *fbp*, is incomprehensible. Of course, we can change the meaning of the symbols in use such that the cipher 3 is utilized with the meaning normally ascribed to the cipher 2, but such a manipulation of symbols does not affect the point at issue. We can also alter the system of arithmetic as well, but this also makes no difference in the end. It just makes the presentation of the claim more indirect. One would have to understand the new system by illustrating its truth in the old system. In this sense, we would be back to square one.

*Fbp* is not intelligible because it is untrue. We can only understand *bp* because it is true. Indeed, we cannot understand *bp* unless it is true. The truth of *bp* is a prerequisite to its intelligibility. We can understand *bp* only because we see *bp* to be a true relationship among the symbols in use. Intelligibility or understanding is dependent upon truth. We cannot understand *fbp*; however, we can understand that *fbp* is false. We can understand that *fbp* is false because we understand *bp* (true *bp* or *tbp* would be redundant).  $1 = 1 = 3$  is incomprehensible. We understand what the symbol maker is attempting to make equivalent, but we cannot understand the equation. We cannot understand the equation because it is false. The only way in which *bp* can be understood is when *bp* is known to be true. *Fbp* is possible only under the condition of *bp*. Truth is the condition for the knowledge of falsity. The relationship of truth and falsity is asymmetrical. Truth is the condition of the knowledge of falsity, but falsity is not the condition of the knowledge of truth. Intelligibility is the condition of unintelligibility, but unintelligibility is not the condition of intelligibility. Without its truth value, *fbp* is a non-cognitive proposition or an unintelligible proposition.

It should be clear by now that ‘understanding’ and ‘knowing’ and ‘seeing’ are utilized as terms in this context in the sense of understanding with apodictic or certain knowledge. This apodicticity is not certainty in a psychological sense. Certainty in a psychological sense occurs in such a proposition as, ‘I am certain that I know that  $x$ ’. Psychological certainty is not the same as certain knowledge. Psychological certainty reflects an inner or subjective certainty. It does not carry with it the knowledge of the certain truth of the proposition. It carries with it only the subjective certainty of the subject knower. Certain knowledge, on the other hand, does not require the subjective belief of the subject knower. Certain knowledge occurs when the truth of the proposition presents itself as a certain truth regardless of the subjective feelings of the subject knower.

The unique relationship that exists in basic arithmetical propositions between intelligibility and truth also exists between intelligibility and certain truth. When we understand that  $1 + 1 = 2$ , we *must* understand that  $1 + 1$  cannot not  $= 2$ . Basic arithmetic propositions are intelligible only insofar as their certainty is apprehended. This is a convertible truth because it also is the case that the certainty of the truth of basic arithmetic propositions is dependent upon their being understood. We cannot understand that  $1 + 1 = 2$  without understanding that it is necessary that  $1 + 1 = 2$ . We cannot understand that it is necessary that  $1 + 1 = 2$  without understanding that  $1 + 1 = 2$ .

In bp, when one knows bp, one knows that the truth of bp is a certain or apodictic truth. This certainty of the truth of bp accounts for the clarity and distinctness of the knowing of the truth of bp. To reverse Descartes, the truth of bp accounts for its clarity and distinctness. When we use the term ‘truth’ we are referring to an absolute truth. It does not matter if this absoluteness of truth is definitional, logical or intuitive. It only matters that its intelligibility is dependent upon its being true.

Of course, it can be argued that bp is a conventional truth dependent upon its arrangement in a conventional system of symbols. However, this does not affect the point at issue. Once the meaning of the arithmetical language is agreed upon, the truth of bp and its intelligibility are convertible. Bp cannot be understood unless it is true and bp cannot be true for the subject knower unless it is comprehended. Intelligibility is grounded upon truth. The complete transparency of intelligibility is only available when truth conditions are present. Unintelligibility is dependent upon the existence of falsehood. False basic arithmetic propositions can

never be understood. It can be understood why they are false. However, the inner meaning of such propositions is void. They are meaningless. Understanding of basic arithmetical propositions is possible if and only if they are true. The truth of basic arithmetical propositions is known only in and through understanding their content. Intelligibility and knowing that they are true are two sides of the same coin. Or, to put it in a word, cognition is dependent upon truth and the experience or the knowing of truth is dependent upon understanding. It is impossible to understand bp without knowing at once that bp is a necessary truth.

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# THE TACIT DIMENSION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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Motto: "Socrates was puzzled why the knowledge which constitutes human excellence cannot be imparted" (Gilbert Ryle)

**Abstract:** *This paper is survey on the role of tacit knowledge in knowledge management. The distinction between explicit or propositional knowledge and implicit or tacit knowledge has been made relatively late in epistemology. Some philosophers specified the difference between knowing that and knowing how (Ryle, 1945) and talked about the tacit dimension of personal knowledge in learning by doing process (Polanyi, 1967). Others mentioned that knowledge is shared in a social context and developed theories about forms of life and paradigms that put the question of rules following (Wittgenstein, 1953, Kuhn, 1970). On the other hand, some social theorists observed that knowledge play a new role that changed the organizational nature of knowledge based society (Bell, 1999, Drucker, 1991). Knowledge was understood as a new kind of capital which can produce a competitive advantage. Nonaka and Takeuchi proposed a model of knowledge production based on the mutual conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. Were described four phases: socialization, externalization, combination and internalization. The SECI model created a new research area devoted to the role of tacit knowledge in knowledge management. Collins proposed the tripartite distinction between somatic tacit knowledge, relational tacit knowledge and collective tacit knowledge. Others have mentioned the differences between technical and cognitive components of collective tacit knowledge.*

**Keywords:** *knowing how and knowing that, tacit knowledge, learning by doing, organizational knowledge, the SECI model of knowledge production.*

## I. Some epistemological preliminary remarks

The distinction between explicit or propositional knowledge and implicit or tacit knowledge is well known in epistemology. My aim in this chapter is to reveal the forms of tacit knowledge which are embedded in knowledge management and to argue that the managerial capacity

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depends on the tacit knowledge both at individual and organizational level.

Epistemology was traditionally focused on the so-called classical or standard definition of knowledge as justified true belief which was proposed by Plato. Therefore, different topics related with the concept of knowledge, such as those regarding the components of standard definition, were developed in connection with the propositional knowledge, namely, with knowledge which is expressed, transported or incorporated in a language. The practical abilities or skills were considered something different by their own nature, something which can't belong to the domain of knowledge in a strong sense.

### ***1.1. Knowing how and knowing that***

This classical view was hardly challenged and changed only in the second half of last century. I shall begin with some epistemological remarks about the distinction between tacit knowledge and propositional knowledge. In a famous presidential address to Aristotelian Society, published under the title "Knowing How and Knowing That", Gilbert Ryle, in opposition to the traditional doctrine according with "doing things is never itself an exercise of intelligence, but is, at best, a process introduced somehow steered by some ulterior act of theorising"<sup>1</sup>, tried to show that "intelligence is directly exercised as well in some practical performances as in some theoretical performances..."<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, if from Plato's account of soul is derived the idea that practical activities are intelligent if and only if they are accompanied by some shadow internal acts of contemplating the so-called regulative propositions, Ryle denied the need for such kind of contemplative faculty and claimed that there is no gap between intelligence and practice.

Ryle explained the differences between theoretical capacities and practical skills using a familiar distinction which was neglected by philosophers, that between knowing that something is the case and knowing how to do things. The traditional theories of knowledge were centered on the debate regarding the ways or methods which are proper to discovery facts and truths about facts and ignored completely the search for ways or methods of doing things. Eventually, if it was asked a question

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<sup>1</sup> Ryle, 1945, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ryle, 1945, p. 2.

about how to do something, the answer offered a theoretical reduction of the ways to do something to the ways to discover facts. Ryle proposed an epistemological turn and tried to prove not only that knowledge-how can't be reduced to knowledge-that but that knowledge-how is logically and epistemologically prior to knowledge-that.

Let's suppose that we are playing chess and that some of us are good players and others aren't. Are we ready to suppose that there are some truths about chess which aren't known by the bad players? Or are we justified to say that if the good player will inform the bad player about some truths regarding the chess the second player will become a good one? And will necessarily the bad player become a good one if he or she will learn chess using a treatise written by the chess players in the world? Of course, we have no guarantee that the player will improve her or his performances. The bad player could remain as bad as he or she was. This means that we have to distinguish between practical knowledge which is embedded in what a person does when plays chess and the propositional knowledge which is expressed in a language in the form of different claims, rules, criteria and so on regarding how to play chess. Therefore, we can explain propositionally how to do something but how to do something can't be reduced to this propositional explanation which contains some assertions, rules and criteria.

Knowing a rule isn't equal with a bit of information, but being able to apply that rule. Let's suppose that two persons are learning to play chess and they will receive the same amount of information. When they will play chess they will do it differently and their performances won't be the same. One of them will infer the best next step, for example, to move the horse, the other won't be able to see this. Therefore, their knowledge about chess can't be reduced to some propositional knowledge or semantic information and to the capacity to use it. Besides the information semantic, the capacity to play chess incorporates some abilities and skills about how to play this game. These two strata of knowledge are described clearly by Ryle.

“(a) When a person knows how to do things of a certain sort (e. g. make good jokes, conduct battles or behave at funerals), his knowledge is actualized or exercised in what he does. It is not exercised (save *per accidens*) in the propounding of propositions or in saying ‘Yes’ to those propounded to others. His intelligence is exhibited by deeds, not by intended or external dicta. A good experimentalist exercises his will not in reciting maxims of technology but in making experiments. It is a ruinous but

popular mistake to suppose that intelligence operates only in production and manipulation of propositions, i. e., that only in ratiocinating are we rational.

(b) When a person knows how to do things of a certain sort (e. g. cook omelettes, design dresses or persuade juries), his performance is in some way governed by principles, rules, canons, standards or criteria. (For most purposes it does not matter which we say.) It is always possible in principle, if not in practice, to explain why he tends to succeed, that is, to state the reasons for his actions. It is tautology to say that there is a method in his cleverness. But his observance of rules, principles, etc., must, if it is there at all, be realized in his performance of his tasks. It need not (though it can) be also advertised in an extra performance of paying some internal or external lip-service to those rules or principles.”<sup>1</sup>

In other words, speaking briefly, even if the bad and the good players of chess possess the same amount of information, the difference between them will be given by the ways in which they use the rules of the game. We can be instructed in truths regarding chess, but we can become good players if and only if we were instructed in methods. Therefore, we have to understand that to play chess is irreducible to the fact that we have learned a lot about chess, its theory and its historical moments. Of course, in order to become a good player we have to observe details regarding the rules and tactical principles of chess, but it is obvious that the good player just plays according to these rules and principles and not thinks of them theoretically all the time. Generally speaking, this means that knowing how is different from knowing that, and also that learning how differ from learning that. We can learn some things by doing them without any propositional information.

Gilbert Ryle wrote his article in a time when the epistemologists were focused on scientific knowledge as objective knowledge and in philosophy of science were dominant the so-called linguistic view and the hypothetical-deductive model of theories. The philosophers offered firstly rational reconstructions of theories as deductive systems and weren't interested about the ways of scientific discovery. But the dominant view was criticized and some changes occurred. First of all, the epistemic subject was recovered and become gradually a topic of interest for epistemology. Philosophers began to analyze knowledge in different contexts, from

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<sup>1</sup> Ryle, 1945, pp.8-9.

historical to practical ones, and in relation with the epistemic subject, namely, with all capacities or skills.

### **I.2 Learning by doing and tacit knowledge**

The analysis of these subjective dimensions of knowledge and learning was developed by Polanyi in some of his books, based on the concept of personal knowledge, starting from the theoretical principle that “we can know more we can tell”<sup>1</sup>. The debate is focused on the highest level of knowledge, scientific knowledge. Ryle already observed that a scientist who discover some truths do this because he knows how to discover them: “a scientist is primarily a knower how and only secondarily a knower that.”<sup>2</sup> Polanyi goes further in his *Personal Knowledge* and reveals the fact that the effort of knowing is guided by some subjective forces which are perceived internally by the knower as constraints or obligations. In his chapter about skills, Polanyi take into account the case of exact sciences which can be defined as a mathematical formalism related with experience. The personal participation of scientist to this relation is essential because some elements which are important for the final form of the theory aren’t tested or falsified by the experience, but are established by the scientist. For example, in quantum mechanics the researchers had different preferences and used different mathematical formalisms, as in the case of debate between Schrödinger and Heisenberg, or they have different views regarding the order in nature, if it is deterministic or probabilistic. This means that the research is guided not only by experience, but also by some hidden presuppositions which are adopted subjectively by the researcher according with some personal criteria and preferences rooted in his culture or philosophy. With his concept of personal knowledge Polanyi has challenged the established view about knowledge and opened the transition to new perspectives on knowledge, so that the standard concept of objective knowledge was reconsidered:

“Yet personal knowledge in science is not made but discovered, and as such it claims to establish contact with reality beyond the clues on which it relies. It commits us, passionately and far beyond our comprehension to a vision of reality. Of this responsibility we cannot divest ourselves by setting up objective criteria of verifiability, or falsifiability, or testability, or what you

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<sup>1</sup> Polanyi, 1967, p.4.

<sup>2</sup> Ryle, 1945, p. 16.



will. For we live in it as in garment of our own skin. Like love, to which it is akin, this commitment is a 'shirt of flame', blazing with passion and, also like love, consumed by devotion to a universal demand. Such is the sense of objectivity in science..."<sup>1</sup>

As a result of this approach Polanyi proposed an extended concept of personal knowledge which includes not only cognitive elements convertible in semantic information but also subjective states and commitments like emotions, faiths, beliefs, prejudices and values. When a person does something he uses his own skills and all this shapes the final result. For example, in science a scientist exercises his own skills and these shapes the scientific knowledge which is achieved. From the structure of these skills we can derive the nature of scientist personal participation to the final result. The capacity to obtain some results is a personal property which can't be described in propositions and transferred as such to others. For example, a swimmer will have the capacity to keep himself afloat, but he won't be conscious of all the rules which were followed. In Ryle's terms, to know how to do something is epistemologically prior to know that facts are so and so and doesn't belong to the domain of propositional or explicit knowledge. Consequently, the sphere of tacit or implicit knowledge begins to be bounded in epistemology.

Polanyi adds an important comment which has to be mentioned. He observes that "the aim of a skillful performance is achieved by the observance of a set of rules which are not known as such to the person following them."<sup>2</sup> Hence, some rules are implicitly contained in an activity even if the person who carries it is unaware of them. These rules are incorporated into the structure of any action which is fulfilled successfully and they can be made explicit at least partially.

### **I.3. Rules following and organizational knowledge**

Ryle and Polanyi related the dimension of tacit knowledge with the epistemic subject and his personal knowledge. Thomas Kuhn, in his famous book,<sup>3</sup> extended the analysis of tacit knowledge from the individual researcher to the community. He introduced the concept of normal science which was defined as puzzle solving activity and claimed that the

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<sup>1</sup> Polanyi, 1958, pp. 66-67.

<sup>2</sup> Polanyi, 1958, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> See Kuhn, 1970.

paradigm is the main epistemic unit in science. The paradigm is understood as a strong network of conceptual, theoretical, instrumental and methodological commitments which are shared in common by all the members of a community. Any research is guided by a paradigm and from any paradigm we can derive, if we want, a set of rules. In his analysis Kuhn is inspired by Wittgenstein's considerations about rules-following from *Philosophical Investigations*<sup>1</sup>. If we want to apply the term 'game' unequivocally we don't take into account some attributes that all games and only games have in common, but only a network of overlapping resemblances. Therefore, although we don't use an explicit rule which was abstracted from our activities of naming things, we know how to name an activity, if it is or not a game, starting from the context which is shared and grasped implicitly. Similarly, a scientist learns mainly how to do science not theoretically, but with and through the applications of a theory. A scholar will learn how to do science in a laboratory by doing some experiences without an explicit recourse to the rules of the game.

As a result of these insights were developed new approaches centered on social dimension of all knowledge, not only of practical knowledge, from the role of social context in learning by doing to the role of tradition in the evolution of any community. The general significance of this philosophical approach is mentioned clearly by Barry Smith: "An understanding of practical knowledge, of that knowledge which is manifested in intelligent or judicious behavior, will therefore – and this is perhaps the principal lesson of Wittgenstein's philosophy – involve a new sort of understanding of society and of the rules, customs and institutions maintained within it."<sup>2</sup> New perspectives based on social dimension of knowledge were developed in epistemology and in sociology of science, from the so-called social epistemology, as in Fuller, 2002, or organizational epistemology, as in Tsoukas, 2005, to actor-network-theory, developed in Latour, 2005. All these approaches are focused on the relation between the cognitive pursuits and their social organization and from this is deduced the idea that the production of knowledge is something which can be manageable through a better understanding of its social dimensions.

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<sup>1</sup> See Wittgenstein, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, 1988, pp. 14-15.

## **II. Knowledge production and the tacit dimension**

### **II.1. Knowledge based society**

Some philosophers with cognitive interests in practical domains observed that along the development of human society, from the ancient and medieval craftsman to the contemporary engineer, were used not only theories but also skills and techniques. They stated that human society was always based on knowledge, but in contemporary society knowledge play its role in a way and at a level which weren't acquired before. Knowledge, in all its forms, from fundamental science to technology, become a constitutive force of society, with a societal impact, similar with property and labor, a normative principle of social cohesion and integration, and has the capacity to transform the social relations inside different organizations and institutions. Knowledge provides a new principle for social hierarchies and stratification, for the distribution of social chance and for the nature of personal life.<sup>1</sup>

Daniel Bell was probably the first who wrote is his studies about the so-called post-industrial society that knowledge itself has changed in its nature and that society was transformed gradually, but radically, under the impact of scientific and technological revolution. In Bell's view, the changes in the social structure are induced by the new axial principle of society, namely, the centrality of theoretical knowledge as a source of innovation. The codification of theoretical knowledge and its symbolic capacity to be organized in axiomatic systems have changed knowledge itself: "we move from language to concepts which are groupings of ideas that allow us to sort our experiences and generalize our ideas."<sup>2</sup> Under the impact of knowledge and based on the dynamics of science and technology in the new framework structured around research and development needs, economy gained a changing shape from goods to services. Bell also mentions the new debates in post-industrial society regarding the subordination of the corporations and the tension between economizing and sociologizing modes, the problem of social choice and social planning and the controversy between politicians and technocrats.

But theoretical knowledge, as Thomas Kuhn already stated, is mainly a product of scientific communities, or, in Lakatos's terms, the final result of a research programme, as in Lakatos, 1978. Therefore, knowledge is

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<sup>1</sup> See Böhme, Stehr, 1986, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Bell, 1999, p. xxxix.

created by communities structured around a knowledge project. This organizational nature of contemporary society was observed by Peter Drucker who explained in *Post-Capitalist Society* that in the so-called post-capitalist society the main role is played by specialized organizations centered on specific aims, from banks to laboratories. Comparative with industrial economy, finance as such plays a diminished role in knowledge based economy because, as Bell has already mentioned, knowledge itself became a capital.

## II. 2. Knowledge as an immaterial public good

Although knowledge seems to be similar with the capital in their organizational character, it has other two supplementary characteristics: first, it is a public good and, second, it is ineffable. As a pure public good, knowledge has two critical properties:

“nonrivalrous consumption – the consumption of one individual does not detract from that of another – and nonexcludability - it is difficult if not impossible to exclude an individual from enjoying the good. Knowledge of a mathematical theorem clearly satisfies both attributes: if I teach you the theorem, I continue to enjoy the knowledge of the theorem at the same time that you do. By the same token, once I publish the theorem, anyone can enjoy the theorem. No one can be excluded.”<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, if knowledge isn't concealed or protected, then it is distributed without division. If two persons have similar intellectual capacities or skills, they can use the same amount of knowledge. This is the case not only for propositional knowledge but also for tacit knowledge items. For example, in learning by doing process we share together a mixture of knowledge in different forms and other non – cognitive elements as values. For example, if the value shared by the community members is the secrecy of knowledge then the community will try to protect it as something which doesn't have to be transmitted to others from outside. But if the value is the universalization of research results then the community will be opened and will communicate to others these results. As a result, the configuration of ordinary life in a community centered on knowledge production depends on the values which are shared at least implicitly by its members.

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<sup>1</sup> Stiglitz, 1999, p. 308.

As an economic good knowledge is also immaterial or ineffable, namely, it can't be consumed when it is used like any material good. Therefore, because isn't consumable, knowledge isn't only inexhaustible as a resource but also cumulative, which enables the birth of authentic knowledge tradition in society. All these issues are examined by the new research domain of symbolic or immaterial goods economy. (One of the first who has initiated this kind of research regarding tacit knowledge was Arrow.<sup>1</sup>) Michael Porter, in a research about the economic growth factors, proposed a threefold distinction between production factors such as land, natural resources and labor, which were analyzed by classical economists, starting with Adam Smith, financial capital, which were the main issue in monetarist view, and innovative capacity, which became the favorite topic in the new theory about knowledge based society. Porter's idea was that every nation uses in an evolutionary order these three factors and that, ultimately, every nation will reach at the stage when the innovative capacity will make the difference. Even if a nation who has a lot of natural resources has initially a competitive advantage, finally the decisive competitive advantage will belong to the nation who has the capacity to use its innovative capacity. But this decisive competitive advantage depends on the cultural framework. Even if a community has initially a big amount of money it will lose this competitive advantage if the money will be used only for mercantile purposes and not for the development of its innovative capacity. But the decisions regarding how to use different productive factors are taken according to the social and cultural framework:

"Differences in national values, culture, economic structures, institutions, and histories all contribute to competitive success. There are striking differences in the patterns of competitiveness in every country, no nation can or will be competitive in every or even most industries. Ultimately, nations succeed in particular industries because their home environment is the most forward dynamic, and challenging."<sup>2</sup>

All these developments gradually led to the reassessment of knowledge management theory in its theoretical core. The traditional Cartesian distinction between subject and object that has fostered the understanding of an organization as a mechanism which has the capacity

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<sup>1</sup> See Arrow, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Porter, 1990, p. 73.

to process the information received from outside was revised. The capacity to create new knowledge and to use it in an innovative manner was emphasized increasingly more by the researchers. Likewise, the accent was put not only on the inner mechanisms which produce knowledge but also on the ways to convey new knowledge from inside to external environment and to change it.

### **III. The SECI model of knowledge production**

#### **III.1. The four phase: socialization, externalization, combination, internalization**

Nonaka and Takeuchi proposed a theory of organizational knowledge or of knowledge creating organization which is based alike on the distinction between explicit and tacit knowledge and on supposition that knowledge is socially created and transformed through the interactions between the individuals which work in an organization. The two Japanese philosophers bring into debate the concept of organizational knowledge and make a distinction between knowledge owned by a person and knowledge owned by an organization. Moreover, they rethink the conceptual content of the distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge.

Firstly, tacit knowledge was traditionally understood as practical knowledge, namely, knowledge that can't be separated from the activity which is possible with the help of it. Explicit knowledge consists of propositional knowledge, namely, semantic information expressed by sentences which can be true or false. Nonaka and Takeuchi accept that a person can't be aware of what he knows and of the way in which he obtains some results, but this doesn't mean that this person doesn't have any knowledge. In the case of explicit knowledge, a person is aware of it, knows that he knows something and uses the language in order to manage it.

Secondly, if we take into account the relation between a person and the organization to which he belongs, knowledge was traditionally located at personal level. Normatively speaking, a person can have a role in an organization if and only if he has not only a theoretical knowledge but also some skills and practical competences. Nonaka and Takeuchi change the paradigm and accept that knowledge is also collectively located in an organization. We can make a distinction between knowledge institutionally incorporated in organizational rules and procedures and knowledge culturally embedded in an organization as a mixture of views, traditions,

values, faiths and beliefs. Therefore, we can mention the fact that a person may acquire a behavior only if it is a member in an organization which is regulated in some way.

Their paradigm could be better understood with the help of a case study. The two Japanese philosophers discuss the case of a bread making machine. They describe the way in which the tacit knowledge which is owned by the bread maker can be extracted and worded in such a manner that become possible to incorporate it in a bread making machine. We can develop a theory about how to make bread but the expected outcome will be obtained only after a learning by doing process. Because tacit knowledge can be partly transformed into rules, explicit knowledge can be extracted from practical activities. Certainly, this extraction can't be exhaustive.

Based on the distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge and on possibility of transformative process of one in another, Nonaka and Takeuchi have made a distinction between the four modes in which knowledge is transformed in an organization:

- from tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge, a conversion which is called socialization,
- from tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge, a conversion which is called externalization,
- from explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge, a conversion which is called combination, and
- from explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge, a conversion which is called internalization.

Socialization is defined as an interactive process in which a person learns and acquires knowledge, mental models and skills from other community members without using language, but only by observation, imitation, and practice, all of these understood as forms of sharing experience. The information is extracted by that person from a mixture composed sensations, feelings and thought contents embedded in a social and organizational context. For example, Honda Company organized the so-called "brainstorming camps" which were informal meetings between different experts for free discussions about the problems met in its projects. The rule of these meetings was to criticize without constructive solutions and to share together different experiences. New projects were developed and mutual trust inside the company increased.

Externalization is a process of converting tacit knowledge into explicit concepts and judgments with the help of language. Tacit

knowledge may become explicit not only if the informational content is constrained to take the shape of an assertion, a theory or a hypothesis but also if it takes the shape of a metaphor, an analogy or a model. By externalization the new explicit concepts are created from tacit knowledge. For example, low cost Canon Mini-Copier was projected starting from some metaphors and analogies. One of them was that the drum cylinder could be manufactured by an analogy with a can of beer.

Combination is a process of fitting and incorporating the concepts into systems. In this process the epistemic subject uses different technical equipments, facilities and networks. The previous information and knowledge is reconfigured, sorted, and combined with new information which was added. In the knowledge based society were developed new technical means which have the capacity to store in databases and to process the information according with the cognitive aims which were previously established. For example, returning to the case of Canon Mini-Copier, we have to mention that it was projected starting from the concept of "easy maintenance".

Internalization is a learning by doing process of transforming explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge in the form of mental models and the so-called know how. The explicit knowledge is expressed linguistically in theories, documents, books, manuals, databases, and also it is spread in universities, or by the help of mass/media and other interactive means. Therefore, knowledge is re-experienced and interiorized by the epistemic subjects, individuals and organizations. For example, Matsushita decided to reduce yearly working time and to maintain costs and results. This policy was communicated as explicit knowledge and it generated innovative solutions inside the organization.

The process of organizational knowledge creation is the result of a continuous interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge and the conversion of one in another is induced by some triggering mechanisms:

"First, the socialization mode usually starts with building a 'field' of interaction. This field facilitates the sharing of members' experiences and mental models. Second, the externalization mode is triggered by meaningful 'dialogue or collective reflection', in which using appropriate metaphor or analogy helps team members to articulate hidden tacit knowledge that is otherwise hard to communicate. Third, the combination mode is triggered by 'networking' newly created knowledge and existing knowledge from other sections of the organization, thereby crystallizing them into a new



product, service, or managerial system. Finally, 'learning by doing' triggers internalization."<sup>1</sup>

The content of the knowledge which is used and created by each knowledge conversion is different. Socialization, as a conversion of tacit knowledge in tacit knowledge, is based on the so-called "sympathized knowledge", because the individuals share mental models and technical skills. Externalization, as a conversion of tacit knowledge in explicit knowledge, produces "conceptual knowledge" starting from metaphors and analogies which extract the meaning or the propositional content embedded in a pure practical activity or interaction. Combination, as a transfer from explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge, gives rise to "systemic knowledge", namely, to a development of ideas in deductive chains which entails new practical consequences. Finally, internalization, as a conversion of explicit knowledge in tacit knowledge, produces the so-called "operational knowledge" which is embedded in production process and its management and policy.

Which is the epistemological relation between an organization and its members in different phases of knowledge conversion? An organization isn't able to create knowledge by itself, but it may have the structural capacity to identify, extract and convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and, therefore, to create knowledge. This holistic capacity, which isn't the sum of individual capacities to convert tacit knowledge in explicit knowledge, although emerges from them, makes the difference between organizations and explain why some individuals are more productive in some organizations than in others. The organization has the capacity to maximize the individual capacities. Practically, the creation of organizational knowledge begins at individual level and climbs the spiral to more interactive levels, up to that where the organization become a totality with its own capacities. In Nonaka's words<sup>2</sup>, the social interaction process inside an organization offers to every individual, as a part of organizational network, the possibility to grow its own knowledge. This doesn't mean that organization becomes prevalent to the individual and that the totality becomes more valuable than its parts. Actually, this idea would be a managerial justification for a totalitarian ideology. On the contrary, the key for the originality in the spiral of knowledge production is

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<sup>1</sup> Nonaka, Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 70-71.

<sup>2</sup> Nonaka, 1994, pp. 17-18.

the autonomy of individual because every new bit of knowledge needs an autonomous mind to get born:

“At the individual level, all members of an organization should be allowed to act autonomously as far as circumstances permit. By allowing them to act autonomously, the organization may increase the chance of introducing unexpected opportunities. Autonomy also increases the possibility that individuals will motivate themselves to create new knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

### **III.2. Some critics and a revision**

Anyway, the model of knowledge production proposed by Nonaka and Takeuchi was firstly criticized for its hard core of ideas regarding the conversion of knowledge. I shall mention some of these critical reviews. One problem would be the contradiction or at least the epistemological inadequacy between the dynamic description of knowledge production and the concepts used. The two concepts, tacit and explicit knowledge, are defined by contrast and in a static manner. Then, if the two types of knowledge are so different, how is possible to explain their reciprocal conversion? And how is possible to explain a process with static concepts?<sup>2</sup> The same opposition between tacit and explicit knowledge was seen by Tsoukas but he also added the objection that Nonaka and Takeuchi work with the presupposition that tacit knowledge could be completely transformed into explicit knowledge. This is a mistake because tacit knowledge is irreducible to explicit knowledge. If we return to Polanyi and try to understand him correctly we'll see that in his view tacit knowledge is ineffable and can't be entirely captured by propositions or, if we do this, we lost it. In Tsoukas's words, the two types of knowledge aren't the opposite parts of a continuum but like the two sides of a coin: tacit knowledge is always a silent companion of tacit knowledge even if we aren't aware of it.

Another objection is focused on the normative character of Nonaka and Takeuchi's theory.<sup>3</sup> The four conversions of knowledge into tacit and explicit are described as necessary but they are dependent on some contingent conditions, namely, the cognitive task that was assumed. This means that the preferred task will select the mode in which knowledge is transformed. Therefore, it is possible to observe in practice the conversions

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<sup>1</sup> Nonaka, Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> See Adler, 1995, 110-111.

<sup>3</sup> See Becerra – Fernandez I., Sabherwal R., 2001.

described by Nonaka and Takeuchi but we can't derive from these observations as instances some normative sentences. A similar objection was rise starting from the theory about learning organization. The activity which is projected by an organization depends on the learning task that was assumed by an organization.<sup>1</sup> As a result, if the conversion of knowledge is a learning task, the organization will select that phase of knowledge conversion which is necessary in that practical context.

As an answer to the previous objection we may say that Nonaka and Takeuchi have offered a model. But if we try to defend their theory and to consider it as a model which represents the reality, then we have to identify an empirical base for it. Is the SECI model based on empirical evidences? Which will be its empirical flaws? (For example, see Gourlay, 2016) Some authors claimed that the model hasn't empirical validity as a general theory of knowledge production and that it was developed on a narrow empirical base, represented only by some case studies about Japanese companies. I think that this objection led to the general problem regarding the epistemological relation between theory and experience, and it did not hit the SECI model as such, even if it is a result of an inductive derivation, a deductive chain or a speculative theoretical enterprise based on analogies and metaphors. After Nonaka and Kenney<sup>2</sup>, all is important from a managerial point of view is the fact that the process of knowledge creation in an organization is analyzed as a managerial activity that could grow the innovative capacities at organizational level. Innovation is understood as an information process which is concretized in a new product and through this process the organization is opened to a self-renewal activity.

The revised version of SECI model, proposed in some papers by Nonaka and others<sup>3</sup>, is focused on other two dimensions of organizational knowledge, the so-called "Ba", the framework of knowledge creation shared by the community members, on the one hand, and the so-called knowledge assets, on the other hand. Moreover, the subjective dimension is taken into account as a dynamic relation between individual subjectivity and the process by which a person exceeds his own limits within the organization. The concept of "Ba" means the common place where the

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<sup>1</sup> Poell, Van der Krogt, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Nonaka, Kenney, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> See Nonaka, Konno, 1998; Nonaka, Toyama, Konno, 2000; Nonaka, Toyama, Boyesiere, 2001; Nonaka, Konno, Toyama, 2001; Nonaka, Toyama, 2003.

knowledge is created, but is understood not only as physical space but also as a virtual place where the organization members communicate each other and share experiences, ideas, goals and ideals. This place as “Ba” can be known only by acquaintance so that it is accessible only to those persons who have the experience to live and to work in that organization.

#### **IV. The variety of tacit knowledge**

##### **IV.1. Somatic, relational and collective tacit knowledge**

I think that, according to the previous assertion about the role of tacit knowledge in knowledge production, it's easy to imagine a situation in which a community from any domain of activity is able to produce something new without a good knowledge of the methods and rules used to obtain it. Such as a baker is able to do good bread because he learned how to do this, so a scientist who happened to discover something without a conscious use of scientific method will understand how was possible to do that discovery only after he did it. Collins<sup>1</sup> describes the case of a person who knows how to do something but he isn't able to offer an explanation of what he did even after a so-called an externalization process. What shall we say about this person: that he is an ignorant person or that some elements of tacit knowledge aren't irreducible to rules propositionally expressed? The incapacity to express propositionally how something was done isn't equal with ignorance but an argument for the irreducibility of tacit knowledge.

Nonaka and Takeuchi, following Polanyi, gave a definition of tacit knowledge which is based on the presupposition that it could be made explicit in some conditions. Therefore, in their view tacit knowledge is equally with implicit knowledge and it is opposed to explicit knowledge. This means that tacit knowledge is reduced to a relational property. Harry Collins<sup>2</sup> developed an analysis of tacit knowledge and he has made a distinction between three types of tacit knowledge:

- somatic tacit knowledge which is embodied in the human body and brain;
- relational tacit knowledge which is able or not to become explicit in some circumstances;
- collective tacit knowledge which is embodied in society.

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<sup>1</sup> Collins, 1974; Collins, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Collins, 2010.

The approach proposed by Collins enlarged the traditional meaning of tacit knowledge and assured a new perspective on the role of it in knowledge management.

Somatic tacit knowledge is embedded in any acquisition of a skill. We learn to do something, we feel that we have understood how to do that thing, we try to do and we succeed, but we can't explain in our language why we are able to do that. For example, if we learn how to ride a bike we'll be able to keep our balance but we won't say something very clear about how we manage it. Therefore, we know how to do something and the fact that we can't explain why we can do it doesn't diminish in any way our knowledge.

Relational tacit knowledge appears in different interactions between people, as it would be a learning situation, and, as a rule, any bit of it can be made explicit at a certain time if the circumstances assure the means to transform it. To translate tacit knowledge in explicit knowledge is a task which depends on historical, situational and technical circumstances. Therefore, a piece of tacit knowledge can be made explicit in some circumstances which are created, let's suppose so, by a cultural tradition in a society, and won't be explicit in another society or if the circumstances changed. Relational tacit knowledge is relative to the social, cultural, and historical circumstances. We'll say that the learning context may be favorable or not to the successive conversions of tacit knowledge.

Collective tacit knowledge is embedded in society such as somatic knowledge is embodied in our body. If we take into account a social activity, for example, car driving, we'll see immediately that drivers from different cultural spaces we'll drive their cars differently in terms of style driving although the rules aren't very different. Therefore, although they have learned the same rules, they have learned more than the rules, they have learned something about how to interact each other in the traffic, how to behave as a driver and how to express one attitude or another. We can say that in the learning process something regarding the meaning of social responsibility and sensibility were transferred and that the differences between the drivers from different societies is an effect of the differences regarding the ways in which social responsibility and sensibility are conceived and understood in that societies. Any attempt to use language in order to change driver behavior is futile from the beginning and we'll see that a newcomer will begin to adopt gradually the driving style which is collectively recognized.

These arguments about collective tacit knowledge bring us back to the philosophical debate held around the Wittgenstein's concept of form of life or Kuhn's concept of paradigm. Some philosopher claimed that if something which is in our mind escapes from the control of our own reason then it becomes irrational. This is also the case for the collective tacit knowledge and for those decisions which are taken in an organization. If an organization has autonomy over its members, then, when a person takes a decision, he isn't aware of the fact that he preferred one decision to another because he shares a collective tacit knowledge. But if he will try to express the content of his knowledge as a result of his membership to the organization he won't be able to grasp all the elements of this content and some of them will remain inaccessible. This is a contradictory result, because, on the one hand, if we accept that we can't grasp rationally something then it will be considered irrational, and, on the other hand, we need to accept that we can't become aware of all our tacit knowledge.

#### **IV.2. Is tacit dimension personal or organizational?**

I think that we really have two theoretical oppositions which are overlapped and mixed, one between tacit knowledge and propositional knowledge, the other between personal knowledge and organizational knowledge. This means that beside the question regarding the distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge we have the question about the nature of tacit knowledge, if it is essentially something personal, embedded in deep individual capacities, or something organizational, produced by an organizational culture in a holistic manner. Some authors, as Ambrosini and Bowman<sup>1</sup>, assert that tacit knowledge is personal knowledge and reduce it to individual skills and its evolution to the development of these skills, others, on the contrary, state that it is organizational knowledge and claim that "The possession of technical 'knowledge' is an attribute of the firm as a whole, and is not reducible to what any single individual knows, or even to any simple aggregation of the various competencies and capabilities of all the various individuals, equipment, and installations of the firm."<sup>2</sup> My belief is that both dichotomies are false dilemmas if they are understood as alternatives and that such as tacit and explicit knowledge are

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<sup>1</sup> See Ambrosini and Bowman, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson, Winter, 1982, p. 63.

two faces of the same transformative process so are also personal and organizational knowledge.

Anyway, it is obvious that individual tacit knowledge has two dimensions, one cognitive, another technical, observed many experts.<sup>1</sup> In technical sense tacit knowledge is practical knowledge. It is equal with the acquired skills, it is the result of learning from experience process and it is used as knowing how that can't be described. The cognitive individual tacit knowledge is embedded in ideals, values, mental models which are taken for granted or in exemplar situations which are taken as such without any doubt.

I think that in the light of previous distinctions we can identify two components of organizational knowledge which have a tacit dimension:

1. Knowledge embedded in organizational technologies, rules and procedures. Any organization tends to regulate itself with the aim to use efficiently its own knowledge. A person won't have any knowledge of these rules outside the organization and he or she is able to have some performances only within the organization.

2. Knowledge culturally embedded as aggregate of perceptions, values, beliefs, faiths and visions. This kind of knowledge contains a diversity of elements, from the neural software which have a cognitive interface to the so-called anonymous collective thinking in which an individual is kept. Some philosophers mentioned the importance of a biological or a historical a priori that grounds the knowledge and establish the conditions of its possibility.

## **V. Conclusion. Tacit knowledge as a managerial resource**

Any information or knowledge already acquired produce new information or knowledge which we will be consumed and so on to infinity in an endless chain of knowledge. Knowledge produced by research communities are then used not only by research communities but also by the entire society, by different social groups and organizations. But different organizations have different capacities to use knowledge as a competitive advantage. Cohen and Levinthal<sup>2</sup> was proposed the expression "absorptive capacity" to name the capacity of any organization to recognize the value of any information, to assimilate it and to use it according to the

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<sup>1</sup> Nonaka, Konno, 1998, p. 42; Taylor, 2009, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen, Levinthal, 1990.

commercial aims. Zahra and George have taken into account the dynamics of organizational capabilities and extended the concept of absorptive capacity in order to cover the process and proposed a distinction between potential absorptive capacity and realized absorptive capacity. The first provides organizations “with the strategic flexibility and the degrees of freedom to adopt and evolve in high-velocity environments”.<sup>1</sup> The absorptive capacity as a dynamic organizational capability is understood as a set of organizational routines and process by which an organization is opened to the knowledge environment and is able to acquire it, to assimilate it inside the organization, to transform it according to the organizational aims and to exploit it in the benefit of organization in order to assure and to grow its competitive advantage. I think that in the light of the ideas outlined above, we may propose a new conceptual extension and to define absorptive capacity in relation with the knowledge already assimilated by the organization, internalized and transformed in tacit knowledge. Therefore, organizations have different absorptive capacities because they differ in their internal structure of the background. By this background I understand not only the explicit knowledge already acquired but also the organizational skills and values. For example, an organization that assigns a great value to knowledge will be centered on the knowledge acquired process and will have a greater absorptive capacity. The routine and the tradition become organizational factors that can empower the capacities at organizational level.

Davenport and Prusak,<sup>2</sup> based on new meta-theoretical debates from information and communication theory, developed in an exquisite way Nonaka and Takeuchi’s ideas. They take over the distinction between knowledge and information, use it in a holistic approach and begin to investigate the so-called corporate memory.

Two domains of knowledge management were identified as different starting from their orientation towards different goals: one centered on the production of knowledge inside the organization, the other focused on the transfer of knowledge already created and stored. In the first case, the managerial activity is devoted to the growth of innovative capacities which are related with human resources, in the second case the managerial

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<sup>1</sup> Zahra, George, 2002, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Davenport, Prusak, 1998.



process is based on the use of the best new technologies in order to increase the organization capacity to store and transfer information.

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# PRINCIPII ALE GUVERNĂRII CORECTE ÎN *LEGILE* LUI PLATON

Adriana NEACȘU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *This article analyzes the Plato's *Laws* dialogue and highlights the most important principles that our philosopher has established there as the basis of a strong, non-degradable state. For most of them, the author notices a resemblance to the rules governing the proper functioning of any democratic state, as it is understood today. This invalidates the idea that Plato promoted, *avant la lettre*, totalitarianism, although he admitted some practices familiar to its. However, these play a minor role compared to the philosopher's general vision of the state, contoured under the sign of Good and Justice.*

**Keywords:** *state, political ideal, moderation, equality, power control, sovereignty of law, direct democracy, representative democracy, meritocracy.*

## I. *Legile* – un model autonom de stat

Este de notorietate faptul că, toată viața, Platon a visat la constituirea unui stat ideal, virtuos și fericit, capabil să reziste netulburat trecerii timpului. Știm, de asemenea, că filosoful a considerat acest stat perfect posibil, și că a acționat în mod concret pentru realizarea lui efectivă. Acest lucru era în deplină concordanță atât cu teoria lui Platon despre filosofi în calitate de conducători ai cetății, cât și cu tipul de educație a cetățeanului atenian din vremea sa, chemat să se implice în toate chestiunile care priveau buna funcționare a statului.

Cea mai complexă și mai celebră descriere a statului ideal o întâlnim în dialogul *Republica*, care, de-a lungul timpului, i-a fascinat pe cititori, atrăgându-i autorului său numeroase elogii, dar și critici foarte dure (mai ales în perioada contemporană), care vizează aspectele totalitare detectate în viziunea „divinului” filosof.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Vezi, în acest sens, Karl R. Popper, *Societatea deschisă și dușmanii ei*, Volumul I: *Vraja lui Platon*, traducere de Drăgan Stoianovici, București, Editura Humanitas, 1993. O analiză a criticii lui Platon de către Popper se află în Adriana Neacșu,

În ceea ce privește *Legile*, ultima dintre scrierile lui Platon, ea pare, la o primă privire, să completeze tabloul schițat în linii mari în *Republica*, insistând asupra reglementărilor multiple și concrete care orientează viața de zi cu zi a cetățenilor, și care nu-și aveau locul într-o prezentare strict teoretică, principală, caracterizată printr-o maximă generalitate. În realitate, lucrurile nu stau așa decât parțial, căci în *Legile* Platon creează o altă imagine a statului decât cea din *Republica*, iar aceasta, chiar dacă nu se opune celei dintâi, este, totuși, autonomă, configurând un alt model, alternativ, de guvernare. Faptul acesta denotă că autorul a meditat în mod constant de-a lungul vieții la problema bunei guvernări, pe care a abordat-o din diverse perspective și pe diverse nivele, creând, astfel, variante distincte, deși complementare.

De altfel, nevoia acestor abordări multiple este evidențiată de Platon în *Legile*, atunci când Atenianul ia în discuție, împreună cu Clinias și Megillos, problema organizării unei colonii în Creta, constituită din cetățenii mai multor orașe cretane, deci a construirii unui stat concret, contemporan cu aceste trei personaje. Astfel, mai întâi, Atenianul, *alter-egoul* lui Platon, evidențiază calitățile superioare ale conducătorilor unui stat ca o condiție indispensabilă pentru ca statul respectiv să fie cu adevărat perfect.

„În general, este adevărat a zice, cu privire la oricare guvernământ, că dacă înțelepciunea și cumpătarea sunt reunite în persoana aceluiași om cu puterea suverană, de aici iau naștere originea statului desăvârșit și a legilor celor mai bune, și că altfel nu pot fi create.”<sup>1</sup>

Mai departe, însă, el admite că este foarte greu, dacă nu imposibil, ca unul sau mai mulți oameni să se ridice la înălțimea acestei cerințe, și că, în realitate, numai cu titlu de excepție întâlnim în istorie o astfel de situație ideală, căci „minunea aceasta a avut loc, după cât se spune, în timpul asediului Troiei, dar în zilele noastre nu se vede așa ceva.”<sup>2</sup> De aceea, făcând apel la un mit, Platon concluzionează că, în fond, oamenii nu sunt capabili de o guvernare ideală prin care să se conducă ei înșiși, astfel încât numai zeii, în calitate de ființe perfecte, o pot exercita asupra lor, într-un

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„Filosofie socială și metafizică. Karl Popper despre teoria platoniciană a Ideilor”, studiu în volumul colectiv: D. Stoianovici, G. Flonta, C. Stoenescu (editori), *Filosofia lui Karl Popper. Analize și interpretări*, Editura Pelican, Giurgiu, 2007, pp. 186-195.

<sup>1</sup> Platon, *Legile*, traducere de Ștefan Bezdechi, București, Editura IRI, 1995, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*.

mod oarecum asemănător cu felul în care oamenii își exercită autoritatea asupra diverselor animale. Tot ceea ce pot face muritorii este să aibă în minte modelul desăvârșit al unui stat condus de către zei, pe care să încerce să îl imite în viața lor socială, în măsura în care acest lucru este cu putință.

„Saturn, băgând de seamă că nici un om, după cum am spus mai sus, nu e în stare să guverneze pe oameni cu o autoritate absolută, fără ca să cadă în desfrâu și în nedreptate, așeză în orașe, ca dregători și regi, nu oameni, ci genii cu o fire mai aleasă și mai divină ca a noastră, pe demoni, ca să facă cu noi ceea ce și noi facem cu turmele, fie de oi fie de alte animale domestice. (...) și astfel făcură să domnească pe pământ pacea, cuviința, libertatea, dreptatea și ne aduseră zile fericite, lipsite de tulburări și neunire. Povestea aceasta este adevărată și astăzi și ne învață că nu există leac pentru viciile și relele statului, care nu va avea zei, ci oameni, să le conducă; că datoria noastră este să ne apropiem pe cât se poate de guvernământul lui Saturn, de a încredința cârmuirea vieții noastre publice și particulare părții nemuritoare a ființei noastre și, dând numele de legi povețelor izvorâte din rațiune, să le luăm drept călăuză în administrația familiilor și a statelor.”<sup>1</sup>

Statul pe care Atenianul și companiile săi de drum din *Legile* doresc să îl proiecteze se află tocmai în această situație, adică nu poate fi condus de zei, ci de către oameni, care sunt imperfecti, dar are șansa unor legiuitori capabili și bine intenționați, care se străduiesc din răspuțeri să suplinească, prin superioritatea, forța și trăinicia legilor, neajunsurile unei guvernări căreia îi lipsește știința autentică a conducerii statului și deținerea adevărului despre lucruri<sup>2</sup>. Ceea ce primează, deci, în modelul de stat din *Legile*, este tocmai configurarea sistemului acestora, care reprezintă coloana vertebrală a statului, aflată în conexiuni multiple cu toate organele sale, de la instituții până la simplii cetățeni. Legile sunt cele care orientează activitatea cotidiană a fiecăruia către un scop comun, iar ele acționează în acest sens fie prin îndrumare, persuasiune și convingere, fie prin sancțiuni.

Pentru ca legile să aibă un asemenea efect benefic în întreaga societate este necesar ca guvernarea care se realizează pe baza lor să respecte anumite principii. În continuare vom evidenția câteva din aceste principii, pe care Platon însuși le expune într-o manieră explicită în dialogul său.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 285.

## II. Unicitatea idealului politic

Pentru a putea funcționa în cele mai bune condiții și pentru a se bucura de stabilitate, un stat trebuie să-și fixeze un singur scop principal, adică un ideal politic suprem, pe care să îl urmărească în mod consecvent, și din care să derive toate celelalte interese ale sale. În caz contrar, el va urmări diverse ținte, mai mult sau mai puțin generale, oscilând între acestea și fragmentându-și astfel eforturile, iar, în plus, subminându-și prin neglijare organizarea socială pe care ar trebui să o conserve și să o întărească.

„Acum vom înțelege că nu e de mirare că instituțiile celor mai multe dintre state sunt rele, fiindcă legiurile lor n-au un scop unitar și că în unele guvernăminte dreptatea constă să ridice în posturile cele mai înalte o seamă de oameni, fie buni, fie răi; în altele n-au altă năzuință decât să se îmbogățească, fără să le pese dacă sunt sclavi sau liberi; iar în altele toți tind numai la o viață liberă; sunt iarăși alte state care în legiurile lor își propun două scopuri deodată, anume să aibă și libertate înăuntru, și să-și extindă dominația asupra altor state; în fine, cei ce se cred cei mai deștepți își pun înainte toate aceste scopuri deodată, fără să-și fixeze un ideal unic, la care să raporteze toate celelalte interese de stat.”<sup>1</sup>

Din punctul de vedere al lui Platon, acest ideal suprem al statului nu poate fi altul decât virtutea, ceea ce presupune că întreaga activitate politică urmărește, în ceea ce privește oamenii, să îi facă mai buni<sup>2</sup>, iar în ceea ce privește ansamblul social, să instaureze domnia justiției.<sup>3</sup> Într-adevăr, atâta timp cât oamenii sunt lăsați în voia pornirilor lor naturale, ei își urmăresc propriul lor interes egoist, intrând în conflict cu ceilalți semeni și destabilizând întregul social din care fac parte.<sup>4</sup> Virtutea însă, care presupune ridicarea omului către modelul existenței divine, contracarează această tendință destabilizatoare. Acționând prin intermediul legilor pentru a-i face pe cetățeni cu adevărat virtuoși, legislatorul va reuși să-i asigure statului fericirea și perenitatea de-a lungul timpului, ceea ce se va repercuta în mod pozitiv asupra vieții poporului și a fiecărui individ în parte. În fond,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 284.

scopul oricărei guvernări autentice nu este altul decât fericirea statului și a cetățenilor, iar aceasta derivă, în mod firesc, doar din virtute.<sup>1</sup>

### III. Solidaritatea de interese a cetățenilor

Dar un stat nu poate cultiva virtutea în rândul cetățenilor săi decât dacă reușește să promoveze interesele lor comune, astfel încât corpul social să nu fie divizat, ci să constituie o unitate, asigurând astfel unitatea indestructibilă a statului, ceea ce reprezintă „culmea virtuții politice.”<sup>2</sup> Una din căile prin care se poate obține acest lucru este asigurarea unei o vieți sociale intense pentru toți cetățenii, prin organizarea unor serbări comune, desfășurate sub egida divinității protectoare a fiecărei clase sociale, căci, din punctul de vedere a lui Platon, nu se poate construi un stat adevărat cu ateii, ci religia trebuie să fie baza acestuia.

„Apoi fiecare clasă de cetățeni va avea divinitatea ei, demonul, ori eroul său particular. La împrumutarea cea dintâi grijă a legiuitorului va fi să rezerve terenul necesar dumbrăvilor sfinte, și a hotărî prescripțiile cultului, pentru ca în zilele de sărbători fiecare clasă de cetățeni să țină întruniri acolo, în vederea înlesnirilor de tot felul, a trebuințelor lor mutuale și pentru ca la praznicele ce vor însoți sacrificiile să-și dea unii altora semne de bunăvoință și să lege cunoștințe și relații laolaltă. Viața aceasta socială creată astfel e cel mai mare folos pentru stat.”<sup>3</sup>

Un alt important mijloc de menținere a unității statale este acela de a-i convinge pe cetățeni de faptul că binele individual nu se poate obține decât pe baza binelui obștesc, care este cel mai mare și mai dezirabil dintre toate bunurile. De altfel, este necesar ca acest bine obștesc să fie urmărit pe toate căile de către stat, iar el trebuie să fie unul autentic, nu aparent, și să contribuie în mod real la împlinirea năzuințelor legitime ale tuturor cetățenilor, nu doar a câtorva dintre ei sau a unor grupări restrânse.

„...politica adevărată și sănătoasă trebuie să aibă în vedere binele obștesc, iar nu binele particular, pentru că interesul comun leagă împreună părțile statului, iar interesul particular le desparte: prin urmare, publicul și particularii să-și caute folosul lor mai degrabă în săvârșirea binelui obștesc, decât în aceea a binelui particular.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 284.



În momentul în care acest principiu este încălcat, în stat intervine inechitatea, armonia intereselor se destramă, iar virtutea cetățenilor devine un simplu slogan fără acoperire, un paravan în spatele căruia unii profită, iar alții sunt dezavantajați.

#### IV. Înțelepciunea sau subordonarea față de rațiune

A acționa în vederea stabilității statului și a coeziunii dintre toți cetățenii înseamnă a proceda într-un mod înțelept, subordonând activitatea de guvernare față de rațiunea autentică, obiectivă, singura capabilă să înlăture ignoranța omului politic, restabilindu-i armonia sufletului și orientându-i deciziile în conformitate cu binele obștesc.

„...grija de căpetenie a legiuitorului trebuie să fie de a face să domnească înțelepciunea în statul pe care-l organizează și de a alunga din el neștiința (...) faptul de a urî în loc de a iubi ceva despre care suntem încredințați că e frumos și bun, și de a iubi și îmbrățișa ceea ce recunoaștem a fi urât și rău.”<sup>1</sup>  
„În adevăr, amicii mei, cum ar putea să existe cea mai mică imagine a înțelepciunii într-un suflet care nu este de acord cu el însuși? Aceasta nu se poate, pentru că înțelepciunea desăvârșită nu este altceva decât acordul cel mai frumos și cel mai perfect, și fiindcă cineva nu-l posedă decât dacă trăiește conform rațiunii drepte; cât privește pe cel ce e lipsit de ea, acesta este răsturnătorul casei sale și, departe de a fi mântuitorul statului, el îl va pierde fără greș prin nepriceperea sa, de care va da dovadă în toate împrejurările.”<sup>2</sup>

De altfel, înțelepciunea este cea mai importantă parte a virtuții, care știe să facă distincția între ceea ce este bine și ceea ce este rău, și de aceea este partea ei conducătoare, în lipsa căreia celelalte trei virtuți cardinale (cumpătarea, curajul, dreptatea) nu și-ar mai putea păstra caracterul de virtute, căci le-ar lipsi justa apreciere a lucrurilor asupra cărora se exercită.

#### V. Moderația

O altă parte a virtuții care joacă rol de principiu al guvernării corecte este cumpătarea sau moderația. Fiindcă orice exces înseamnă dezechilibru, iar acesta provoacă degradarea lucrurilor, moderația este singura metodă prin care se poate evita acest rezultat cu totul nedorit. De altfel, pericolul

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 108.

excesului în actul guvernării apare în mod firesc, deoarece natura umană rezistă cu greu tentației puterii pe care o exercită în mod nelimitat.

„Că nu e om pe pământ, dacă e tânăr și n-are să dea socoteală nimănui, să poată suporta greutatea puterii suverane, fără ca boala cea mai grea, ignoranța, să nu pună stăpânire pe sufletul său și să-l facă un obiect de scârbă pentru prietenii săi cei mai credincioși, fapt ce-l va duce degrabă la pieirea sa și va face să dispară toată puterea sa. Este însușirea numai a celor mai mari legiuitori, instruiți relativ la moderația ce trebuie să păstreze în toate, de a preîntâmpina neajunsul acesta.”<sup>1</sup>

În plus, același principiu care vizează moderația în exercitarea puterii de către indivizi i se aplică și tipului de guvernare care funcționează în interiorul statului. În consecință, nu este indicat nici un dezechilibru între puterea conducătorilor și libertatea poporului, căci o putere prea mare a celor dintâi duce la tiranie, care îngenunchează în mod nepermis poporul, în vreme ce o prea mare libertate generează „democrația absolută și neatârnată de orice altă putere <care> este infinit mai puțin folositoare decât democrația moderată.”<sup>2</sup>

Din acest punct de vedere, pentru Platon contează mai puțin forma politică a unui stat, cât maniera, excesivă sau moderată, în care se exercită puterea în cadrul acesteia. De fapt, el consideră că nici o formă pură de guvernare nu le este superioară tuturor celorlalte, și că un stat bine organizat trebuie să se inspire din cele două forme originare: monarhia și democrația.

„Se poate spune cu dreptate că există două specii de constituții politice, din care se nasc toate celelalte: una este monarhia și cealaltă democrația. La perși, monarhia, și la ceilalți, atenieni, democrația sunt înălțate la gradul cel mai înalt; și aproape toate celelalte constituții sunt, cum spuneam, alcătuite și amestecate din acestea două. Numai că este absolut necesar ca un guvernământ să se țină și de una și de cealaltă, dacă vrea ca libertatea, știința și unirea să domnească acolo; și acolo vream să ajung, când ziceam că un stat, în care aceste trei lucruri nu se întâlnesc deloc, nu poate să fie civilizată.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112.

Acest punct de vedere al lui Platon se înscrie perfect în spiritul principiului moderației, care trebuie să caracterizeze tot ce înseamnă alcătuirea statului și corecta lui funcționare.

## **VI. Împărțirea puterilor în stat și controlul reciproc al instituțiilor puterii; suveranitatea legii**

Cea mai eficientă cale de a elimina excesele și de a menține moderația într-un stat este evitarea concentrării puterii în mâna unei singure persoane sau a unei singure instituții, cu alte cuvinte, împărțirea puterilor, „căci nu trebuie să se întocmească niciodată o autoritate prea puternică și care să nu fie temperată.”<sup>1</sup> Platon recunoaște faptul că modelul acesta de organizare a statului a existat deja în vechime, format fiind din regalitate, instituția eforilor și sfatul bătrânilor, și că el s-a menținut parțial în constituția Lacedemonei din vremea sa. Dar, pentru a evita orice posibilitate de corupere a puterii, filosoful elimină instituția regalității, optând doar pentru câteva grupuri restrânse de cetățeni, capabile să exercite guvernarea la cel mai înalt nivel, căci „dificultatea organizării crește cu numărul celor ce guvernează; și, din contră, cu cât numărul acestora este mai mic, cu atât ea este mai ușoară”<sup>2</sup>

În acest sens, Platon stabilește un senat, alcătuit din 360 de senatori, câte 90 din fiecare clasă socială, care să conducă și să supravegheze treburile curente ale statului. Dar în calitate de organ suprem al statului, el propune un consiliu format din zece „păzitori ai legilor”, magistrați de rang superior, un fel de sfat al bătrânilor înțelepți, deținători ai adevărului despre natura lucrurilor, capabili, de aceea, „să cunoască mai întâi scopul politic, cum am zis, ce trebuie realizat, apoi pe ce căi se poate realiza și care sunt legile precum și oamenii în stare să-l înfăptuiască”<sup>3</sup>, cunoaștere în lipsa căreia nu se poate constitui un stat perfect.

La drept vorbind, acest consiliu, care se întrunește de obicei noaptea, sau dimineața foarte devreme, la ceasuri tainice, pentru a dezbate și a lua cele mai importante hotărâri privind statul, ar putea fi suspectat că își exercită puterea în mod discreționar, concentrând-o pe toată în mâinile sale. Într-adevăr, privind din perspectiva democrației contemporane, pericolul acesta ne apare cât se poate de real, dar Platon respinge această idee din

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 368.

moment ce decretează că oamenii consiliului „divin” sunt „perfecti”, experți în cunoașterea cosmosului, a raționalității lucrurilor, a zeilor, a sufletului și a tuturor virtuților, jucând rolul de inteligență a statului, capabilă să îl orienteze fără greș în direcția cea bună. În plus, acest consiliu este ajutat în exercitarea puterii de o mulțime de magistrați mai tineri, cu diferite funcții și cu o educație superioară în raport cu ceilalți cetățeni. Aceștia, răspândiți la toate nivelele societății, sunt capabili să implementeze în rândul tuturor cetățenilor respectul legilor și ordinea socială.

„Desigur, statul se poate asemăna cu capul, sediul inteligenței, iar paznicii mai tineri, cu niște ochi așezați în partea de sus a capului, care rotindu-și privirea lor scrutătoare, inspectează de jur-împrejur ce se petrece în stat, iar observațiile făcute le încredințează memoriei, comunicând celor mai bătrâni mișcările din țară. Pe când aceștia se compară cu inteligența, întrucât cugetă, prevăd, deliberează și, cu sprijinul celor tineri, asigură împreună conservarea statului.”<sup>1</sup>

De altfel, toți magistrații, indiferent că sunt tineri sau bătrâni, sunt primii care se subordonează tuturor reglementărilor statului, de aceea ei sunt numiți de Platon „servitori ai legilor”. Asta înseamnă că legile statului sunt singurele suverane<sup>2</sup>, ceea ce elimină din start arbitrariul în luarea deciziilor și în orientarea acțiunilor practice.

## VII. Îmbinarea democrației directe cu cea reprezentativă

De altfel, legile trebuie cunoscute de toți cetățenii, fără excepție, căci statul proiectat de Platon este format din oameni educați, deopotrivă bărbați și femei, care înțeleg raționalitatea reglementărilor sociale, și de aceea le respectă din „convingere inteligentă”<sup>3</sup>, nu doar din respectarea tradiției, și cu atât mai puțin din simpla obediență față de putere. Datorită educației, datorită faptului că este format de către stat ca o personalitate complexă, fiecare cetățean se poate implica direct în conducerea diverselor treburi ale cetății, primind responsabilități în funcție de competențele lui dovedite, dar și ca urmare a unui vot liber exprimat de semenii săi.

Implicarea directă presupune, în primul rând, rezolvarea conflictelor dintre particulari cu ajutorul vecinilor, rudelor, prietenilor, sau a celor care cunosc problema, astfel încât doar în urma imposibilității

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 371.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 356.

acestora de a lua o decizie se permite apelul la un tribunal superior, format în majoritate din magistrați.<sup>1</sup> În plus, oamenii simpli sunt cooptați în diversele instanțe de judecată, pentru că numai astfel simt că își exprimă în mod plener condiția lor cetățeni. De asemenea, toate problemele de stat, adică cele de interes comun, vor fi judecate de întreg poporul într-o primă, dar și în ultimă instanță, deși ele vor fi instrumentate de magistrați abilitați în acest sens.

„Cu privire la crimele de stat, e necesar ca poporul să ia parte la judecată, pentru că toți cetățenii sunt vătămați când statul este vătămat, și pentru că ar avea cuvânt să privească drept o injustiție de a-i exclude de la asemenea procese. Astfel, pricinile acestea se vor aduce înaintea poporului în primă instanță, și el le va rezolva în ultim resort; însă procedura se va instrui înaintea a trei dintre primele corpuri de magistrați, alese prin învoirea și a acuzatului și a acuzatorului. (...) Totdeodată, pe cât va fi cu putință, trebuie să ia parte la judecățile referitoare la pricinile particulare. Căci acei ce se văd înlăturați de la orice drept de a judeca își închipuie că sunt lipsiți cu totul de drepturile de cetățean.”<sup>2</sup>

Responsabilitatea cetățenească este întărită prin faptul că oricine are datoria să vegheze la bunul mers al lucrurilor în cetate, iar în cazul în care observă nereguli care aduc prejudicii statului, indiferent că acestea vin din partea particularilor sau a magistraților, să le aducă în fața opiniei publice și a judecătorilor. În felul acesta, cetățenii exercită un permanent control asupra instituțiilor statului și a persoanelor care activează în cadrul lor. De altfel, Platon consideră că aceasta este principala ocupație a oricărui cetățean, „care cere de la el mult studiu și exercițiu: de a lucra la înființarea și păstrarea bunei ordini în stat; și aceasta nu este o muncă de care să se poată achita cineva în mod ușuratic.”<sup>3</sup>

Într-adevăr, pe lângă responsabilitate, exercitarea datoriei de cetățean necesită destul de mult timp, căci accederea în cele mai multe din funcții se face în urma votului cetățenilor, chemați să aleagă, periodic, oamenii potriviți dintre mai multe persoane care și-au dovedit competența profesională și integritatea morală. În cazul funcțiilor importante, selecția este extrem de riguroasă, desfășurându-se în mai multe etape de vot și dezbateri publice, care reduc treptat numărul candidaților, până când se

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 180-181.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 257.

ajunge la cel optim, cerut de fiecare instituție sau magistratură în parte. De exemplu, în cazul păzitorilor legilor,

„Toți cei ce poartă armele ca pedestrași sau călărași, sau care au mai fost în luptă, în ordinea vârstei, vor avea drept de vot la această alegere. Alegerea va avea loc în templul socotit cel mai sfânt din toată cetatea. Fiecare va depune pe altarul zeului votul său scris pe o tăbliță, cu numele aceluia pe care-l alege, a tribului său, a demosului ce-l locuiește; și va adăuga și numele său cu aceleași amănunte. Primul venit, care va crede că un vot oarecare nu este dat în forma cuvenită, va avea dreptul să-l ia de pe altar și să-l expună în piața publică timp de cel puțin treizeci de zile. Magistratii, după ce vor fi cules numărul celor trei sute, care vor fi avut cele mai multe voturi, le vor publica în tot orașul, care va face, după chibzuința sa, o nouă alegere dintre cei trei sute. Se va publica a doua oară numele celor o sută, care vor fi preferați; și poporul va face o nouă alegere dintre acești o sută aleși, și așa mai departe, până ce vor ajunge la cea din urmă subdiviziune; atunci cei treizeci și șapte de candidați ce vor avea cele mai multe voturi vor fi declarați magistrați.”<sup>1</sup>

În alte cazuri, precum cel al componenței senatului, în urma votului cetățenilor se va stabili un număr mai mare de candidați, de obicei dublu decât cel necesar, iar cei care vor ocupa, până la urmă, funcțiile respective vor fi desemnați dintre aceștia prin tragere la sorți. Practica este menită să înlăture nemulțumirile celor respinși prin vot direct, care pot pune în pericol stabilitatea cetății, pasându-le zeilor sau hazardului responsabilitatea numirii în funcții.<sup>2</sup>

În felul acesta, Platon îmbină ceea ce noi, astăzi, am numi democrația directă cu cea reprezentativă, chiar dacă am văzut că el nu agreează tipul de guvernare democratic, pe care-l echivalează cu anarhia, recomandând atenuarea lui prin reglementări specifice monarhiei. În același timp, Platon acordă credit și voinței zeilor, pe care-i implică în mecanismul electoral dintr-o necesitate politică precisă și, de altfel, în mod extrem de precaut.

### **VIII. Corecta ierarhizare a valorilor în stat; meritocrația**

Pentru ca toți cetățenii, indiferent de poziția lor în stat, să aibă repere clare în organizarea vieții proprii și a activității sociale, în stabilirea scopurilor și în aprecierea situațiilor de viață, statul trebuie să stabilească o

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 170-171.

ierarhie a valorilor care să funcționeze din interior ca un cadru reglator. În cazul în care această ierarhie este greșită, corpul social va funcționa defectuos, și doar în măsura în care ea este corectă, statul are șansa reală de a-și păstra unitatea, dăinuind nealterat, în cele mai bune condiții.

„Afirm deci că dacă cineva lucrează să facă un stat trainic și perfect, atât cât e permis oamenilor, e necesar să distribuie înăuntrul lui, în mod just, onoarea și dezonoarea. Ori, distribuția aceasta va fi dreaptă numai când se pune în linia întâi și în locul cel mai de cinste calitățile bune ale sufletului însoțite de înfrânare; în al doilea loc, superioritățile corpului, în al treilea, averea. Orice legiuitor care va răsturna rânduirea aceasta, punând în primul rang al respectului averea sau altă calitate de un rang inferior, va păcătui contra justiției și a politicii sănătoase.”<sup>1</sup>

Același principiu al ierarhizării corecte a valorilor impune ca toate funcțiile publice să fie repartizate după merit, ceea ce face din statul lui Platon o meritocrație. Cel dintâi dintre merite este cunoașterea legii și subordonarea față de ele, iar cetățenii vor primi funcții mai înalte sau mai modeste în funcție de măsura în care posedă aceste calități.

„Ceea ce spunem aici are de scop să ne întărească în hotărârea ce-am luat, de a nu încredința funcțiile publice în statul nostru nici bogaților, nici celor de nem, nici celor puternici la corp, nici celor cu statura înaltă, nici unora cu superiorități exterioare, ci numai cetățenilor care se vor arăta cei mai supuși legilor stabilite și care îi vor întrece pe toți ceilalți în privința aceasta. Numai pe acela trebuie să-l facem cel dintâi servitor al legilor. În al doilea rând, trebuie să-l punem pe acela care, în urma celui dintâi, s-a deosebit mai mult în această privință; și tot așa cu ceilalți, conform aceleiași ordini și după aceeași proporție.”<sup>2</sup>

Apoi, este vorba de o educație superioară în cele mai înalte științe privind lucrurile, ceea ce implică competențe de netăgăduit și în administrarea statului. Totuși, nici unui demnitar nu i se acordă credit nelimitat, iar activitatea lui poate fi contestată, astfel încât judecătorii și toți funcționarii publici pot fi, la rândul lor, puși sub acuzare, judecați și condamnați. În acest sens Platon stabilește o serie de reguli privind sancționarea abuzurilor în funcție și a corupției.<sup>3</sup> De altfel, există o pluralitate a instanțelor de judecată, începând de la micile comunități

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 174, 180, 157.

sătești, constituite din membrii acestora, și care reprezintă instanțe informale, până la cele mai înalte, având competențe juridice foarte tehnice, capabile să judece cele mai complexe pricini și pe cei mai importanți demnitari.

Ca o precauție în plus, prin care se urmărește reducerea la minimum a corupției și a exceselor de orice fel, statul trebuie să limiteze exercitarea oricărei funcții publice, indiferent care ar fi aceasta și indiferent de persoana care o deține. De exemplu, senatorii, care reprezintă cel mai înalt nivel al puterii executive a statului, exercitată în mod curent și continuu, în fiecare clipă, sunt aleși doar pe un singur an. Chiar și oamenii „perfecti”, „divini”, înțelepții, cababili să creeze și să perfecțeze legile, să stabilească strategii și să ia hotărâri în cele mai importante chestiuni de stat, nu pot rămâne pe viață în consiliul „de taină”.

„Păzitorii legii nu vor sta în funcție mai mult de douăzeci de ani, nici numiți în slujba aceasta mai înainte de vârsta de cincizeci de ani. Oricine va fi ales la șaiszeci de ani, va sta în funcție numai zece ani, și așa mai departe, după aceeași proporție.”<sup>1</sup>

Urmând același model, fiecare dintre funcțiile mai mici are limita sa proprie de exercițiu și, de multe ori, doar o anumită perioadă de vârstă la care se poate accede la ea, astfel încât să se asigure atât un optimum al activității magistratului cât și o rotire permanentă a cetățenilor pe toate palierele puterii, ceea ce face ca nimeni să nu poată deține autoritatea administrativă sau juridică în mod neîngrădit.

## IX. Egalitatea tuturor cetățenilor

Larga și diversă atragere a cetățenilor în funcționarea mecanismelor puterii exprimă faptul că aceștia sunt în raport de egalitate, cea mai importantă în acest sens fiind egalitatea „ca libertate”<sup>2</sup>, de vreme ce nu există nici o altă constrângere în stat decât aceea a legilor. Pentru că în acordarea funcțiilor se ține cont de competența și meritele fiecăruia, egalitatea nu este una cantitativă, înțeleasă în mod simplist, ca o distribuire identică, nediferențiată de responsabilități și atribuții, ci una calitativă, socotită de Platon egalitatea „adevărată și perfectă”, care este „egalitatea

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 243.



stabilită între lucruri neegale, conform naturii lor”<sup>1</sup>, singura care asigură într-un stat „justiția politică”.

În orice caz, egalitatea de șanse pentru accesarea la conducerea statului, pe diversele paliere ale puterii, le este asigurată tuturor cetățenilor prin acordarea unei educații complexe începând încă din copilărie. Căci numai prin educație omul va putea ajunge asemănător zeilor, fiind capabil să contribuie la buna organizare a vieții sociale, în vreme ce, lipsit de ea, va avea condiția brutei iraționalități. „Din cauza aceasta legiuitorul trebuie să privească educația copiilor ca cea dintâi și mai serioasă grijă a sa”<sup>2</sup>, ceea ce face ca învățământul să fie riguros organizat și condus de funcționari virtuozși și pricepuți, selectați cu grijă în urma unor examene diverse.

„Iată cum trebuie ales prezidentul și arbitrul corurilor. Toți cei ce vor avea gust pentru felul acesta de lucruri se vor duce la adunare; se va pedepsi cu amendă oricine nu va veni; paznicii legilor vor fi informați despre lipsa aceasta. Cât privește pe ceilalți, vor asista, dacă vor vrea. Fiecare va propune, după alegerea sa, ca prezident, pe cineva dintre cei mai destoinici în genul acesta; și în examenul ce va urma după alegere, nu se va invoca alt motiv, spre a alege ori a respinge pe cel ce este prezentat, decât talentul sau incapacitatea sa. Acela care va avea cele mai multe voturi din zece candidați, și a cărui alegere va fi confirmată de examen, va prezida corurile timp de un an, conform legii. Se va observa aceleași forme în alegerea unui arbitru de monodii și de concerte de instrumente: printre aceia ce vor ajunge până la cinstea examenului, acela, ce va fi ales după ce va trece proba voită, va fi prezident pe timp de un an.”<sup>3</sup>

În cadrul unui asemenea învățământ general și obligatoriu, de masă, fiecare, în funcție de calități, motivație, aspirație și muncă, va putea obține competențe mai mici sau mai mari într-un domeniu sau altul, ceea ce îl va califica să intre în competiția pentru anumite funcții. Dar statul va avea grijă ca diferențele de educație să nu se transforme în inegalități flagrante privind averea și privilegiile publice, urmărind cu strictețe să mențină egalitatea socială între cetățeni, altfel solidaritatea lor ar fi compromisă. De aceea el instituie un control strict al proprietății, împărțind cetățenii în

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 177-178.

patru clase, în funcție de numărul loturilor de pământ deținute, nepermițând îmbogățirea lor excesivă, interzicând camăta, zestrea, cauțiunea în bani, aurul și argintul ca monedă internă, și stabilind limita minimă a săraciei.

„Într-o cetate ca a noastră, merită a fi scutită de cel mai mare dintre rele, pe care îl vom numi mai bine revoluție decât sediciune, nu trebuie ca unii cetățeni să fie peste măsură de bogați, iar alții extrem de săraci, fiindcă aceste două extreme duc direct la relele acestea. Este datoria legiuitorului să înlăture și pe una și pe cealaltă. Limita minimă a săraciei va fi lotul atribuit fiecăruia prin sorți. Lotul acesta va fi păstrat întreg; și magistrații și oricine ține la virtute, nu vor permite să i se aducă cea mai mică atingere. Limita aceasta fixată, legiuitorul va permite să dobândească și îndoitul, întreitul și chiar împătritul lui. Dar cine posedă ceva în plus, fie că l-a găsit sau i l-a dăruit altul sau l-a agonisit prin hărnicia sa, sau în orice alt mod, va da surplusul acesta statului sau zeilor protectori ai statului.”<sup>1</sup>

O mulțime de legi particulare au drept sarcină să reglementeze procedurile prin care se pot respecta aceste exigențe generale, în condițiile apariției unor situații concrete dintre cele mai variate. De exemplu, atunci când proprietarul unui lot are mai mulți copii, lotul va fi moștenit de unul singur, de gen masculin, în vreme ce fetele vor fi măritate cu alți moștenitori de loturi, iar băieții, însurați cu fete singure la părinți, devenind ei înșiși proprietarii loturilor deținute de tații soțiilor lor, căci fetele au un drept limitat de moștenire a averii, și în nici un caz nu pot moșteni pământul.<sup>2</sup>

În ciuda acestei evidente discriminări în funcție de sex, și a câtorva considerații negative ale lui Platon privind slăbiciunea femeilor, a inferiorității lor ca temperament și caracter în raport cu bărbații<sup>3</sup>, filosoful instituie, în fapt, o egalitate reală a celor două sexe în cele mai multe aspecte ale vieții sociale. Totul începe de la educație, care se acordă în aceeași măsură fetelor și băieților, deși, de la un moment dat, ea se realizează în mod diferențiat. Dar chiar dacă anumite exerciții sau cunoștințe se potrivesc mai degrabă unui sex decât altuia, fetele vor fi și ele învățate tot ceea ce implică exercitarea activității de cetățean, inclusiv mânuirea armelor.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 331-333.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 148;193.

„După vârsta de șase ani, băieții și fetele să se despartă pe sexe: băieții să meargă cu băieții și fetele cu fetele. Îi vor face să se ocupe cu exercițiile potrivite etății și sexului lor: băieții vor învăța călăria, a trage cu arcul, a mânui lancea și praștia. De asemenea și fetele, dacă voiesc; oricum, ele vor învăța cel puțin teoria. Lucrul de căpetenie este mai ales a ști să mânuiască bine armele grele.”<sup>1</sup> „Fetele se vor deprinde cu tot felul de dansuri și de lupte cu arme grele; femeile vor învăța evoluțiile, ordinele de luptă, cum trebuie să lase jos armele și cum să le ia din nou, fie că exercițiile acestea n-ar sluji decât în cazurile când toți cetățenii ar fi obligați să părăsească orașul spre a se duce la război, pentru ca ele să poată veghea la siguranța copiilor și a restului orașului.”<sup>2</sup>

Ca urmare a educației primite, femeile vor avea posibilitatea să concureze pentru funcții în stat asemenea bărbaților. În acest sens, Platon vorbește de femeia-soldat, femeia-magistrat, femeia-avocat, femeia-informator, cu misiunea acordată de consiliul suprem de a pleca în călătorie în străinătate și de a strânge informații despre alte state.

Este adevărat că plasarea femeii alături de bărbat în exercitarea tuturor atribuțiilor cetățenești nu se face datorită generozității lui Platon sau unei concepții superioare explicite despre egalitatea între sexe, ci doar din nevoia trăinicieii statului, căci altfel, lăsând needucată și nefolosită jumătate din populația cetății, în speță fiicele și soțiile bărbaților cetățeni, aceasta ar deveni vulnerabilă și nu și-ar putea împlini menirea la cel mai înalt nivel.

„...nu există nimic mai nechibzuit ca datina în ființă în Grecia noastră, pe baza căreia femeile sunt scutite de a-și da toată osteneala și, împreună cu bărbații, să facă aceleași exerciții ca și aceștia. De aici provine faptul că un stat nu este decât pe jumătate din ceea ce ar trebui să fie, dacă toată lumea ar lua parte la aceleași lucrări și ar contribui deopotrivă la sarcinile publice; această stare de lucruri trebuie privită ca o greșală enormă din partea legiuitorilor. (...) Vreau ca un legiuitor să-și desăvârșească lucrarea, să nu o facă pe jumătate, îngăduind ca femeile să ducă o viață moleșită, luxoasă, fără regulă și conducere, dându-și toată osteneala numai pentru educația bărbaților; în loc de a trage pentru stat planul întreg al unei vieți fericite, el lasă jumătate din stat fără a se ocupa de el.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 225-226.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 217-218.

Indiferent, însă, de motivația lui Platon, situarea femeilor pe același plan cu bărbații în exercitarea datoriilor cetățenești înlătură cea mai mare parte din prejudecățile specifice societății grecești a timpului său, instituind, cel puțin ca deziderat, egalitatea politică efectivă între cele două sexe.

## X. Concluzie

În *Legile*, urmărind să instituie modelul unui stat puternic și nedegradabil în timp, dar care să aibă o orgnizare mai puțin utopică decât cea din *Republica*, Platon a meditat asupra unor principii generale care să stea la baza acestuia. Trecând în revistă pe cele mai importante dintre ele, se observă, în majoritatea cazurilor, o apropiere de regulile care guvernează buna funcționare a oricărui stat democratic, așa cum este el înțeles astăzi. Astfel, egalitatea de șanse și cea politică, solidaritatea de interese, suveranitatea legii, împărțirea puterilor în stat, participarea directă la conducere sau controlul instituțiilor politice de către cetățeni, prezentate pe larg de Platon, sunt stipulate în mod explicit în constituțiile democratice actuale. În special egalitatea politică dintre bărbați și femei, susținută de Platon, deși cu argumente ce vizează stabilitatea statului, și nu pe baza unei teorii privind natura celor două sexe sau pe considerente de etică socială, este un principiu extrem de actual.

Alte principii, precum moderația, înțelepciunea sau virtutea reprezintă idealuri morale generale, care, deși nu apar formulate ca atare în nicio reglementare administrativă, politică sau juridică a statelor contemporane, sunt vizate, în mod implicit, de către acestea, căci orice democrație autentică urmărește un echilibru al forțelor sociale, o organizare corectă a vieții publice și o implicare superioară a tuturor cetățenilor.

Formularea de către Platon a unor reguli fundamentale care guvernează statul democratic modern infirmă faptul că el ar fi fost, *avant la lettre*, adeptul totalitarismului, în ciuda admiterii unor practici familiare acestuia din urmă. Dar condițiile istorice distincte, care nu puteau oferi o vastă perspectivă asupra experienței politice a umanității, explică în bună măsură „derapajele” antidemocratice detectabile atât în *Legile* cât și în alte scrieri ale lui Platon. Acestea, însă, joacă un rol minor în raport cu viziunea generală despre stat a filosofului, conturată sub semnul Binelui și al Dreptății, și pe care principiile de guvernare formulate în *Legile* o exprimă într-un mod exemplar.

**WHAT KIND OF CRITICISM  
SHOULD THE INTELLECTUALS ENDEAVOUR?  
THE POLITICAL MAINSTREAM'S CELEBRATION OF  
OCTAVIO PAZ'S RUPTURE WITH THE LEFT**

**Ana BAZAC<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** *Actually, the aim of my paper is not so much to discuss Octavio Paz's political view, than to warn against a present tendency to celebrate the idea of rupture with the intellectual support of the popular conatus and will of human dignity and joy of life.*

*The modern tradition has called this support left-wing, but I am not interested to use this label, or rather I use the well-known political formulas (left-wing, right-wing) for convenience: actually, I oppose to an imaginary model of the functions of the intellectual, the political position of Octavio Paz.*

*First of all, this model contains, following the Enlightenment credo underlined by Kant and Hegel, criticism – highly assumed by the great Mexican poet – and self-criticism. The intellectual must have the absolute external freedom to exert the first, while he should be able to develop the second. If so, the model is pursuing professionalism as well: an intellectual ought not to express opinions that are not based on the best arguments related to the entire phenomenon (and its history and logic), and not only to its fragments. Accordingly, the model involves intellectual and human responsibility, since without it there is no manner to have a verified and verifiable standpoint.*

*In order to be understood, the political realm requires a scientific outlook. It cannot be approached through emotions and only through metaphors, because emotions and metaphors are related to fragmented empirical data and impressions, and their relative character is eloquent only if we emphasize the historical character of politics and its tackling.*

*All of these do not mean that a non-political scientist would have no right to write his political opinions. Nor that they are not important for people. They are, the more so as these opinions belong to public intellectuals. And this means that their representations and ideas must be treated with the same attention all the publicly expressed ideas deserve: especially because of their impact.*

*Therefore, I do not discuss the poetical work of Octavio Paz, but I present his political ideas as they appear in *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History* (1983) and later articles*

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*and declarations. My criticism arises from an analytical standpoint, which is reflective and not emotional, and concludes that Octavio Paz's political view is exemplary for the historical period when it was conceived, and for most of Western intellectuals. Octavio Paz's political conception is thus another model realized in my paper. But, while that conception reflected a historical moment when it was very difficult to surpass it in a self-criticism specific to a non-conformist political epistemology (at least because in that time the Western capitalism was not yet in the devastating global crisis it lies nowadays, and it could somehow temper its critical economic consequences), at present the obstinate brandishing of the flag of superiority of representative democracy and the separation between economic, social and political problems are strange in front of the ardent global crisis.*

*An intellectual is the son of his people when he really cares about it by straining the use of his own specific tools. Nowadays, the celebration of the rupture of intellectuals from their possible former support of the popular initiatives to realize conditions for a dignified human life for all, and the rupture of intellectuals from their functions as voices of the consciousness of the people, is a new postponement of the focus on alternatives, and thus a waste of people's time. But this is only an unnecessary (but for the moment inevitable) example of the historical character of ideologies and intellectual positions.*

**Keywords:** *intellectuals, Octavio Paz, 20<sup>th</sup> century, opportunism, ideology, criticism, social conformism.*

## **I. Instead of introduction**

The aim of my paper is not so much to discuss Octavio Paz's political view, but to use his view as a *model of an intellectual rupture*.

As we know, Octavio Paz (1914-1998) was, in his youth, left-wing (and he always considered himself as left-wing)<sup>1</sup>. How could he be

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<sup>1</sup> José Roberto Cisneros Duarte, 2014, *Octavio Paz, reflexiones políticas por obligación moral*, Marzo 31. Available from: <http://www.adnpolitico.com/ciudadanos/2014/03/31/octavio-paz-reflexiones-politicas-por-obligacion-moral> [August 14, 2014]: "I was educated in the cult of the French revolution and Mexican liberalism. In my youth I made my own the huge and Promethean communist attempt to change the world. The revolutionary idea was and is a generous project. My intellectual and moral affinities, even my life and my criticism, are a part of the tradition of the left".

otherwise, since he has seen with his own eyes a so deep poverty and so many injustices in Mexico: it was very clear to everyone that the Mexican revolution (1910-1920) was, beyond the struggle for power of different layers of wealthy landowners, the result of the social situation of Mexican peasants and national bourgeoisie, and their opposition to the foreign (American and Anglo-Dutch) possession of oil and other national resources. In front of this reality, the young poet could not only immerge within the poetical realm, by thinking that poetry would be the most efficient and true means to criticize the harsh existence – in fact, to understand it – but also to manifest as a *social activist*: in 1937 (so before Lázaro Cárdenas' nationalization in 1938 of Mexican Eagle Petroleum Company) he went to Yucatán to teach children of peasants, in a new and ardent Enlightenment spirit.

But then the *environment* has changed: its watchword was now “let spread the reforms” and it seemed that the inward-looking and protectionist development will – as it indeed succeeded to a certain extent – transform and improve the life of the many. Accordingly, the idealist social activism did no longer appear as the necessary path of a Romantic young man. In his deep down he was a poet, but what could he do else – the necessary supplementary – in order to survive and be really known, thus in order to accomplish man's main goals (and not only a poet's ones), to be esteemed and to self-actualize? Would he be followed only to write articles and to move in circles of writers and artists? It was not enough, the more so the political party of reforms seemed only to need professional elites which ought and were to realize its ambitious program.

Unfortunately, poets do not know economics, nor are they sociologists. Yes, in the decade after the Great Depression a strong wave of protectionism and national development of monopolies has passed over the countries, generating a deepening of international competition and contradictions leading to the WWII. And this wave seemed to be fit just for the underdeveloped countries which had a subordinated position because of the *unequal exchange* with the developed countries. Some leading economists have written about the solutions for the existent *unequal exchange*<sup>1</sup> (between them, the Romanian Mihail Manoilescu<sup>1</sup>, well-known in the Raúl Prebisch's Latin America) and recommended:

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<sup>1</sup> John Brodin, 2006, *The Bias of the World: Theories of Unequal Exchange in History*, Lund University Lund.

a) a national macro planning (possible in the frame of a national capitalism: when the relationships between capital and labour force took place only within national confines),

b) to realize the ‘comparative advantage’ (Ricardo) rather in production than in international trade,

c) thus industrialization and diversification of production,

d) nationalization of the main and profitable industries/companies, and

e) high state expenditures in education, transportation and infrastructure (possible just because the state ownership generates a bigger revenue than that from taxes given by private companies).

Briefly, this is the *state monopoly capitalism* economic strategy, promoted after the big crisis and it has emphasized the *phase crisis* of *monopoly capitalism*. The *state monopoly capitalism* was worldwide developed until the constitution of trans-national forces and capitalism, in the seventies of the last century.

This economic strategy was followed by Mexico too and the resulted “miracle” gave hopes to people. Nevertheless, the economic strategy is not independent from the social and political relations and values. If the dominant ideology does not contain as leading value the social equality or real, economic and social, opportunities (and not only formal political ones) for *every* citizen, only the economic freedom of entrepreneurs is not enough, and the development of state capitalism is encumbered by concentration of wealth and thus by *legal inequality*. And since it is a *state capitalism*, the state bureaucracy controlling the state resources and having deep connections with private (internal and international) companies is quite autonomous from the people and the original democratic institutions,

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<sup>1</sup> Mihail Manoilescu: *Théorie du protectionnisme et de l'échange international* (1929) ; *Le siècle du corporatisme. Doctrine du corporatisme intégral et pur* (1934), nouvelle édition, Paris, F. Alcan, 1936 ; *Le financement des travaux publiques et leur effet comme stimulant économique dans les pays agricoles, communication*, Association Générale des Ingénieurs de Roumanie, Bucarest, 1937. See also Ana Bazac, „The *Zeitgeist* at Stefan Zeletin and Mihail Manoilescu/ Spiritul timpului la Ștefan Zeletin și Mihail Manoilescu”, in Constanța Partenie and Corina-Ionela Dumitrescu (eds.), *Mihail Manoilescu – punct de referință în gândirea economică / Mihail Manoilescu – reference point in the economical thinking*, bilingual edition, București, Editura Economică, 2007, pp. 197-208.



and expands its power in a highly *corrupted* manner (but do not forget: the state corruption is intertwined with the private corruption). The “*Década Perdida*” of Mexico (~1970s to 1990s), when the development halted and the general standard of living decreased dramatically, was not determined firstly because of international accidents as the reduction of the price of oil as well as the fly of speculative capitals, but because of the behaviour of the Mexican political elite: when the price of oil was high, this elite did not continue to develop a diversified production but has organized mainly an oil export based economy (as the inter-war Romanian elite did with cereals, oil and ore), and when the price has fallen the only measures taken were monetary. The oil export based economy and later on together with the hosting of the American and other Western companies offering them a tax-friendly milieu and cheap workforce has showed the subordination of the Mexican political class to always the strongest capitalism – as every political class in a domination-submission society does –: after the reforms of national capitalism in a *dependent* country, to the “neo-liberal”/neo-conservative strategies corresponding to the new phase of trans-national capitalism.

Generally, the *capitalist ideology separates economy from politics*. It seemed, including to the young Octavio Paz, that if economy moves forward, people’s well-being is only a question of time, and that if in politics there are some democratic institutions, these two realms will marvellously intersect and develop. The social structure, the class interests, the *continuity* of the dominant class traditions through the *appearance of discontinuity* were not themes of the dominant ideology and so, they did not penetrate in the preoccupation of many Mexican intellectuals: the more so they were poets.

And when Octavio Paz caught the opportunity (in 1943) to study in an American university and then to enter the diplomatic service – becoming part of the new elite contributing to the modernization of Mexico – it was more and more clear for him that a revolutionary indignation and effervescence would not have been fruitful for the advancement of the country: actually, it would have been harmful. He became in his public *non-poetical writing an intellectual of the status quo: a right-wing intellectual*.

## II. The tradition of rupture

This was the simple and step by step ideological shift of Octavio Paz from the left to the right. This shift as such – so not only of the Mexican

poet discussed here – is *celebrated* by the *status quo ideology*: as a banal transformation in fact, as in the slogan heard not only in Romania, “normally, a youngster is left-wing, an adult becomes right-wing”. In this ideology, this shift would be the salutary rupture with the “sentimental heresy” due to the irrational young enthusiasm. And it would be salutary, because only the maintaining of the social order would be beneficial.

The ideological rupture from the support to *the ruled* to the assistance of *the rulers* is part of the *right-wing motivation* within the entire formative-manipulative *strategy of domination-submission*. The rupture is certainly traditional in this type of society, but is more important in the *modern* one, because the *modern legitimacy* of power depends on “the people”: new social layers, intellectuals and different other popular classes (and not on the tiny stratum supporting the divine origin of the supreme ruler). Generally, the popular layers are ruled, dominated. In order to control the social consciousness of these layers it is imperious to use an ideological strategy that legitimates the capitalist domination-submission as such. One of the elements of this strategy is the theory that though people become indignant in front of the social injustice and this state of mind would conduct them to criticize and oppose the undemocratic political regimes and economic organization of society, ultimately they arrive to think in a rational manner that to destroy an “organic” continuity would be an adventure and worst than to support it.

Then between the social layers there is one which is *both* ruled – because its members are not the owners of the productive forces – and has a specific position in front of the rulers: because it has the intellectual competency able to create both its own symbolic capital and the rulers’ means of symbolic violence towards the ruled, the *intellectual* layer is rather a kind of (inferior) extension of these rulers. The intellectuals – they themselves *stratified* – constitute an intermediary *bureaucratic* stratum<sup>1</sup>, together with all other bureaucratic strata, between the upper class, owner of the economic and political power, and the lower, let’s name with the Marx’s concept, the proletarians who, in order to gain their living, have nothing to sell except their own labour capacity. Indeed, from a standpoint, the majority of the modern intellectuals was and is proletarian and thus it has to sell itself to those buying it (and, certainly, to sell itself as

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<sup>1</sup> Ana Bazac, “*Esprit de corps*: Old and New Values of a Significant Social Identity”, *Analele Universității din Craiova. Seria Filosofie*, Nr. 36 (2/2015), pp. 179-205.

expensively as is it possible). From another, the historical technical division of labour meant – and this was the case too during the first industrial revolution to which Octavio Paz was contemporary – that the intellectual labour force led the physical one, as the above-mentioned extension of the rulers. Concretely, the intellectuals in humanities led *indirectly* the proletarians, through their function to endorse the domination-submission relations, irrespective of the possible criticism some one of them made towards some bearers of these relations.

The intellectuals, or rather the intellectuals in humanities have specific *instruments* related to the exercise of the human reason. These instruments are *criticism*, the *logical* arguments, the consideration of both the *universals'* and the *concrete's* diverse conditionality and historicity, the interest for the *results* of the human actions, the taking into account of both *long and short terms*, the appraisalment of *values* and *alternatives*. The intellectual view impugns the *premises* themselves, their *criteria* and *consequences*, in order to avoid both the moral relativism and the common fatalism.

But, since the intellectuals are socially conditioned, they use these instruments in contradictory and differentiated ways. Indeed, the social condition of intellectuals is which upholds their *opportunism*<sup>1</sup>, and thus their *ideological confusion*: no less than the confusion which is of the popular classes, with all their intellectual means. Because: the most important for them is their social recognition leading to both their possible material assimilation near/within the dominant class and their materially supported presence in the public sphere. In fact, the intellectuals – already in ancient times: priests, officers and tribute collectors, let us do not idealize the writing – were from the beginning assimilated to masters/lords: the Sanskrit etymology (*dam*) of the Latin *dominus* passes through the old Greek, where *δαμάζω* and *δαμάω* means to domesticate, to master, to subdue, and the root *δμη* is found in *δμητός* – tamed, and *δμώς/δμωός* – slave; in Latin too, *domare*, *domitare* – to tame, *domitor* – tamer, *dominus* – master; and are the intellectuals not tamers with their words constructing, au fond, the legitimacy of the masters to whose circle they want to belong?

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<sup>1</sup> According to *Petit Robert*, the noun *opportunism* and the adjective *opportunist* were used in the French literature in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, describing “a politics able to use the circumstances, even by making compromises with the principles”.

There is a difference between the simple political *partisanship* and *opportunism*: these concepts have the same structural cause in the social dependence that transfigures the view of their bearers about “the general interest” and leads to a mercenary behaviour, but while the former does not require a high degree of reflection, the latter is the result of careful examination of gains and losses related to different political alignments.

Their instruments push the intellectuals to use them and to consider that this use is the most valuable thing they may do and even that may exist. But when they do not see themselves and their use of their own instruments in a critical manner – thus their arguments, reasoning, concepts – and when they do not see the phenomena which are their object as historical and social, when they think that the official truths of the moment are definitive and eternal, when they do not see through transparent lens the causes, the internal logic and the consequences of different ideas and theories in fashion and support them in order to have a bigger social visibility, they are *opportunist*.

The opportunist intellectuals pass from an ideology to another because of the above-mentioned epistemological shortcomings and social condition, but not every passing is opportunistic, not every abjuration is vile: only those which negate the genuine critical feature of the intellectuals, are.

At the same time, the powerful find that just this critical feature is harmful for them, because just this feature opposes the subdued character of the intellectuals and their use by the masters as a legitimating face of the domination-submission relations. According to the powerful, what is important from the standpoint of the worth of intellectuals is just their folding at the need of the system conservation and, concretely, of different factions of the ruling class. The more the intellectuals answer to this need, by using sophistic turnings and by selecting information according to their own oblivion of holism and consequences over *alterae partes* and obviously according to a biased refusing of criticism, the more are they gratified as “public” intellectuals. And the more the public intellectuals endorse the political class’ *status quo*, the bigger seems to be their *present* prestige. The political alignment of intellectuals, irrespective of the different parties they support, is one of the strongest means of the *continuity* of domination-submission, because the intellectuals create and are the voices of the dominant ideologies.

It's no wonder that the idea of *rupture* of the intellectuals from their possible previous attachment to the Enlightenment principles of social rights of the people (political freedom *and* economic well-being, social dignity of all, freedom of social criticism and development of the democratic content of institutions – so beyond their simple forms –) was and is cherished as a main argument, in front of both intellectual and non-intellectual strata, of the viability of the capitalist system and the egotistic “rational choice” of atomised people. No hope generated by left-wing alternatives – since these alternatives are decreed by the mainstream ideologies and intellectuals as “utopias” – are allowed to people: only the gloomy social conformism would them protect from the facts that cause them fear.

However, there were historical periods related to modernity which saw a notable progressive intellectual current (as well as some transition toward the left, irrespective here of the meaning of this last word), though this current does not necessarily mean that the majority of intellectuals would have shared the new social and moral values in the first years they were created: as in the history of science, there was and is an *inertia* of the old paradigms, manifested in inertial beliefs; but in some specific periods, the values of *reason* (critical examination of all kinds of authorities), *transformation*, *collective well-being*, *democracy and social rights*, *human dignity* and *courage* were in fashion, in that they have become the *criteria* of ideological judgements and creation and that they have more than marked, entailed the whole cultural development.

Such periods were not only the *Enlightenment*, but also the post-war “*trentes glorieuses*”, and they emphasize the connection between the societal phase of capitalism with its class structure, and the ideological currents. The first example is when bourgeoisie, the new revolutionary class, fought for power during the period of feudal system crisis, and this class could but promote *rationalism*, *social criticism*, a strong belief in *progress* and a *utopian capitalism*. The second example is that of the apex of the *state capitalism*, i.e. of the mutual strengthening of states and their internal monopolies, supporting at the same time the internal mass consumption as a ground of both profit and political consensus. And although the ideology of this period was not as enthusiastic as that of the Enlightenment – because now capitalism was no longer a promise, but a realization, and a very contradictory one – and, consequently, it was *structurally right-wing*, this

characteristic was pictured in social-democratic tones, while the aggressive right-wing values were promoted rather with the mute one.

Once more, this last image is not quite correct, since the right-wing ideology was dominant, but nevertheless corresponds to a tendency: realized through the *welfare state* rhetoric (as the *new* utopian capitalism) and the careful *separation of this rhetoric from the external imperialistic manifestation* of the Western countries. More: because of the ideological antagonism to the Eastern countries constructing an alternative model, the Western dominant ideology has included, as an element of counter-model, the element of Eastern *anti-communist dissidence* and its representatives, the anti-communist dissidents. And since through these dissidents there were some ones who have passed from their former confidence in the communist values to the negation of these values, we can assert that the *Western ideology has continued and developed the tradition of rupture*.

However, the anti-communist dissidents were part of a “different society” and “proved” the non-viability of that society: this is the reason they were very visible personages in the Western ideology. But as parts of the Western/or Western style societies, the shift of some intellectuals from the left to the right was not very celebrated. It was used, since it was useful, but it was not a topic: it was not fashionable, because the social-democratic veil and peaceful political consensus required rather the “no comment” on every sensitive subject possibly harming their triumphant ideology.

More clearly: the eventual shift of Western intellectuals from the left to the right was not a *main* vocal argument of the Western ideology, though it was one of them. In those times, capitalism had many other proofs of its superior development, sufficient for the ideological influence.

But in the present trans-national phase of capitalism, already in a crisis that is no longer phase crisis but *system crisis*, these proofs practically do no longer exist. The ideology of domination needs every aspect that might substitute these inexistent proofs. This is the reason of the revival and aggressiveness of the *conservative* ideology. And this is the reason of the celebration of “the tradition” of ideological rupture from the left (related also to Octavio Paz).

Two more remarks should be made: concerning both the celebration of tradition, and the one-sided consideration of the political rupture as arriving only from the left to the right. The first is that the standpoint concerning the *tradition as being good in se and exterior to any historicity and historical examination* belongs to the conservative mind. The other is that

there certainly are different types of ruptures, reflecting that although different political assumptions correspond to different social appurtenances of the individuals, there is a relative autonomy of the political and moral consciousness towards the class appurtenance and interests: an ability of the individual consciousness to become more or less sensitive to the direct spectacle of society. Thus, one may pass from a right-wing social conscience to left type sensitivity, though this is not determined at all by the social appurtenance.

### III. What kind of rupture is Octavio Paz model of?

Actually, Octavio Paz was not, in his first manifestations, real/consistent left-wing. He was the son of a bourgeois/petit-bourgeois social milieu<sup>1</sup> whose “charm” (word borrowed from Bunuel’s film in 1972) one ought not to overbid. He rather has assumed a mixture of *utopian political liberalism* promoting democratic political rights and institutions (for example freedom of speech/expression and republicanism) and a *progressive radicalism*, normal in an economically and politically “peripheral” country and in a time of world phase crisis of capitalism and totalitarian dictatorships (the thirties).

And he was a poet whose interest was ardent concerning the human soul, but more than pale concerning the logic of economic and political relations. And as a poet, he used the *metaphors* as the finest instruments able to emphasize the social logic and the deep down of human feelings.

In a *time of mobilization*, the poet could be but radical. It was a *poetical radicalism*. And Octavio Paz has always considered as the main element of this poetical radicalism, the *freedom of criticism*, of debate: in fact, of thinking. Equating the left spirit with this freedom of criticism and the tradition of radical criticism, Octavio Paz has, as we know, considered himself always to be left-wing. And since the object of criticism was any type of *authority* – and, obviously, *authoritarianism* – he once more considered himself to be left-wing. Finally, if the force of the poet is to unveil and if his criticism is directed against the veils represented by any *ideology* – which is only “false consciousness” (to use Marx’s early image) and not a reflection of real situations and relations of forces, and which

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<sup>1</sup> I do not speak about his concrete origin in a middle-class family, but about the general Mexican *Zeitgeist*.

generates only fanaticism – it results that to behave in such a manner meant to be left-wing.

Octavio Paz always has denounced the evils of the representative democracy: the privileges and the infringement of the state of law, and was never frightened to declare his refusal of the politicians and governments which have attacked the liberal and democratic values<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, he was “only a poet”, i.e. he did not question the meanings, historicity and values of the representative democracy *as such*, and lesser he did with the

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<sup>1</sup> See his attitude towards the Institutional Revolutionary Party when it had endorsed the Tlatelolco massacre (1968) and then, during Luis Echeverría’s presidency, the repression of another students protests (Jueve de Corpus, 1971): he has renounced to his diplomatic activity in 1968, and in 1971 he has begun and fuelled a famous debate in his journal *Plural* (1971-1976) concerning the critique of the Mexican state and political elite.

Contrary to Carlos Fuentes who considered that the democratic opening initiated by Luis Echeverría’s presidency in 1970 would have been attacked by the reactionary groups which have pushed to the repression and that Echeverría’s strategy ought to be supported, Octavio Paz was both critical (having a “conditional and critical trust” in the regime of Echeverría, Carlos Monsiváis, *Octavio Paz y la izquierda*, Abril 1999, <http://www.letraslibres.com/revista/convivio/octavio-paz-y-la-izquierda>) and resigned. He considered that the writer must be absolutely free to criticise “the state, parties, ideologies and society as such”; and this freedom meant a ‘marginalized’ status of the writer, just in order to speak against “the power and its abuses, *the seduction of the authority* as well as the fascination of the orthodoxy” (my emphasis, because the formula shows that the intellectuals were conscious about the fact expressed by it). But, at the same time, he consciously remained at the level of critique, of the negative manifestation of his freedom. “Many have thought that the moral posture of Paz will convert into a political project, and when this not happened, the scene of the present crisis was prepared” (AB, the political project is the positive manifestation of freedom). Quotes from John King, *Octavio Paz: Pasión Crítica*, <http://www.letraslibres.com/revista/convivio/octavio-paz-pasion-critica?page=0,2> and <http://www.letraslibres.com/revista/convivio/octavio-paz-pasion-critica?page=0,1>.

It was obviously difficult to have an alternative political project, from a historical standpoint more difficult than nowadays. Octavio Paz wanted to criticize both the neo-liberal and socialist („pseudo-Marxist”) dogmas. And this is absolutely correct. However, at least after the elections in Chile, he could have manifested in a practical manner. Was he too prudent in front of the socialist turn of Allende’s country, or he simply could not choose „the lesser evil”?



capitalist relations. He really did not differentiate between those in power or in opposition – in his critique of political personages and habits –, but he was confident in the betterment of society *as a result of capitalism*.

Consequently, he was a kind of utopian liberal mixed with social-democratic strategy. Because he was not concerned with the “metaphysical” basis of capitalism, or rather he focused on this basis indirectly, through the critique of the “really existing socialism” far from Mexico, showing a bashful restraint from the analysis of the real structural situations in his own country (and in the world), Octavio Paz is not the proud model of the rupture from the left to the right. Actually and from the standpoint raised here, *he was not the model of rupture at all*. On the contrary, and despite his own characterization of himself as left-wing, he was the representative of the *conformist intellectuals criticizing the political non-democratic “excesses” of capitalism, but never capitalism as such*.

The radical poet did in his *non-poetical* public expression just what he rejected so much at others: he let the ideology he shared to interpose as a veil between his consciousness and reality. If Octavio Paz would have remained only a poet, no present mainstream would celebrate his rupture: *this one is visible only in his non-poetical public expression*.

Octavio Paz’s *radicalism* manifested as such in his *poetry*: his metaphors, irrespective of whose philosophical schools were the reverberations, suggested a radical view about man and life: and, sharply put, only the metaphorical form protected him from the mainstream attack against his radicalism. In its turn, his *social conformism*, observed in his *non-poetical* direct ideological writings and speeches, was sadly considered by the progressive Mexicans – because *the social conformism of great figures is always sad* – and with joy by the *status quo’s* gainers. And from the standpoint of the *meanings* of his poetical and non-poetical works, yes, it was a rupture, but just between Octavio Paz’s *poetry* and his *non-poetical* writings: this is the *first* sense of the rupture we may discuss concerning the big Mexican poet.

*It is clear now what does rupture mean in the conservative view*: it is an ideological shift – from the left to the right – directly manifested in public expression, although not necessarily transfigured in poetical/artistic works. In fact, if the shift would have manifested only in poetry, it would not have been so useful for the permanent owners of the capitalist power: because it would have been farer from the ordinary people.

But, beyond the difference between his poetical and non-poetical work with direct ideological address, can we speak about an ideological rupture in Octavio Paz? We can from another two points of view: the difference between his ideological non-poetical works and, on the other hand, his own consideration of himself as being left-wing (and this is the *second* sense of the concept of rupture related to Octavio Paz), and, the *third*, the difference between his prestige as critical intellectual and, on the other hand, his anti-Sandinista and anti-Zapatista position in the 80s and 90s.

Indeed – and the paper will stop a moment on – the *later political attitude* of Octavio Paz is more important for the promoters of the establishment, even than his basic conformism in principle. Actually, it is about a “clever conformism”, manifested through social criticism, and just the difference between the aura of this criticism and, on the other hand, the anti-Sandinista and anti-Zapatista position is celebrated by the ideological mainstream.

Therefore, as a representative of the fundamental social conformism of most of intellectuals and *irrespective of his own image about himself*, Octavio Paz does not illustrate any rupture. But, because he did not continue the left-wing sensitivity from his youth, or more correctly because he did not follow the initial moment of *promise*, he can be used as a figure of the rupture.

This use overshadows his stature as a poet. And even though he was not conformist because of personal calculations – but because of many overlapping conditions of the time – a public intellectual, and a prestigious one, should go *all the way* with his critique (something in the line of Kant’s indication in *What is Enlightenment*; and he was luckier, because he was not priest or officer, but a poet, then he could be free in both his craftsmanship, and in his public expression of his critical image about society).

#### IV. Case study: *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds*

The essays concerning the contemporary history and published in 1983<sup>1</sup> are very interesting for the present discussion about what kind of rupture was Octavio Paz representative of.

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<sup>1</sup> Octavio Paz. (1985). *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History* (1983), Translated by Helen R. Lane, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, New York, London.

First of all, they are essays, and not philosophical analyses. Consequently, they *mix* different levels of reality and of concepts, but privileges the *values* and the development of ideas – but not the economic relations and causes<sup>1</sup> – and discusses them rather in a metaphorical manner, suggesting *more poetico* his ideas. More precisely, the conclusions about the better society or about the lesser evil are the result of the translation of an ignored and un-understood logic of the structural relations into the values decreed as shared by “intellectuals”.

But the concrete focus on the world history is full of true and bitter characterizations. The world is marked by two consonant processes: “the crisis of imperial democracy in the United States; its counterpart, the crisis of the system of bureaucratic domination in Russia” and, between them, the countries on the periphery, agitated by the challenge of modernization and “the revolt of particularisms”<sup>2</sup>.

And while in the sixties, the result of a “political crisis, and even more a moral and spiritual one” was a “rebellion of a segment of the ‘middle class’ and a real ‘cultural revolution’”, they constituted “a libertarian movement and a passionate, total critique of the State and of authority as much as it was an explosion against the capitalist consumer society”<sup>3</sup>.

Many people can criticize capitalism, the state of things. However, *it depends what kind of critique is made, namely toward which/with what consequences.*

It seemed that the contemporary history has demonstrated to Octavio Paz that “*there is no alternative*”: “the emergence of dissidents in the Soviet Union and other ‘socialist’ countries” and their recognition in the Western world meant that “no movement of moral and political self-criticism appeared in the West comparable to that of the dissidents of the ‘socialist’ countries”<sup>4</sup>. Is it not risky, this conclusion? No public intellectual – and not only a philosopher – can treat his own presumptions without questioning them, because it is his responsibility to fully use his intellectual instruments and to enounce theories already falsified. The popularity of dissidents – so, of right-wing dissidents – was simply a weapon of the capitalist

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<sup>1</sup> Idem, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Idem, p. 5.

propaganda, since their message was that “capitalism is good, communism is bad”.

The message of dissidents was clearly consonant with Octavio Paz’s former political view. Indeed, on the one hand, he always put between him and the political questions the interest for poetry, and the discussions related to art were the lens through which he received and assumed political information. On the other hand, once an impression formed, he considered it as a ground of his view and selected people, data and theories in order to fit with his ground<sup>1</sup>. He found from some left-wing dissidents that Stalin and the “socialist” political regime were opposed to the communist principles and expectations, and from that moment he erected his utopian liberalism, believing “in a peaceful, gradual move toward democracy”<sup>2</sup>: but that utopian liberalism made him *to equate* the heroic attempts to construct a socialist society with totalitarianism, with “terror” stemming from Rousseau’s general will. He never asked himself why the lower strata supported “communism”, what did they gain from this support.

As in a banal anticommunism, Octavio Paz has *equated* the whole process with the political regime and has criticized the other intellectuals which did not do the same, as not respecting their profession of faith (criticism, examination and doubt)<sup>3</sup>: but neither has he respected it. And concerning the *left-wing anti-Stalinists* he met: *they never made the same equivalence between communism and Stalinism*<sup>4</sup>; in fact, they did not reduced communism to Stalinism, as the poet did, and *have criticized Stalinism from the viewpoint of communism*; for this reason, for example, Octavio Paz did not like Trotsky.

Epistemologically, Octavio Paz has assumed as a knowing pattern a banal *reductionism*, functioning both for the “socialist” countries and for capitalism. Because: he has assimilated and subordinated the destiny of

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Mac Adam, interviewer 1991, ‘Octavio Paz, The Art of Poetry No. 42’, *The Paris Review*, 1991, Available from: <http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2192/the-art-of-poetry-no-42-octavio-paz> [August 15, 2014].

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> Octavio Paz. (1985). *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History*, p. 11. Octavio Paz, *On Poets and others* (1986), Translated from the Spanish by Michael Schmidt, N Y, Arcade Publishers, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> David Rousset, known by Octavio Paz and cited, was not an anticommunist. See his *La société éclatée*, Paris, Bernard Grasset, 1973.

lower strata from his country to the *democratization of the political regime*. But this democratization – i.e. according to the Western representative model – did not and does not lead *per se* to the well-being, dignity and culture of the majority of the common people.

Octavio Paz has reminded the readers the anti-Stalinist left-wing thinkers of the time in order to uphold his standpoint about the USSR: the communist model concretised by this country would have been without hope, ill and malignant<sup>1</sup>. But neither at peripheries, with so many revolts, there was no resurrection. And since the Western capitalism as such had many problems, what was to be done?

Though capitalism, i.e. “Western democracy”, was for him the best because of its dialogical character, the poet proved to be impotent: he cherished criticism as the only force of the intellectuals; but there is criticism and criticism. Why was he socially impotent? Just because he *did not transpose himself into the position of the ordinary people, he only assumed to speak in their name, instead of them*. For this reason, he considered society only as a play of the random individual manifestations: “all times the principal cause is the personal element”<sup>2</sup>. Not grasping why the social conflicts would exist, he said that it would be “the ambiguity is us as human beings”<sup>3</sup>. His intellectual calmness resulted, therefore, from his reduction of the social complexity to simplifying presumptions and the approximate understanding of the “essay”<sup>4</sup>.

The impotence of the intellectuals generates, au fond, a *conservative* view. Because: the reduction of ardent social problems and antagonisms to the message of clever criticism suggests that it is the *only* manner to oppose or behave towards a pre-determinate, already given forever sole social

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<sup>1</sup> Octavio Paz. (1985). *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History*, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> A Romanian philosopher, Constantin Noica, has observed that the good essays are made on the basis of previous rigorous research and science of the objects one popularize through the essays; if this condition is not realized, it is about a “fiddlerism”, Constantin Noica, „Modelul Cantemir în cultura noastră sau memoriu către Cel de Sus asupra situației spiritului în cele trei țări românești”, in *Despre lăutărism*, București, Humanitas, 2007, pp. 33, 35. [The Cantemir model in our culture or factum to the Almighty about the situation of the spirit in the three Romanian lands, in *About fiddlerism*].

model and way of life; and only the “excesses” should be banned. But this means that if, ultimately, capitalism is the best of all possible worlds, namely the peoples *ought not to search for alternatives*, not even the consequences of the domination can be annulled, because this domination follows only the logic of the rulers.

### V. Position in the 90s

The book of essays in 1983 explains Octavio Paz’s attitudes in the 90s and till his death. Not once has he carefully underlined that his critique of the communist parties did not mean the support of the other ones<sup>1</sup>, or the critique of Sandinistas in Nicaragua did not mean to support the USA, since just the American policies have determined the halt of modernization and democracy in Latin America<sup>2</sup>. However, this impression of “equidistant” critique is false: he opposed the Sandinista revolution because this one would have represented another “military-bureaucratic dictatorship” as those in Cuba and USSR, and because Sandinistas “received military and technical aid from the Soviet Union”<sup>3</sup>. But his standpoint *did not give any place for the effort of Nicaraguan peasants and workers to correct, according to their own interests and ideas, this possible path*: Paz’s proposition – free elections in Nicaragua<sup>4</sup> – is in fact a deceit, since these elections are not really “free” (neither in the developed countries), namely they do reflect neither the independent rational choice of the individuals nor their autonomous manifestation of sentiments, because the

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<sup>1</sup> Octavio Paz. (1985). *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Maarten van Delden, 2006, “Polemical Paz”, *Literal*, 7. Available from: [http://www.literalmagazine.com/english\\_post/polemical-paz/](http://www.literalmagazine.com/english_post/polemical-paz/) [January 16, 2015].

<sup>3</sup> “Shortly after the [Sandinista] triumph, the case of Cuba was repeated: the revolution was confiscated by an elite of revolutionary leaders. . . . From the beginning the Sandinista leaders sought inspiration in Cuba. They have received military and technical aid from the Soviet Union and its allies. The actions of the Sandinista regime show its will to install a military-bureaucratic dictatorship in Nicaragua according to the model of Havana. They have thus denaturalized the original meaning of the revolutionary movement”: Octavio Paz quoted in Joel Whitney, “Poetry and Action: Octavio Paz at 100”, *Dissent*, March 25, 2014, [http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/poetry-and-action-octavio-paz-at-100](http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/poetry-and-action-octavio-paz-at-100).

<sup>4</sup> Nicholas Caistor, 2007, *Octavio Paz*, Reaktion Books Ltd, London, p. 113.

internal economic powerful and the external ones put at stake huge material means and propaganda in order to convert the will of as many as they can in supporting just these powerful against which they opposed and oppose.

And how could the Sandinistas resist in front of the American power without an aid? Octavio Paz was pessimistic because of the “global tensions” induced by the United States and the Soviet Union<sup>1</sup>, but he never considered the possibility to surpass these tensions through and with the *power of the peoples*. This power was for him a utopia, and thus the *law and order* – even realized in a democratic manner – was the “lesser evil”. Is this not *conservatism*? Did the Mexicans not feel this when they became mad at the poet? Paz equated the Russian tanks in Czechoslovakia in 1968 with Pentagon’s support of the Chilean generals generating the 1973 coup<sup>2</sup>: but even though politically they have the same characteristics, from the standpoint of the *structural relations* and *historical conjunctures* framing, grounding and generating these facts and their consequences – they are opposed.

And is the label “bureaucratic-military dictatorship following the model of Havana”<sup>3</sup> not too incongruent with the real situation?

The attitude towards Sandinistas was not singular. In 1994 the same was towards Zapatistas. He criticized the government for not having resolved the problems of Chiapas, but condemned the violence of both the peasants and the government and indicated the way of “negotiations”<sup>4</sup>. What kind of negotiations, if all of them led and lead to the victory of the *status quo*, irrespective of the change of political personages at the top, and of some minor political concessions? Is it not incredible on behalf of a radical writer?

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<sup>1</sup> Germán F. Albuquerque 2009, ‘El pensamiento político de Octavio Paz y Mario Vargas Llosa É América Latina en el mundo polarizado..’, *Anos 90*, Porto Alegre, vol. 16, n. 29, pp. 261-290 (p. 267).

<sup>2</sup> Idem, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Caistor, *ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> “Poca sangre y mucha tinta”, *Octavio Paz sobre el EZLN*, Enero 7, 2014, Available from: <http://larotativa.nexos.com.mx/?p=377> [August 14, 2014].

## VI. Instead of conclusion

Is this analysis not incorrect since it seems to represent the point of view of the experience we passed through *after* Octavio Paz's death? So – after it is clear whose interests represented the wave of “democratizations”, and which are their consequences. No, because my arguments are not the facts occurred in the last 19 years after his death, but the opposition between Octavio Paz's radical spring in his poetry and, on the other hand, his *political backwardness*. This backwardness, *common to many intellectuals*, has determined a graver state of the Latin American countries and even of their democracy. Because this one is not tantamount only with the formal representative liberal democracy, and to not support peoples' striving for modes and alternatives towards this single model of democracy is strange for a radical poet.

Was the analysis made here too harsh? Au fond, can every man and every intellectual move on the practical realm, having practical political projects? And is it not enough for a poet to be marvellous in his poetry? Perhaps, it is. But if he nevertheless expresses his political critique, he must be consistent with the message of his poetry.

When one writes, one discovers, tries, is mistaken, but nevertheless one needs to continue to write in order to better understand. A public intellectual is a man who wants to understand; but, also, to transfer his point of view to the great public, to *educate* it. And if so, the problem is not that a public intellectual must not write political essays which do not follow a scientific research and expertise, but that he must push criticism *all the way*, that is, be consonant with the deep popular standpoint, or rather with its life interests, irrespective of the possible confused manner different layers of the people express these interests.

Since the poet is concerned with the problems of life and consciousness of man, could he not confer worth to the real possibilities the common individuals – representing the abstract “man” in as legitimate manner as the sophisticated intellectual with his unrest does – have *hic et nunc* for developing their *reason* and faculties to *dream*, to *act* and to *be more human*? If, for the poet, the lesser evil is not at all the possibility of peasants and workers to have free education and health care – but the *form* of representative democracy with its words about free elections and multi party system – nevertheless does he not have the intellectual obligation to *give time* to these peasants and workers to *construct* (and not only to fight for) a more egalitarian and just society? Is it not the intellectual obligation



of the poet to trust people, their abilities to criticize in a *constructive* manner if they have a dignified status and in order to have a dignified status?

The answers are not so simple. I put these questions rather targeting the intellectual consciousness of today: when, from the standpoint of the historical moment, it is already possible that the intellectuals cherish every man's *conatus*<sup>1</sup> – and the *human* one, the overlapping of the will to live and both the human restraints and brotherhood and reciprocity – more than the concepts and the prejudices. Octavio Paz appreciated Nietzsche as a pattern of criticism and, at the same time, of pessimism. He was pessimistic too. But the present intellectuals can appreciate Nietzsche for his criticism and, at the same time, Spinoza and Kant (the *human conatus*), their optimistic or open messages. The promise of the poet involved, or rather sent to an abstract *conatus*. But this abstract *conatus* is no longer related to the concrete life of the many.

Well, but is it not unjust this entire critical standpoint, however it aims at targeting the present inertia of intellectuals subordinating themselves to the mainstream's celebration of conservative attitudes towards the ordinary man?

Maybe yes, it is. Indeed, Octavio Paz "had" to think and behave in the manner he did. He was a poet, and not a social scientist. He lived during the years of aggressive reaction of the right-wing ideology against the practical attempts of socialist alternatives. He lived during the years of the crisis of "really existing socialism" and he saw this crisis through pessimistic and conservative lens. The fall in 1989/91 seemed to him the confirmation of the ideology he unconsciously assumed.

And, once more, he was a poet. He developed the power of imagination and metaphors in order to construct and de-construct the world of the imaginary. And he considered the real, political world just *through the mediation of the imaginary*, of representations, of the continuous mythical forms of cultures. He did no longer exit from this pattern of thinking. All the ideas – which au fond determine the world – were for him

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<sup>1</sup> Ana Bazac, "Conatus and the worth of life in a time of crisis", in *Philosophy and Crisis: Responding to Challenges to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World*, Golfo Maggini, Vasiliki P. Solomou-Papanikolaou, Helen Karabatzaki, Konstantinos D. Koskeridis (Eds.), With a Foreword by João J. Vila-Chã, Ioannina: Department of Philosophy, University of Ioannina; Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2017 (forthcoming), Volume II, pp. 131-147.

veils, masks, mediations, spectacle which had to be unveiled: criticized. In a philosophical interpretation, he may be viewed as having, through his criticism, a “post-philosophical” attitude, refusing the accredited systems and schools, and emphasizing the mediations of representations and language in the classical causal explanation<sup>1</sup>. But, concerning his political attitude, he was not a promoter of “post-political” image of humankind: on the contrary; and just this justifies his celebration as a representative of the “tradition of rupture”.

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<sup>1</sup> Omar Astorga, 2004, ‘La Filosofía de Octavio Paz’, *Araucaria*, vol. 5, núm. 11, primer semestre Available from: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=28211510> [September 1, 2014].

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## THE FRENCH ENLIGHTENMENT DISCOURSE ON RELIGION: THE CASE OF “PHILOSOPHY IN THE BEDROOM”

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**Abstract.** *The article deals with the transformation of the Enlightenment’s religious consciousness in France. The authors assert that “secularization” primarily meant pluralization of religious beliefs and could lead not only to atheism and materialism, but also to some new forms of religiosity. The conducted analysis of certain ideas of the Marquis de Sade shows his particular place in the Enlightenment philosophy and the potential of the parody revival of paganism. The views of Sade are compared to the neo-pagan doctrine of Alain de Benoist, and connection of the latter with the Enlightenment tradition is revealed.*

**Keywords:** *Enlightenment, secularization, paganism, the cult of Reason, the Marquis de Sade.*

Critical reflection on the Enlightenment’s impact upon the transformation of religious ideas no longer allows us to see the “century of philosophers” as an exclusive source of “de-Christianization” or the negation of religion as such, although in general it can hardly be denied that it did become a catalyst for secularization of society and rationalization of religious beliefs, as long as the world and the various aspects of social life were gradually beginning to be interpreted without the traditional religious authorities, but finding some other, quite secular base: politics becomes a derivative of the material interest, morality finds its base in mind and “natural motives”, etc. The excesses of the Great Revolution lit up those changes with infernal glow, for the king’s execution as the anointed of God does not simply mean the death of the citizen named Louis Capet; it means the encroachment on the One, Whose power reflected in the king.<sup>3</sup> But it also gave the era its majestic character.

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<sup>3</sup> See: Klossowski, P. *Sade my neighbor*, trans. Alphonso Lingis. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991, p. 51.

## I. Enlightenment as the Pluralization of Religious Discourse

C. Brinton writes that the ideas of the Enlightenment are considered by modern Christians as close ones; comparing the ideas of Christianity and the Enlightenment, he indicates their relationship, although regarding them as two parallel religions<sup>1</sup> The idea of religion's purification and improvement is only possible under the condition that we accept the idea of progress, but is progress possible in the field of religion? This is totally anti-traditional and even anti-Christian point of view, especially if we consider that the improvement of religion for the Enlightenment's thinkers was bringing its provisions in accordance with the principles of reason.

De Maistre is probably closer to the point when he writes about the "satanic quality of the French Revolution," noting:

Institutions are strong and durable to the degree that they are, so to speak, *deified*. Not only is human reason, or what is ignorantly called *philosophy*, incapable of supplying these foundations, which with equal ignorance are called *superstitious*, but philosophy is, on the contrary, an essentially disruptive force.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, it is still questionable whether we can identify the Revolution with the Enlightenment as such (this association was claimed, for example, by E. Hobsbawm<sup>3</sup>), but it is hardly possible to deny that the Enlightenment and, namely, the activities of philosophers (*les philosophes*) did largely prepare the coming of the Revolution.

The Revolution reflected the complexity of the Enlightenment philosophical trends combined materialism and atheism with preservation of religious attitudes, which can be seen even in the changing character of the revolutionary laws on the religion – from the first relatively soft Church rights' restrictions to "The Civil Constitution of the Clergy" (July 12, 1790), followed by the subsequent division within the clergy associated with the taking the constitutional oath, and after the Vendee there was a maximum radicalization of measures in relation to Christianity and the Church, which was marked by the establishment of the cult of Reason, later (after the fall of Hebertists) replaced by the cult of the Supreme Being.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Brinton, C. *Ideas and Men. The Story of Western Thought*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Maistre, J. de. *Considerations on France*, trans. Richard A. Lebrun. Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Hobsbawm, E. *The Age of Revolution. 1789-1848*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.

The cult of Reason's essence is still being the subject of discussion – whether it was a manifestation of Chaumette and Hebert's atheism, a deistic construction or a triumph of the rationalist natural religion? Probably we should trust in the righteous anger of the zealous Catholic De Maistre, considering the plebs' madness in Notre Dame de Paris on 20 Brumaire of Year II of the Republic nothing but the orgy of pure godlessness. It is significant that the fiery counterrevolutionary assessment converged with an equally fiery revolutionary one: in his famous speech at the Jacobin Club November 21, 1793, Robespierre declared insane the desire of turning atheism into some kind of a new religion. He called atheism an "aristocratic" in its spirit idea and opposed it to the true nationwide idea of the "Supreme Being," "protecting oppressed innocence and punishing triumphant crime."<sup>1</sup>

The rational-deistic nature of the cult of the Supreme Being can not be doubted, as soon as its founder himself, speaking in the Convention on the day of the decree adoption (7 May 1794), interpreted the cult in that way, noting that the ideas of the Supreme Being and the immortality of soul are social and republican ones, being "the sacred link between people and their Creator."<sup>2</sup> This cult also performed the function of the political consolidation of the nation around the familiar, although somewhat modernized Catholic idea, expropriated from the Church by the republican government. (It is very likely that Robespierre's rhetoric was assumed by de Maistre as godless as that of the supporters of the cult of Reason.)

There is some kind of a paradox in the Enlightenment. It was the age of widespread free-thinking, with transgressive libertinage zones in the social body, ironic attitude to religion as such that became a high-society trend (salons, Voltairianism), even the presence of a certain number of *athées*<sup>3</sup>, and Epicureanism coming from Gassendi to various salons (see Diderot's article about Epicureanism in the Encyclopedia)<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, the outcome of all those intelligent vectors was, rather, the idea that

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<sup>1</sup> Ado, A. (ed.) *The Documents of the History of Great French Revolution in two volumes*, vol. 1 [in Russian]. Moscow: Moscow University Press, 2004, p. 431.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 439-440.

<sup>3</sup> However, it is not necessary to become an *athée*, some radical skepticism in the spirit of Pierre Bayle will be enough to imagine a nation consisting entirely of atheists, nevertheless, living a virtuous life.

<sup>4</sup> Diderot, D. Epicureanism, in *The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert*, trans. S. J. Gendzier. Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, 2009.

religion in one particular form is not obligatory and other points of view are permissible – either actually atheistic ones or of a religious character (such as another conception of the deity or a different confession). In short, it was the developing of the idea of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience as the right to profess any religion or not to profess any.

Actually, the Enlightenment criticism was more of anti-clerical than anti-religious nature, and was directed against social institutions monopolizing the sphere of the spiritual aspirations of the person. It was clearly formulated even by Hegel. Noting the heterogeneity of philosophical ideas of the XVIII century French thinkers, with both deistic and atheistic tendencies, he wrote that it was caused primarily by a catastrophic spiritual state of the religion itself and especially the Church, its institutional form:

If we would understand the feeling of indignation to which these writers give utterance, we must keep before our eyes the state of religion in those days, with its might and magnificence, the corruption of its manners, its avarice, its ambition, its luxury <...> We perceive into what a frightful condition of formalism and deadness positive religion had sunk, as had the bonds of society as well, the means employed for the administration, justice, the power of the state<sup>1</sup>.

Moreover, Hegel clearly indicates that the Enlightenment's attack on the superstitions and deathly power of religious institutions mostly did not affect religion as such:

they did not wage war on what we call religion <...> Those who enforced these views were therefore agents of destruction against that alone which was in itself already destroyed<sup>2</sup>.

But there certainly was some atheistic tendency in the French Enlightenment, and it deserves consideration to see exactly its influence on the transformation of religious feelings in the future. Here we do not agree with such simple answer, that atheism (for example, of Holbach and La Mettrie) was just progressively moving to a purely secular point of view, which is quite complete without the idea of God, the need for a religious

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<sup>1</sup> Hegel, G. W. F. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1896, p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 389.

cult or religious justification of moral responsibility. Private unbelief cannot suddenly transform into a social trend, it needs some sort of support.

It seems that much talked-about secularization<sup>1</sup> meant primarily the pluralization of the spiritual sphere, in which conflicting views turned out to coexist on an equal footing. The mentioned above synthesis of materialism and the desire to “purify” religion with a new rationality engendered not the rejection of religion, but rather its preservation in a degraded form. That form was criticized and rebelled against by many, such as Nietzsche, Juan Donoso Cortés, Pope Pius the IX and Konstantin Leontiev in Russia. It may be a much more anti-Christian idea than pure atheism in the spirit of Holbach. This updated and rationalized Christianity was now ready to agree with everything deeply alien and even hostile (such as atheism or other forms of spirituality). The point of convergence for the different forces becomes the recognition of the secular “common good”, together with individual (but universal, that is, equalizing all people) rights and freedoms.

As already mentioned K. Leontiev wrote,

the idea of mankind’s general benefit, the religion of common good is the coldest, most prosaic and in addition the most incredible, unfounded one from all religions. <...> It is a misleading distraction and nothing more. One thinks that the common good is suffering and resting alternately and then praying to God; another considers that the common good is working and enjoying, not believing in anything non-material; and the third supposes it is only enjoying all the time, etc. How can it all be reconciled to all of us to be our common good?<sup>2</sup>

The rationalist idea of progress, being applied to religion, is perhaps more detrimental to the latter than the atheistic negation. We are not

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<sup>1</sup> About modern revision of secularization theory, see: Casanova, J. “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective”, in *The Hedgehog Review*, 2006, vol. 8, 1-2 (Spring/Summer), pp. 7-22; Dobbelaere, K. *Secularization: An Analysis at Three Levels*. Bruxelles: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Leontiev, K. Byzantism and Slavdom, in Leontiev, K. *Slavophilism and Future Fate of Russia* [in Russian]. Moscow: Institute of Russian Civilization, 2010, p. 64-65. An image from “A Story of Antichrist,” the famous book by Vladimir Solovyov, is coming to mind here – the “virtuous Antichrist”, a spiritualist, philanthropist, vegetarian, people’s deliverer from material need, the “common equality of satiety” establisher. However, his deeds aimed at the achievement of the common good were not accomplished in the name of Christ, but in *his own name*.



talking here about a gradual improvement of the morals and customs of the people who practice a religion; on the contrary, the progress refers to the improvement of the religion itself in its core, i.e. dogmas. The religion that admits the possibility of self-improvement and betterment, as well as recognizes its equality with other views, loses itself – as a dogma, an authority, a revelation. Ultimately, there may not be need of such a “weakened” religion which is no more considered the sole and reliable source of answers to eternal questions, as soon as *man may, in the observance of any religion whatever, find the way of eternal salvation, and arrive at eternal salvation, while Divine Revelation is imperfect, and therefore subject to a continual and indefinite progress, corresponding with the advancement of human reason.* Christianity represented by Catholicism courageously resisted the modernist trends in the post-revolutionary period (we deliberately borrowed the last two statements from the *Syllabus Errorum* 1864<sup>1</sup>), but the idea of universal individual rights and religious tolerance had already established in the minds of the European masses.

Robespierre’s words about the aristocratic nature of atheism can be interpreted in different ways: in addition to the fact that the belief in a Supreme Being is a universal maxim certified by reason, here one can also see the recognition that atheism is not only socially alien to the masses, but is also *excessive* for them, as it requires constant rely on the reason only (not an abstract one, but individual, person’s *own* reason) – both in practical matters and in issues of moral.

The cult of Reason (considered atheistic) did not meet any sympathy among common people, in fact, the attacks on Catholicism provoked negative response, so Robespierre’s condemnation of the cult can also be interpreted as an attempt to overcome the looming split of the nation. So here we can completely agree with James M. Byrne, who wrote:

Despite the clear evidence that leading thinkers were moving as close to atheism as made no difference, it would, however, be a mistake to interpret the eighteenth-century critique of religion by philosophers and other intellectuals as indicating a general decline in religious practice or the presence of widespread atheism. <...> The great mass of people still held to a

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<sup>1</sup> The Syllabus of Errors Condemned by Pius IX. (1864). URL: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm> [15.12.2016].

mixture of religion and superstition and most likely had little knowledge of, or interest in, the esoteric theories of a few philosophers<sup>1</sup>.

## II. A Paradoxical Enlightener: Sade vs. Republic

In 1795 was published Marquis de Sade's "Philosophy in the Bedroom", which embraced a treatise "Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans", presented in the novel as an anonymous work, read aloud in the circle of the orgy participants. André Breton could easily include this treatise into his "Anthology of black humor" along with other Sade's texts: an elegant proof that the acts considered crimes during the *Ancien Régime*, in the era of the Republic cannot be recognized this way, and, in general, there are few things that can now be called "crimes", which means that the number of laws should be kept to a minimum (and, apparently, laws should even be abolished).

This work is very ambiguous: it starts with atheistic criticism of religion, quite acceptable for the Republican discourse, and ends up with a conclusion quite logical for a libertine-philosopher, but scandalous for the new republican order, because this logic reveals the hypocrisy of the idea of universal brotherhood provided the postulation of universal freedom, furthermore, freedom itself is not treated in the traditional manner of the Enlightenment.

It is a difficult question of whether de Sade was atheist or not – and it is here that Albert Camus begins the chapter on Marquise in "The Rebel", coming to the conclusion that Sade's worldview contained contradictory elements, theomachism combined with denial of God's existence.<sup>2</sup> However, taking into consideration only the text of "Philosophy in the Bedroom", leaving aside his other works, we certainly will not notice this duality.

But we do find a sharp criticism of the modernized religion as a cult of the Supreme Being, associated with the name of "infamous Robespierre":

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<sup>1</sup> Byrne, J. M. *Religion and the Enlightenment: From Descartes to Kant*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997, p. 147-148. See also: Barnett, S. J. *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Camus, A. *The Rebel*, trans. A. Bower. New York: Vintage Books, 1991, p. 37.

Let us firmly believe that a people wise enough and brave enough to drag an impudent monarch from the heights of grandeur to the foot of the scaffold, <...> will be sufficiently wise and brave to terminate the affair and in the interests of the republic's well-being, abolish a mere phantom after having successfully beheaded a real king.<sup>1</sup>

Religion and freedom are incompatible – this is the key thesis in the text. Here Sade uses the conventional argument: as long as the idea of God is not experience-derivable and there are no innate ideas, it is only a “chimera”. Its popularity and rootedness in minds is due to the uneducated people’s fear: “Ignorance and fear <...> are the twin bases of every religion”<sup>2</sup>. Priests have always sought to obtain power over the masses and to possess wealth, have always been a mainstay of despotic rulers, striving for their own benefit, and therefore, Christianity is incompatible with republicanism.

In this age, when we are convinced that morals must be the basis of religion, and not religion of morals, we need a body of beliefs in keeping with our customs and habits, something that would be their necessary consequence.<sup>3</sup>

Readers familiar with earlier anti-religious texts of the French Enlightenment will hardly be astonished by the contents of the first part of Sade’s treatise: Marquis talks here of the things quite banal and sounds similar to Holbach if we recall “Portable Theology” and “The Sacred Contagion.” However, “atheism” of Sade is more radical in terms of its ethical consequences and inherently takes the form of anti-theism in a Gnostic sense, which is quite different from the “virtuous” and, so to speak, simple-minded atheism of other Enlightenment philosophers. According to Pierre Klossowski,

in the soul of this libertine great lord of the century of the Enlightenment, very old mental structures are reawakened; it is impossible not to recognize the whole ancient system of the Manichaeic gnosis, the visions of Basilides, Valentinus, and especially Marcion.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, in *The Marquis de Sade. Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom and Other Writings*, trans. Richard Seaver & Austryn Wainhouse. New York: Grove Press, 1965, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296-297.

<sup>4</sup> Klossowski, P. *Op. cit.*, p. 100.

However, not all supported the idea that Sade's teaching was a kind of radical theology turned inside out. For example, Simone de Beauvoir believed that Sade is absolutely not religious.<sup>1</sup>

In Nature Sade was able to primarily see sovereign Desire, whose freedom cannot be limited by anything. The base of Nature is evil and following Nature (as it is dictated by mind freed from religious prejudices) means infinitely committing crimes of lust, seeking to maximize their intensification:

Nature, mother to us all, never speaks to us save of ourselves; nothing has more of the egoistic than her message, and what we recognize most clearly therein is the immutable and sacred counsel: prefer thyself, love thyself, no matter at whose expense. <...> Cruelty is natural. All of us are born furnished with a dose of cruelty education later modifies; but education does not belong to Nature, and is as deforming to Nature's sacred effects... Cruelty <...> is a virtue, not a vice.<sup>2</sup>

We can recall the reasoning of Robespierre in his speech to the Convention, where he says that mind is not able to restrain passions,

the mind of every person, in particular misled by passions, often acts as a sophist in their defense, and the power of man always may be subject to attack of his vanity. Thus, what <...> makes up for the shortage of human self-power is a religious feeling, imprinting in mind the idea of the sanctions given to the requirements of morality by the power standing above the man.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, this idea is completely opposite to Sade's thought, needing limitations only in order that they can be overcome in a gesture of transgression. Sade negated completely any positive meaning of religion (especially Christianity). In this regard, Camus is right saying that Sade "goes against his times: the freedom he demands is not one of principles, but of instincts".<sup>4</sup>

Sade clearly dislikes the attempts to limit the manifestations of this freedom with laws (now not tyrannical, but Republican ones), to say nothing of trying to restore the religious sanctioning of morality. Actually,

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<sup>1</sup> Beauvoir, S. de. *Faut-il brûler Sade?* Paris: Gallimard, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, p. 253-254.

<sup>3</sup> Ado, A. *Op. cit.*, p. 439.

<sup>4</sup> Camus, A. *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

the treatise can be seen as an ironic parody pamphlet, although with a double bottom.

The content of the first part of the treatise, acquired by Dolmancé near the Palace of Equality on his way to Mrs. de Saint-Ange's orgy, coincides in spirit with the main points of *Petition in Support of Temples to the Cult of Reason*, which was composed by Sade and read out in the Convention on behalf of the Section des Piques on November 15, 1793. It contained indications that tyranny and superstition "both are nourished in the same cradle", that "bloody religion ... so often murdered men in the name of the god they only accepted in order to serve the passions of his impure henchmen", etc.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the attitude to religion (Christianity), expressed in the novel "Philosophy in the Bedroom" by its characters, in this case may be identified with Sade's own ideas, as long as he publicly states something very similar at a political meeting<sup>2</sup>. (Here we have the figure of *metalepsis*, as understood by Gérard Genette<sup>3</sup>: Chairman of the Section des Piques, Citizen Donatien Sade enters into his own novel under the guise of an anonymous author of the treatise.) However, it may seem absurd if we imagine him trying to make proposals in the Convention to change the law, reproducing the arguments from the second part of the treatise ("Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans") devoted to morals, supplementing them with some Dolmancé's reflections scattered through the text. Artful sophistic defense of sodomy, incest, theft,

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<sup>1</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Petition in Support of Temples to the Cult of Reason*, trans. Mitchell Abidor, in Henri d'Almeras. *Le Marquis de Sade: l'Homme et l'écrivain*. Paris: A. Michel, 1906. URL: <https://www.marxists.org/history/france/revolution/1793/de-sade-petition.htm> [11.12.2016].

<sup>2</sup> Philippe Roger notes the complexity of Sade's political views and gives an overview of a number of conflicting interpretations by various authors (Roger, P. A Political Minimalist, in *Sade and the Narrative of Transgression*, D. B. Allison, M. S. Roberts, A. S. Weiss (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 76-84). Roger calls Sade's philosophy "impolitical", as soon as "isolism is <...> at the core of what could be called Sade's 'negative anthropology' <...> The denial of the *fil de fraternité* is essential to his thought, just as the affirmation of *pitié* is to Rousseau's" (Ibid., p. 89). To the main characteristics of Sade's thought he also adds historical pessimism and some peculiar deconstruction of the traditional Enlightenment concept of Nature.

<sup>3</sup> Genette, G. *Métalepse*. Paris: Seuil, 2004.

prostitution and murder, as well as the demand to abolish the death penalty, would hardly have found a response among members of the National Convention, encouraging them to put those maxims in law.

Thus, "Philosophy in the Bedroom" presents us either a shameless confession of a monster philosopher or a caustic parody of the Republican orders.<sup>1</sup> Anyway, the Republic, which recognized the universal equality, religious tolerance, the cult of the Supreme Being, and at the same time insisted on a guillotine, clearly did not suit Sade.

Klossowski writes: "A government that was born from the murder of God and that continues to exist through murder has lost in advance the right to inflict capital punishment; it consequently could not pronounce sanction against any other crime."<sup>2</sup> And a little further he cites Sade's question: "I ask how one will be able to demonstrate that in a state rendered *immoral* by its obligations, it is essential that the individual be *moral*? I will go further: it is a very good thing he is not."<sup>3</sup>

Here is a kind of permanent state of immorality, which is only an ethical consequence of the Republic, built on the rejection of religion, even if the rejection is masked by the quasi-religious cult of the Supreme Being and the declarations of the common good. The evil lies in the basis of republicanism, and there is a need to just explicate it in order to be fair to one's own reason. In place of the illusion of the virtuous Republic, embodying the new concept of social order based on "freedom limited by freedom of others," Sade puts a libertine "utopia of evil", which, like all utopias, is not destined to be realized in its pure and original form.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Dalia Judovitz regards the treatise as a parody (calling it "*pseudorevolutionary pamphlet*"): "Sade's bitterly ironic claim represents his violent attempt to parody revolutionary rhetoric. <...> By interpreting the notion of fraternity literally as incest, Sade parodies and reveals the violent underpinnings of the discourse of the Enlightenment" (Judovitz, D. *The Culture of the body. Genealogies of Modernity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001, p. 160). Martin Nadeau writes about "Philosophy in the Bedroom" that it is perhaps a real satire or mockery over the Jacobin discourse of the nature and virtue (Nadeau, M. "Mœurs, vertu et corruption: Sade et le républicanisme classique," in *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* [En ligne], 2007, (347) janvier-mars, URL: <http://ahrf.revues.org/8393> [10.12.2016].).

<sup>2</sup> Klossowski, P. *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

### III. “Yet Another Effort, Europeans, If You Would Become Pagans”

Enlightenment’s critique of religion was primarily directed against Christianity, but it had a universal character in general. Anti-religious discourses of the era, as a rule, were formed up according to this model: any religion at all times and among all peoples is a chimerical fruit of ignorance, the means of enslavement and the source of cruel and barbaric acts (human sacrifice, sacred prostitution, persecution of dissenters, etc.) However, the ancient polytheistic religions sometimes unexpectedly received an excuse or, at least, were considered loftier and nobler than Christianity.

There is a very interesting fragment in the previously mentioned reference to the Convention on behalf of the Section des Piques, authored by Sade: “There can be no doubt but that with new morals we must adopt a new religion, and that of a Jewish slave of the Romans is only appropriate for the children of Scaevola”.<sup>1</sup>

The new morality requires a new religion. But why? Is it impossible to do without it? We believe that Sade was aware of the public opinion’s heterogeneity: a large part of the population clearly was not ready to go to the practice of even deistic philosophical principles, not to mention atheism. Therefore, the cult of Reason appeared in a dual role: on the one hand, it was similar to the usual forms of veneration of the Divine Principle, and on the other, it parodied those forms, so that the Cult was turning into a propaganda tool of dispelling any cult. And since Christianity was initially called into question (“absurd dogmas, the appalling mysteries, the impossible morality”), where else could be found a relevant stylistic paradigm, if not in quite conventional noble pagan antiquity?

Sade writes:

Since we believe a cult necessary, let us imitate the Romans: actions, passions, heroes—those were the objects of their respect. Idols of this sort elevated the soul, electrified it, and more: they communicated to the spirit the virtues of the respected being. Minerva’s devotee coveted wisdom. Courage found its abode in his heart who worshiped Mars.<sup>2</sup>

Actually, the cult of Reason can be considered as a kind of exercise in allegory with constant references to the Republican Rome, whose history,

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<sup>1</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Petition in Support of Temples to the Cult of Reason*.

<sup>2</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, p. 299.

heroes and even gods were becoming a stylization paradigm and a source of new political language for the French Revolution era. Allegory as the trope is extremely rationalistic, whereby the cult built on it does not claim to become a full-fledged religion (Minerva merely denotes wisdom, but does not represent it as a real being).

But let us not forget that the “Philosophy in the Bedroom” was published after the Thermidorian Reaction (that, incidentally, saved the life of the author sentenced to death) when Robespierre had already been executed, but the cult of the Supreme Being survived its creator. Because of this, Sade’s anti-religious thoughts are very radical as nostalgia for the time of cult of Reason, whose creators were the most radical of the Jacobins (although in reality the Jacobins were alien to Sade). He warns Republicans: “since you labor to destroy all the old foundations, do not permit one of them to survive, for let but one endure, ‘tis enough, the rest will be restored”, and at the same time designates the “maximum program”: “at the present time atheism is the one doctrine of all those prone to reason. <...> Let the total extermination of cults and denominations therefore enter into the principles we broadcast throughout all Europe”.<sup>1</sup>

But at the moment this program is clearly far from its realization, so Sade proclaims a kind of concession – that is, the introduction of the pagan religion, imbued with the spirit of citizenship and heroism:

But, they assure us, the people stand in need of one; it amuses them, they are soothed by it. Fine! Then, if that be the case, give us a religion proper to free men; give us the gods of paganism. We shall willingly worship Jupiter, Hercules, Pallas.<sup>2</sup>

A kind of gradation seems to emerge here: 1) the best and desired state of the national spirit is atheism, entailing the destruction of all religions; 2) because of lack of the common agreement to implement a non-religious society, for social tension reducing (as a compromise) there may be established quite a rationalist cult of Reason as the imitation of religion; 3) if, all the same, society is not yet ready to give up religion, let this religion be recreated (or imitated) Roman paganism, polytheism; 4) the cult of the Supreme Being is an excessive concession to the ignorant masses, because it is genetically associated with Christian monotheism (in fact it is a

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, p. 299.



rationalized version of Christianity and that is not acceptable for Sade); 5) restoration of Christianity would mean the defeat of the Revolution (it indeed happened later – the Concordat of Napoleon in 1801).

As we can see, pagan polytheism takes the middle level in the gradation and is allowed by Sade as a temporary concession, which is to be eradicated later on through education and systematic propaganda.

According to Sade, the benefits of pagan polytheism versus Christian monotheism are as follows:

a) The Christian religion is less consistent with the idea of Nature: “we want no more of a God who is at loggerheads with Nature, who is the father of confusion”<sup>1</sup>;

b) Christianity rejects the idea of liberty (civil liberties, in the first place): “This worship will ally itself to the liberty we serve; ...Theism is in its essence and in its nature the most deadly enemy of the liberty we adore”<sup>2</sup>.

c) Paganism allows a man to feel his power and greatness, to become godlike by means of valor and glorious deeds: “Not a single one of that great people’s gods was deprived of energy; all of them infused into the spirit of him who venerated them the fire with which they were themselves ablaze; and each Roman hoped someday to be himself worshiped, each aspired to become as great at least as the deity he took for a model.”<sup>3</sup>

d) Pagan religion can elevate the soul of man and develop his virtues, that are to be manifested even at the altar of Hymen: “Heroism, capabilities, humaneness, largeness of spirit, a proven civism - those are the credentials the lover shall be obliged to present at his mistress’ feet.”<sup>4</sup>

e) Only paganism can serve as a basis for aesthetics: “So alien to lofty conceptions is this miserable belief, that no artist can employ its attributes in the monuments he raises; even in Rome itself, most of the embellishments of the papal palaces have their origins in paganism.”<sup>5</sup>

In whole, the first part of the “Yet Another Effort...” treatise, dedicated to religion, consists of antireligious platitudes of that time, coupled with the idea of the pagan cult restoring, which was not typical for

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

<sup>4</sup> The Marquis de Sade. *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, p. 302.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

the Enlightenment ideology, but is present in Sade's work, in spite of its ironic and rhetorical form.

The theme of paganism influence on the Western European civilization should be discussed thoroughly: it includes the problem of folk medieval culture that preserves many pagan elements<sup>1</sup>, the reception of ancient views by the Renaissance philosophers, and even projects of the real restoration of the pagan religion by Gemistos Plethon, etc. All mentioned is beyond the scope of our study and here we will emphasize only one fact: the denial to consider Christianity as the only true religion (or even complete atheistic rejection of it) had the effect of not only de-Christianization and secularization (as it is traditionally accepted in the sense of decline of religious beliefs and practices<sup>2</sup>), but above all meant demonopolization of the spiritual sphere, with other points of view allowed to exist.

As rightly pointed out by K. Granholm,

the Enlightenment ethos was not anti-religious *per se*. <...> The critique of religion was primarily directed towards the dominate religious institution of Western society, i.e. various forms of conventional Christianity. This relative 'de-Christianization' made it both possible and appealing to turn to non-Christian religions for inspirations.<sup>3</sup>

The development of the European spiritual sphere in the post-Enlightenment period can be represented as a number of divergent paths: 1) Christianity, preserved in its prior institutional forms (Catholicism and Protestantism), continuing to resist the transformative trends; 2) the emergence of new Christian-based religious groups having the character of sects, in terms of Ernst Troeltsch; 3) religious indifference combined with a

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<sup>1</sup> Bakhtin, M. *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> Particularly, see the well-known article of José Casanova about the meanings and modern transformation of the "secularization" concept: Casanova, J. "Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective", in *The Hedgehog Review*, 2006, vol. 8, 1-2 (Spring/Summer), pp. 7-22.

<sup>3</sup> Granholm, K. *Dark Enlightenment: The Historical, Sociological and Discursive Contexts of Contemporary Esoteric Magic*. Leiden: Brill, 2014, p. 40.

“weakened” religiosity<sup>1</sup>; 4) atheistic forms of worldview, expressed in the extreme forms of positivism and vulgar materialism; 5) rationalized forms of religiosity such as Auguste Comte’s “Religion of Humanity” or Tolstoyism; 6) new forms of religiosity that arose on the basis of the occult and mystical teachings, non-European religions (Indian, Chinese), as well as an eclectic fusion of different religious traditions.

The interest in paganism in this context can be seen as one of the leading trends of religious changes, in particular taking into account the fact that for a long time the arsenal of ancient mythology has served as an inexhaustible source of artistic themes and emblematic images. As rightly noted by Alain de Benoist, “in truth paganism never died”.<sup>2</sup> Tracing the “hidden” life of paganism from the era of late antiquity to the present day, he finally concludes: “The contemporary trend toward *pluralism* and *honoring one’s roots* itself contains finally, at least implicitly, a rejection of Christian equality and reductive universalism”.<sup>3</sup> He connects those searches with the nowadays decline of the Enlightenment ideology – its rationalism and positivism, optimistic belief in progress, the “grand narratives” dictate, etc. However, we see here, rather, a certain continuity with the Enlightenment, which recognized the very possibility of pluralism and the “rootedness” self-search (for example, in the natural movements of the heart, as Rousseau and Diderot), going beyond the Catholic universalism (both in the dogmatics and in the emancipation from the Pope’s power).

Significant is the fact that the cited above manifesto book by Benoist “On being a pagan” contains a very small amount of references to the thinkers of the Enlightenment, despite the fact that the name of the book is an allusion to the “Persian Letters” by Montesquieu.

We would like to indicate the common points of libertine-mostly-atheist Sade and the “politicizing” philosopher Benoist. First of all, Benoist postulates that modern paganism does not intersect with atheism and agnosticism, i.e., his initial attitude differs from that of Sade, who wanted to destroy religion as such. However, Sade allowed the confession of pagan

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<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon is described by Nietzsche in his “Beyond Good and Evil” (part 3, § 58) (Nietzsche, F. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. J. Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 51-53).

<sup>2</sup> Benoist, A. de. *On Being a Pagan*, trans. Jon Graham. Atlanta, GA: Ultra, 2004, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

cult, referring to the weakness of the human spirit, unable to abandon some chimeras.

Benoist deals with the idea of religion as a necessary “structure of consciousness” (with reference to Schopenhauer, Eliade, Régis Debray and Bataille within the same paragraph), but he also naturalizes this structure, saying that “the need for the sacred is a fundamental human need, in the same way as food or copulation (if there are those who prefer to do without either, then bully for them)”.<sup>1</sup> Sade could have answered here that as an atheist he preferred the latter two needs, although the sacred was not alien to him either – violence and sovereign will to destruction served in this capacity for him. It is the violence that had for Sade the status of the sacred and “was not conceived as opposed to the profane but rather encompassed the profane and gave it meaning”<sup>2</sup> – the meaning of being a victim of libertine.

Benoist writes: “A man needs faith or religion <...> as a ritual, as a universal soothing act, as participation in usual activities that create it”.<sup>3</sup> Sade would hardly have argued here, as long as he says, “we believe that religion is a need of the people, that it pacifies them”. This need makes him suggest introducing paganism, for a rationalist-philosopher would never neglect natural needs (even a need for creation and veneration of “chimeras”), because it would be the same as forbidding people to feed themselves or copulate. The only thing that Sade cannot allow human weakness (as a strict doctor limiting patients) is to profess Christianity, here he is adamant. Benoist speaks of the necessity to overcome the Jewish Christianity in the movement to the pagan origins, too.

We have already pointed out Sade’s irony in argument about the worship of Mars, Minerva and Hymen: he speaks about it seriously, but as a kind of masquerade, which was so characteristic of the “gallant century”. A fancy-dress ball should always be preceded by serious preparation, even if its participants act “as if”. Benoist also writes that modern paganism is primarily a symbolic immersion into the system of values, which is different from Jewish Christianity, and not a belief in the usual sense:

there is no need to ‘believe’ in Jupiter or Wotan – something that is no more ridiculous than believing in Yahweh however –to be a pagan. Contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> Benoist, A. de. *Op. cit.*, p. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24-25.

paganism does not consist of erecting altars to Apollo or reviving the worship of Odin. Instead it implies looking behind religion and <...> seeking for the 'mental equipment' that produced it, the *inner world* it reflects, and how the world it depicts is apprehended.<sup>1</sup>

Benoist's "paganism – Jewish Christianity" antithesis is based on their different understanding of relationship between God, world and man, which can be reduced to the antithesis of monism and dualism. Christianity dualistically opposes God to world (as the Creator and creature), resulting in the world's deprivation of divinity and freedom, while paganism sees the universe as a single animated entity and the soul of the world (and, through it, the world itself) as divine:

"The universe is the sole being and there cannot be any others. <...> The world is non-created; it is eternal and imperishable. <...> God only achieves and realizes himself by and in the world. ... The substance or essence of God is the same as that of the world".<sup>2</sup>

This statement would suit the author of "Philosophy in the Bedroom", because here the concept of God is completely dissolved in Nature.

And precisely because of its dualism, Christianity is seen by Benoist as a doctrine alienating the freedom of man, not allowing him to create. This alienation is concentrated in morality, which operates according to the abstract categories and is in no way connected with the world. Man has no his own measure and is not the measure himself, but he is being condemned according to Other's measure. So, with a nod to Nietzsche, Benoist declares that "the progression of Christian morality in history can also be read as a decline in energy".<sup>3</sup>

Of course, we do not claim to identify the positions of Benoist and Sade, but at the same time we would like to demonstrate that in the manifesto of "new intellectual paganism" some ideas of the Enlightenment are discernible: a categorical denial of creationism, consideration of the world from the monistic position, liberation of man from the acceptance of his sinfulness and weakness, in fact an attempt to give man the divine essence. Benoist thinks about the restoration of the pagan value system, freed from the distortions introduced by Christian morality, and this

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> Benoist, A. de. *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

inspired by Nietzsche attempt to see God “beyond good and evil”, without His moral guises, ultimately is nothing else but development of the Enlightenment’s thesis of man’s self-revelation according to his own nature, the development that finally came to deny its own origin.

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## ADORNO AND KIEFER ON THE DILEMMAS OF REPRESENTATION

Ștefan GAIE<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Adorno's famous statement "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" has aroused a series of controversies caused, as we will try to show in this paper, by being much misquoted and used out of the philosopher's context of thinking. Beginning from a proper understanding of these words, the present study aims to get a closer look at Anselm Kiefer's early creation in order to show that, for the philosopher and the artist, the stake is the same: questioning the post-Holocaust artistic representation.*

**Keywords:** *Holocaust, Theodor W. Adorno, Anselm Kiefer, art, representation.*

The words "Holocaust" and/or "Shoah" (both with a more than respectable age), are currently used to name an event which cannot find its place in the common lexicon of historical events, a singular event in history that creates a rupture in the linear flow of time between what it can be symbolically named pre-Auschwitz and post-Auschwitz. It is obvious, even today, that historians cope with real difficulties in approaching this event. The many debates around this subject, irrespective of the approach, obsessively return to the inevitable failure of representing its terrifying nature. Being perceived as a real black hole of history, Auschwitz also meant a black hole of language. Taking into consideration that we deal with *something* (the magnitude of the suffering to which the Jews were exposed in the extermination camps) that is "unimaginable" (the absolute alterity), this *something* seems to be beyond any representation (using conventional concepts). Since we are not able to imagine it, the only honest option is to give up representation. The champion of this radical iconoclasm appears to be the German philosopher Theodor W. Adorno. He was in fact the first who, from his American exile, approached the problem of the Holocaust from the perspective of the duty of imagination towards history, and his famous verdict – "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" – although seems definite, will transform overnight into a slogan and, like any slogan, will gradually lose its original meaning.

Let us begin by saying that the meaning of Adorno's statement is distorted by using it out of context. It was made in a text written in 1949

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and published in 1951: "In the open-air prison which the world is becoming, it is no longer so important to know what depends on what, such is the extent to which everything is one. All phenomena rigidify, become insignias of the absolute rule of that which is. (...) The more total society becomes, the greater the reification of the mind and the more paradoxical its effort to escape reification on its own. Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter. Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification, which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. Critical intelligence cannot be equal to this challenge as long as it confines itself to self-satisfied contemplation".<sup>1</sup> Before trying to understand what Adorno actually means with this extremely consistent fragment, it is important to remember that the German philosopher repeatedly reconsidered his words in the years to come. He did that not to withdraw it, as it might seem, but because he felt the need to make them clear, defending them against further misinterpretations. Thus, in a text published in 1961, he writes the following: "I do not want to soften my statement that it is barbaric to continue to write poetry after Auschwitz; it expresses, negatively, the impulse that animates committed literature. ... When it is turned into an image, however, for all its harshness and discordance it is as though the embarrassment one feels before the victims were being violated. The victims are turned into works of art, tossed out to be gobbled up by the world that did them in. The so-called artistic rendering of the naked physical pain of those who were beaten down with rifle butts contains, however distantly, the possibility that pleasure can be squeezed from it. The morality that forbids art to forget this for a second slides off into the abyss of its opposite. The aesthetic stylistic principle, and even the chorus' solemn prayer, make the unthinkable appear to have had some meaning; it becomes transfigured, something of its horror removed. By this alone an injustice is done the victims, yet no art that avoided the victims could stand

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<sup>1</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society", in *Prisms*, MIT Press, 1997, p. 34

up to the demands of justice".<sup>1</sup> And in his last work, *Negative Dialectics*, published in 1966: „Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living—especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. By way of atonement he will be plagued by dreams such as that he is no longer living at all, that he was sent to the ovens in 1944 and his whole existence since has been imaginary, an emanation of the insane wish of a man killed twenty years earlier”.<sup>2</sup>

We have largely reproduced these intensely debated fragments because they render very well both the difficulty and the stake of the problem of representation. It seems evident that what Adorno means is that to continue, after the Holocaust, to produce artistic works in the context of the same culture which made Auschwitz possible, means to take part in perpetuating this culture and make criticism impossible. Where is the credibility of the artistic creation, the same which emerged from the bosom of the same culture that gave birth to the Holocaust? In other words, the same culture that made Goethe and Rilke’s poetry possible, also gave birth to the language of the Final Solution. Even more, both of them “speak” the same language. It is impossible, Adorno thinks, to consider them separately for the simple fact that civilization is not isolated somewhere in a kingdom protected from barbarism. Consequently, Adorno does not speak only about the act itself of writing poetry, but rather about the tension between ethics and aesthetics, inherent in any artistic work that creates cultural values inside a society that generated the Holocaust. Representation becomes, in other words, rather a moral problem and less an aesthetic one. Writing poetry (and by extension, creating art) after Auschwitz cannot mean anything else but the rejection of traditional aesthetic values: harmony, consonance and even beauty. The greatest fear

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<sup>1</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Commitment”, in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, Columbia University Press, New York, 1992, pp. 87-88

<sup>2</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Routledge, London and New York, 2004, pp. 362-363

of the German philosopher appears to be that, by means of representation (of an implicit aestheticizing and stylization), specific poetic forms can be pervertedly perpetuated, forms which, not only do nothing but indirectly continue the Nazi barbarism, but also, something at least as serious, betrays the Holocaust victims, their suffering and the brutality of their death. Adorno insisted on the fact that Nazi art programatically targeted the aesthetic pleasure, claiming total adoration and discouraging intellectual distance. Today we know that the popular success of Nazism was possible due to a great extent to the complicity of artistic forms, that the Nazi monumental vision could not be brought to life without the "instruments" of film-making (Leni Riefensthal), architecture (Albert Speer) or sculpture (Arno Brecker). However, this complicity of the language of art represents a sign of its vulnerability. That is why Adorno is more than suspicious towards any tendency of aestheticization and pleads for a radical purification of language after the abuse it has been subdued to: "Art is true to the extent to which it is discordant and antagonistic in its language and in its whole essence ..."<sup>1</sup>, Adorno underlines. This is the reason why the German philosopher argues for an aesthetics that denies the false unity which dominates the society and is interested only in an art that succeeds in revealing the truth about the society. The consequence of this position is concisely uttered, among others, by Michael Kelly: "Art is judged in terms of how it either reveals (e.g., advanced art, such as the music of Schoenberg) or conceals (e.g., most, if not all, forms of mass art generated by Hollywood's culture industry) the objective truth of society".<sup>2</sup> And because "The spirit of artworks is not their meaning and not their intention, but rather their truth content, or, in other words, the truth that is revealed through them"<sup>3</sup>, the new aesthetic language will be defined through "two essential changes in the process of artistic (re)presentation: beauty disappears in front of the truth and this balance between what is true and what is real requires its imitation or expression not only in what it can be represented but also in what it cannot be represented".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis, 1999, p. 241

<sup>2</sup> Michael Kelly, *Iconoclasm in Aesthetics*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 70

<sup>3</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 284

<sup>4</sup> Alexis Nous, *Modernitatea*, Editura Paralela 45, Pitești, 2000 p. 112

Adorno's theory underlines mainly the aesthetic innovation. Following Hegel, Adorno reminds us that art has a much higher vocation than to merely offer entertainment, a moral improvement or a low criticism of some moral flaw. Further more, the role of art must be one that is radically critical, thus a negative one rather than positive: accepting pleasure in art means to be opened to the possibility of affirmation of the society where pleasant experiences are possible. Adorno's conclusion is that if art wants to be adequately critical, it has to be aesthetically radical, i.e. it needs to fight against its own tendency of affirmation. Art can do this only if it is formally negative or critical. The "formally negative" notion will be explained by Adorno in the sense that the work of art must internally undermine traditional aesthetic forms. Through its negativity, the work of art assures its authenticity and separates itself from the conventions of its time and genre. Adorno minimalizes conventions because, as social models of accepted artistic expression, they indirectly support the social status quo. The increase in reality contradictions evidentiates the form dissonances, pushing art evolution towards the point where the artist denies the fundament of the work of art. Consequently, only those works deserve to be named artistic which question their own formal structure.

Art has thus a mission after Auschwitz, yet a mission that does not target the aesthetic any longer but something more important: the truth. Adorno could not plead for the reduction to silence of poetry, for this would mean neither more nor less than the triumph of the National Socialism's barbarism; it would mean that Hitler was right when, in his speech held at Poznan on October 4th in front of the SS officers, he asserted that: "This (the extermination of the Jewish people) is an unwritten – never to be written – and yet glorious page in our history".<sup>1</sup> Therefore, representation has a vital mission for our memory; otherwise Auschwitz will become a reality that will never be admitted to have existed, a reality that will be erased, a memory that will be forgotten. That is why Adorno cannot plead for giving up representation. Consequently, his plead is for the awareness of the traps implied by representation.

Adorno's affirmation – "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" – is thus (and we assume here Lyn Hejinian's conclusion) true in two ways. It is true because what happened in Auschwitz has been and will stay

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<sup>1</sup> Apud Peter Lonerich, *Heinrich Himmler: A Life*, Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 689

incomprehensible and, consequently, “meaningless”, so that “All possibilities for meaning have been suspended or crushed”. It is also true in another sense, “not as a condemnation of the attempt “after Auschwitz” to write poetry but, on the contrary, as a challenge and behest to do so. (...) Poetry after Auschwitz must indeed be barbarian; it must be foreign to the cultures that produced atrocities. As a result, the poet must assume a barbarian position, taking a creative, analytic, and often oppositional stance, occupying (and being occupied by) foreignness – by the barbarism of strangeness”.<sup>1</sup> The most adequate understanding of Adorno’s famous saying would be therefore that which points out a tormenting dilemma: between becoming aware of the impossibility of testifying and the imperious necessity of doing it.

Beyond these nuances that seem to us more than necessary, it is certain that Adorno’s position will be the fundament of a real aesthetic ideology of silence, with powerful iconoclastic accents. We will find once again its echos in some of the most shuddering attempts of representing the Holocaust, beginning with Paul Celan’s poetry till Anselm Kiefer’s work or Claude Lanzmann’s documentary *Shoah*. This iconoclasm has dominated the debate inside the German (and not only) intellectual environment for many decades and, even today, it is far from a final ending.

The one who visually assumed this dilemma, probably more than any other contemporary artist, was the German artist Anselm Kiefer. This assumption, we aim to show as follows, has been obvious even since the beginning of his artistic career. Unique personality in the context of contemporary art, equally worshipped and controversial, Anselm Kiefer, born in 1945, is part of the so-called *Nachgeborenen* generation (term used to name the immediately post-war generation) whose artists and intellectuals were, as John C. Gilmour notices, “confronted by a questionable past and a future so threatening that it tends to create despair”.<sup>2</sup> In May 1945, Germany was defeated and deprived of any hope: physically devastated by the Allied bombing campaigns, with an infrastructure in a state of collapse, haunted by inflation, lacking food supplies and dealing with serious monetary problems. This was the context of *Stunde Null* (*Zero Hour*) when,

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<sup>1</sup> Lyn Hejinian, *The Language of Inquiry*, University of California Press, 2000, pp. 325-326

<sup>2</sup> John C. Gilmour, *Fire on Earth: Anselm Kiefer and the Postmodern World*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1990, p. XII

beyond the material disaster, the Germans had to cope with another terrifying reality: the end of the German sovereignty, that would divide the nation, both physically and politically, half of the country being subordinated to the Soviet Union and the other half being governed by the United States of America, Great Britain and France. The visual culture of the two sectors also reflected this separation, the differences being amplified by the tension of the upcoming Cold War. In 1949 East Germany was officially founded. Here artists followed the aesthetic program imposed by the USSR: a mixture between the aesthetics of the Marxist ideology and a formal realism. It was considered an antidote to the German cultural failure. In the same time, West Germany, mainly the dramatic outpost of the West Berlin, embraced abstraction as a “stylistic mark” of the capitalist winners and a symbol of artistic and political freedom. In this context, the success of the “New American Painting” exhibition was not surprising at all; it was held at the end of the 1950s by the Modern Art Museum in several carefully chosen European centres, among which Berlin, and had as follow up the imposition of the style and vision of the “School of New York”. These options on a formal plan can be viewed, as they actually were by some, not many, of the young German artists, as a symptom of “unrooting”. This fact must be understood within the context of the period between 1930 and 1940, which left beyond a longlasting trauma so that most postwar German artists, historians and critics considered the recovery of their national past a mission almost impossible to accomplish, due to the fact that the Nazi stigmata had infected Germany’s entire cultural heritage. Indeed, the Nazis confiscated, with very few exceptions, everything that represented the best of the German artistic tradition. Some periods or manifestations (for example xylography, as expression of the German Renaissance through the work of Dürer, assumed later by the Romantics and the Expressionists in order to sustain the stylistic unity of the German artistic identity) were selected by the National Socialists to serve nationalist propaganda. In the soon coming postwar period any reference to this past was immediately considered a tabu subject specifically because of these connections, so that the only option seemed to be that of abandoning the national past and identity. This was the reason why the German postwar society was marked by a real visual amnesia which had “perverted, abused, and sucked up whole territories of a German image-world, turning national iconic and literary

traditions into mere ornaments of power and thereby leaving post-1945 culture with a tabula rasa".<sup>1</sup>

The young Anselm Kiefer grew artistically in a period – the 1960s – when the German society began for the first time to seriously question the cultural trauma unleashed by the World War II. The politics of *Aufarbeitung* ("coming to terms with the past") becomes a constant preoccupation for the German cultural and political life. The necessity of such politics was first asserted by Adorno who, in 1959, published the influential essay "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" where he bitterly notes that the Germans not only stick to a shallow understanding of the Nazi past but, sadly enough, are deprived by the true desire to confront themselves with the distressing problems this past inevitably continues to raise. Revealing that, for most Germans "coming to terms with the past" represents the equivalent of "mastering the past" or "turning the page" by erasing the past from the memory, Adorno pleads for what he calls in a Freudian term "working through the past", a project that supposes approaching the past as a process in permanent development. Although it was not very well-received, Adorno's essay had the undeniable merit of pointing out the urgent need to find a "usable" past, to normalize the relation with history and come to terms with it. Starting with the 1960s, these themes will become part of Germany's cultural life under different forms, none of them fully satisfying, which will make the German culture be haunted by its past up to the present days.

What became more and more obvious in the 1960s was the fact that the idea of *Stunde Null*, meaning the German belief in a new postwar chapter, was an illusion, even a very dangerous one. It took Germans almost two decades to understand and accept that Germany's postwar history reports, directly or indirectly, back to prewar and wartime Germany. Accepting this reality was an extremely painful experience reflected by the country's entire cultural life of the last half of the century. An important role in making these debates more intense was held by the students' riots from 1968, which launched a series of events centred on the

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas Huyssen, A., 1989. "Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth", in *October*, 48, 1989, p.34

<sup>2</sup> Theodor Adorno, "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?", in *Bitburg In Moral and Political Perspective*, ed. Geoffrey Hartman, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986, p. 113

unsatisfying conditions in the German universities but which in fact turned very shortly into a critique of the materialism in the German society. The students raised the problem of the “German guilt” in what it would be called the “Germans-as-penetrators” debate, questioning more and more the amnesia of their parents and grandparents regarding the Nazi past and the horrors caused by the Holocaust. “Daddy, what did you do in the war?” becomes the most frequently asked question, a painful one that opens those deep wounds that seemed to be forever closed.

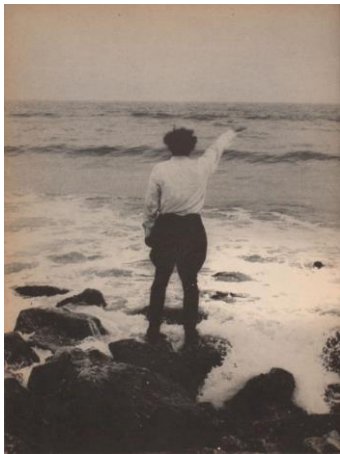
This is, in short, the context in which Kiefer, still a student, creates the *Besetzungen (Occupations)* cycle, a series of black and white photographs which present the artist dressed in his father’s military uniform and performing the Nazi salute (*Heil Hitler!*) in different symbolical places for the European history (like the Colosseum in Rome or in front of the Louis XIV statue in Montpellier) or in natural contexts (in Switzerland, France or Italy). They were exhibited for the first time in 1969, along with a series of paintings of the same subject, entitled *Heroic Symbols (Heroische Sinnbilder)*, as part of the Academy of Fine Arts graduation exhibition in Karlsruhe. The works were welcomed with hostility by the specialists so that the artist did not exhibit them any time later. Only in 1975 the extremely influent Cologne-based art magazine *Interfunktionen*, coordinated by art critic Benjamin Buchloch, published in issue twelve in the form of a photo-essay, 18 black and white photographs from this series, raising a vivid controversy that led to the closure of the magazine. It was not accidentally that the photo that closes the series presents Kiefer, his gaze turned outward, in a romantic posture that reminds us of Caspar David Friedrich’s well-known painting *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, performing the same salute headed, this time, towards the immensity of the sea. A simple visual inspection reveals the striking resemblance between the two works. The cliffs that the two characters stand on (Kiefer and the traveller, who could be Friedrich himself), Kiefer’s sea and Friedrich’s foggy sea, both are romantic symbols of the human soul and its endless torment. Kiefer uses this representative image of the human back in order to add also the symbolism of this motive which hides both the “burden of the *being here sin*” as well as the doubt and discouragement that constituted the base of Kiefer’s artistic approaches, motivated by the question whether a post Holocaust German art is still possible or not. Caspar David Friedrich’s work was also the object of this “infection” since it had been associated with nationalist interpretations like *Blut und Boden* (Blood and Earth) by the



Nazi ideology. The stigmata of this unfortunate association labelled Friedrich's work until 1974, when he was acknowledged by art historian Werner Hofmann as an artist of great value of the German Romanticism and universal art. In conclusion, in 1969 when Kiefer achieved *Occupations*, Friedrich's painting was still, more or less, part of the postwar cultural prohibition. We could go further on to refer to a certain identification between Friedrich's man with his back turned and that of Kiefer: both wear the Nazi "markings", understood as the consequence of the German thinking, extended to the whole sphere of culture just like the original sin.



Anselm Kiefer, *Occupations*, 1969



Anselm Kiefer, *Occupations*, 1969



Caspar David Friedrich, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, 1818

Let us first remark the violence and aggressivity of the project, both symbolic and assertive, that will not meet any correspondent in Kiefer's later works. The artist bluntly violates what is probably the clearest taboo with reference to the Nazi salute, which has in fact been forbidden in Germany up to the present day. There are three possible explanations for this violence. Firstly, we should not forget that Kiefer was only 24 years old and in search for his own creative path. He firmly rejected the artistic models that German art had been more or less forced to accept between 1950-1960. The way young Kiefer chose to follow was that of rebellion and affinity with the realities that his generation was confronted with. It is clear that he was searching for some landmarks. He found them among the German Expressionists, a fact reflected by his later work. Rebellion was not anything new in Germany; although almost four decades had passed from the 1930s period, figures like Emil Nolde, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Otto Dix were still eloquent examples: they remained faithful to the Expressionist art, even after having been declared "volkswidrig" (people's enemy) within a resistance with strong cultural valences: the stake was to defend the German autonomy and the freedom of art. Among the contemporaries, probably the only reference was the artist Joseph Beuys, charismatic figure, extremely popular among young artists. Kiefer took to him while Beuys was professor at the Staatliche Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. Beuys transposed in his unconventional works a powerfully personalized history and mythology. His entire work is a "memory" of his life experience in the Second World War: shot during the Crimean conflict (he participated as a radio operator); his nearly frozen body was found by the members of a Tatar nomadic tribe who gave him shelter inside their warm tent, heated his body with felt and fat and fed him with cheese, milk and fat. These experiences marked Beuys' work and, back to his country, he wanted to "rehumanize" postwar art and life. His works define the concept of art as "social sculpture", resulted from a creative process that mediates both art production and social evolution. Secondly, the *Occupations* cycle *had to* be radical, *had to* cause scandal since this was the only way to raise attention and stimulate debates in a time when the German society was not ready for such things. Thirdly and most importantly, the violence in Kiefer's works must be understood within the context of Adorno's "coming to terms with the past", an idea becoming more and more present in the context of the students' riots in 1968. It is important to highlight the fact that Kiefer understood the "coming to terms with the past" in a very

different way from his generation fellows. The intense debate generated around the cultural trauma caused by World War II around the Germans' "collective guilt", tends to turn into a battle between generations, the generation of the "parents" being urged to assume responsibility while the generation of the "children" seems to proclaim its innocence. This is where Kiefer parts with his young colleagues. He simply refuses to detach from the murders committed by the Third Reich and declare his innocence. It would have been much too easy. Kiefer notices that what the young German students try to do is nothing more than to proclaim another type of "zero hour", a new beginning for which it would be necessary and *enough* for parents to assume their responsibility. That would be sufficient to build a new Germany. Yet Kiefer clearly refuses to throw the responsibility on parents, a comfortable position chosen by his young mates. Assuming the errors of the past is necessary, yet it has a different meaning for Kiefer. His place in the history of contemporary art is tightly connected to the way he chose to confront his own identity, and later the identity of his country (and its history and culture) with the historical truth.

It is therefore important to observe that with Kiefer, there are two ways of assuming responsibility: one is ontic-individual and the other is cultural-historical. These two ways – and here we must seek for the profound originality of his *Occupations* photographs – cannot be conceived one without the other. The artist justified the reason for using his own body in the *Occupations* series with his urge to understand how Nazism was possible and he finally understood only when, like an actor, he played this role. His explanation is thrillingly sincere: "At least theoretically, I count among the perpetrators, because today I simply cannot know what I would have done then. Anything is possible with people. Thus my dismay".<sup>1</sup> The resulting images represent an attempt to give direct and outright expression to the sense of insanity and violence of history personified by Nazism. Assuming the Nazi "carcass" and "occupying" varied European spaces, Kiefer wants to get as close as possible to that experience, eager to explore and reveal it, the very same experience his fellow countrymen wanted to repress. The way Kiefer devotes himself in this process is much more personal; from his perspective, guilt does not belong only to parents and grandparents and Germans in general, it belongs to him as a German and as an individual.

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<sup>1</sup> Germano Celant, *Anselm Kiefer*, Skira, Milano, 2007, p. 183.

The Holocaust generated numerous critical debates related to the psychology of memory, especially the aspect of trauma. An interesting model is represented by *postmemory*, theoreticized by Marianne Hirsch in order to describe the answers given by the second generation to the trauma suffered by the first generation. Although it refers to the descendants of the victims, Hirsch's conclusions can be applied to the descendants of the executioners and even the entire postwar generation, to which Kiefer belongs too. What Hirsch very convincingly argues<sup>1</sup> is that postmemory constitutes a form of very powerful memory due mainly to the fact that the connection with the object or its source is mediated not through remembrance but through a process of imaginative investment. Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who are brought up in an environment dominated by narratives that precede their birth. That is why Kiefer appears like a victim of postmemory, haunted by the national-socialist imaginary: "Forgetting is quick to come. Such a thing must not be forgotten. National Socialism simply cannot be forgotten. Something so profoundly ignoble and evil to have taken such measures cannot be forgotten. When I'm alone in my office at night and the doorbell suddenly rings, I always think of the Gestapo. It is monstrous to imagine that at any time in the night someone can come into your room and take you away. Of course, I didn't experience it firsthand; I have only experienced it 'so-to-speak'. After that it can't be forgotten".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to *seem* to constitute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus not actually mediated by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation. To grow up with such overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one's birth or one's consciousness, is to risk having one's own stories and experiences displaced, even evacuated, by those of a previous generation. It is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension. These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present. This is, I believe, the experience of postmemory and the process of its generation." (Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory", in *Poetics Today*, 29:1, Spring 2008, pp. 106-107)

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, p. 472

Is therefore “right” to write poetry and create art on such a catastrophic topic as the Holocaust? We have seen that Adorno admits the fundamental importance of the image, only that he is also aware of the dangers it implies. As for Kiefer, his entire works reflect the conviction that his representations and images will never succeed in truly seizing the profoundness of the Jewish people’s trauma, even less to exorcize the corresponding German guilt. He explicitly states it in a conference held in Jerusalem in 1990: “The image will be a failure, but even in failure it will shed some sort of light on the immensity . . . of what it is never able to accomplish”.<sup>1</sup> In other words, despite his iconoclasm, Kiefer is constrained to try; he is aware that he creates an art which is meant to failure and this is the reason why we could say that he persists in having a dialogue with both Adorno and Himmler.

We have tried to argue the fact that, for the German artist, the aesthetic, with everything it implies, is no longer a stake; on the contrary, the artist is interested in *understanding*, therefore in *knowledge*, and this knowledge supposes the *assumption*, and therefore *truth* is his main concern. Kiefer’s tormenting dilemma, reflected by the *Occupations* series and most of his later works, is probably best rendered by one of the Holocaust survivors, the writer Primo Levi: “Perhaps one cannot, what is more one must not, understand what happened, because to understand is to justify... If understanding is impossible, knowing is imperative, because what happened could happen again”.<sup>2</sup> However, in order to “know”, French art historian Georges Didi-Huberman remarks, no matter how painful it is, “we must *imagine* for ourselves”<sup>3</sup> for the simple fact that images are “instants of truth”.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Apud Daniel Arasse, *Anselm Kiefer*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 2001, p. 286

<sup>2</sup> Primo Levi, *The Truce*, Abacus Books, London, 1987, pp.395-396

<sup>3</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*, The University of Chicago Press, 2008, p. 3

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 31

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# IDENTITY: A NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** *We discuss here two criteria of personal identity in the analytical tradition (the physical continuity criterion and the psychological continuity criterion) pointing out that pursuing them leads us to an unexpected conclusion, namely, that we can dispense with the concept of personal identity altogether (Parfit's Impersonality Thesis).*

*As a way out, we pursue Paul Ricoeur's take on the subject (i.e., narrative identity), pointing out its advantages over the traditional views on personal identity.*

**Keywords:** *personal identity, impersonality thesis, narrative identity, character, fiction, history.*

## I. Introduction

The question of personal identity deals, basically, with issues of continuity (physical or psychological or both) through time. The Anglo-Saxon analytical tradition usually tries to find *what* is the self. In other words, *what* makes me today to be the same as yesterday? *What* is that which accounts for personal identity?

Traditionally, attempts to answer this question build up on the mind-body split. Here, there are two possibilities: that which accounts for personal identity is to be found in the realm of the body (which entitles physical continuity through time) or in the realm of the mind (psychological continuity through time).

## II. Physical Continuity

The principle of physical continuity says that what is necessary for personal identity is to have bodily continuity through time. Not a continuity of the whole body, however, but the continuity of enough of the brain to make it the brain of a living person. As Derek Parfit puts it in *Reasons and Persons*: X today is one and the same person as Y at some past time if and only if enough of Y's brain continued to exist, and is now X's brain and the physical continuity has not taken a "branching form". (Parfit 1984, 204) To prove this statement, philosophers often use the teleportation example, which is, as Gary Fuller puts it, a key example:

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The problem of personal identity over time, like many other philosophical problems, is driven by key examples. Teleportation is such an example. It is the center of the dispute between the main competitor theories of personal identity: the psychological theory and the physical theory. (Fuller 1995, 61)

What is the teleportation experiment? Very shortly put, it involves a human person who travels from point A to point B and a machine that can record the state of all the cells in the body of this person and send the information to another machine at the destination point where, finally, the process is reversed and the body is recreated. The question now is the following: is this latter entity the same human entity we were talking about at the beginning of the experiment?

One possible answer is to say that one can "survive" (where survive means exactly this: "to continue to live after or in spite of...") this experiment. The argument used in this case is based on an analogy between teleportation and having artificial eyes. According to Parfit (1984, 205), the processes involved in seeing and in personal surviving are analogous. What is required, inasmuch as seeing is concerned, is a causal relation between stimuli and visual experience, but that relation can be performed by any causal mechanism (it can be an artificial eye, it can be an electrical stimulus produced by a computer, etc.).

Similarly, in order for one to survive, what is required is there to be a psychological continuity between the (person) P at t1 and P at t2 and since for Parfit psychological continuity does require causation this relation of psychological continuity can also be supported by any causal mechanism. Normally, it should be supported by the persistence of the brain, but brain persistence as such is not needed: teleportation-like mechanisms will do just as well. Now, to come back to the teleportation experiment, Parfit's idea was that if you are split into two, perhaps by means of your original brain being split and the resulting halves being housed in new brainless bodies, then neither of the two resulting persons will be identical to you. They cannot be because of the violation of the transitivity of identity. Nevertheless, according to Parfit, each of the resulting branches is a survivor of you. Survival is not as bad as death, and may be almost as good as identity. Survival, as Parfit puts it, does "matter". The question about teleportation, then breaks up into two questions, a more specific one about identity and a general one about survival: is the "replica" on the planet



identical to you? And is this "replica" at least a survivor of you? (Fuller 1995, 62)

Thus, one can say that in teleportation we do not have a real means of transportation but a very strange way of dying. You are in the booth, you press the red button and you are destroyed as a human person. You are no longer a person but a set of data which is preserved in an artificial memory. The other entity that is reproduced when the process is reversed, can no longer be you but a Replica of you. What does this mean? Suppose there is something going wrong with the machine at the time of teleportation. The moment you press the button you are "scanned" but this time you are not "destroyed", you are left intact. Suddenly you exist both on B, where you have been "re-produced", and on A, where you have not been annihilated. The person on B and the person on A are, obviously, not numerically identical. One of them is the Replica of the other but both would hold that they are identical. However, from that moment on, both beings would start to have their own experiences, history, etc. and both would claim they are identical with the person who stepped into the teleportation machine. But this cannot be logically true.

Not having bodily continuity seems to be therefore a serious obstacle in preserving personal identity. But is it enough? The supporters of the physical criterion realize the fact that one needs indeed psychological continuity too but this should not be a very important factor since one cannot have psychological continuity without enough brain to be the brain of a living person, and therefore, one cannot have psychological continuity without a bodily continuity.

### **III. Psychological Continuity**

The other view, that of psychological continuity through time, claims that X today is one and the same person as Y at some past time if and only if X is psychologically continuous with Y, this continuity has the right kind of cause, and it has not taken the "branching" form (Parfit 1984, 207). The psychological continuity theories claim that persons' identification with themselves as psychological subjects is more primitive and powerful than their identification with their physical selves. When I say "I" and I think of myself as a person, I do not make any references to a physical body but to a subject and this subject must continue if the person is to continue to exist.

However, while it may seem compelling to say that personal identity is constituted by sameness of the psychological subject, it is not obvious

what it means to say that a subject persists through time. A subject is not to be thought of as an object.

A subject is not a brain, not a body, not even an immaterial soul; and it is only insofar as it is none of these things that a psychologically based view of personal identity has the appeal it does. This means, however that a psychological subject cannot persist through time in the same way substances do: and so it is not clear what is asserted by the claim that psychological continuation makes a person at time  $t_2$  the same person at time  $t_1$ . (Schechtman 1994, 201)

It seems that, the psychological view considers our identity through time as consisting in a relation. Most often, this relation was taken to be "memory" and as often, it has been showed the difficulties to which it leads. Berkeley, Reid and Butler, just to name a few, made their case by underlying the fact that memory continuity is not transitive, whereas identity is. If X and Y are identical and Y and Z are identical, then X and Z are identical. This does not imply, however, that the memories of X and Z are identical.

Another difficulty springs from an ill application of the theory: if I remember something I did, it implies that I am the same as the one who did what I remember. Unfortunately, this does not tell me anything about "who is who". I would not be able to make a difference between the I who remembered this or that and the I who did this or that, but this does not tell me anything about the I as such. Saying that I am "the person whose experiences I can remember" is uninformative.

Last but not least, an obviously problematic situation is the lack of memory during sleep. Following this criterion (psychological continuity), it cannot be possible that "I am the one who slept in my bed last night".

A better way forward appeals to the notion of causal dependence (Shoemaker 1984, 89ff.). A being at a later time is psychologically connected with someone who exists at an earlier time if the latter being has the psychological features she has at the later time in large part because the earlier being had the psychological features she had at the earlier time. A current memory of a past experience is one sort of psychological connection, but there are others. I inherited most of my current beliefs and personality traits from the man who slept in my bed last night. You are psychologically continuous with some past or future being if your current mental features relate to those she has then by a chain of psychological connections. Then we can say that a person who exists at one time is identical with something existing at another time if and only if the former is, at the former time,

psychologically continuous with the latter as she is at the latter time. (Olson 2004)

Although this suggestion might seem to give a better answer, it still leaves enough room for "difficult" possibilities. For example, let us say that it would be possible to electronically copy and save a set of mental states as well as clearing up the entire content of a brain. In this case, inheriting mental properties would still be possible: a sort of "brain-state transfer" in guise of data-transfer. How are we to answer the identity question in this case? Although the psychological criterion "feels" closer to genuine personal experiences, it does not bring us very far in an attempt to clarify the issue of personal identity.

These are, shortly put, the claims of the two branches of the dichotomy. However, the arguments they bring, although mind-boggling and interesting, fail to win their case.

#### **IV. Parfit's "Unimportance of Being Person"**

But what if they would work? What if one day we find out that one of these criteria (Physical or Psychological) is the right one, namely, that physical or psychological continuity through time is actually what is important in our quest to answer the identity question? Well, what is surprising is that we do not really need the concept of personal identity. This puzzling conclusion has been formulated by Derek Parfit in his book on *Reasons and Persons*, under the title of "Impersonality Thesis". The central claim of the Impersonality Thesis is that all reference to persons is eliminable in favor of reference to bodies and experiences: shortly put, reality can be *completely* and *impersonally* described.

What Parfit has in mind when he says this is the fact that a person's identity over time consists in holding certain, more particular facts. These facts can be described without either presupposing the identity of a person, or claiming explicitly that the experiences which a person has are had by "this particular person", or even explicitly claiming that "this particular person exists". Or, to put it in another way, although we can assume that persons exist, we could still manage to give a complete description of the world, without claiming that persons exist. In Parfit's own words: "Even when we have no answer to a question about personal identity, we can know everything about what happens". (Parfit 1984, 266) We can talk about

our selves through time without having to assume identity. Instead we can think in terms of *continuity* and *degrees of connectivity* between our selves.

Parfit's endeavor shows that the idea of a dividing self is possible. If the division of the self is logically possible (i.e., does not violate any basic classical logical principle), then the continuity of the self through time should not be conceived as personal "identity". The resulting "selves" of an original self would have a relation of continuity without identity joined to it. These selves would be *survivors* of the original self. Although being different from their ancestor, they would preserve their psychological continuity through time. This continuity between the original self and its descendants would be a question of degree and not, as we would expect, of all-or-nothing. A descendant self could have more or less continuity with its ancestral self, depending on the case. Using brain fission and fusion cases, Parfit shows that continuity is given in degrees, not according to the *tertium non datur* principle.

According to Parfit, we do not have to suppose the fact that the self is an entity beyond its bodily and psychological continuity. We can logically operate with the idea of the self in descendant and future selves. This division of the self can be conventional and we do not necessarily need to say that we are today identical with who we were when we were a child. We can thus make sense of the phenomenon of ageing (by which we feel only continuity in greater or lesser degree with our past selves) but not identity. We do not have, therefore, to be perplexed with the issue "Is my current self identical to my past self?" and we do not have to answer this question according to the *tertium non datur* principle: yes or no. We can answer - more or less...

To sum up, Parfit's solution questions the use of the logic of identity as a method in the analysis of personal continuity through time. Parfit aims at undermining three common beliefs about personal identity through time which we generally tend to hold as important but which, he considers are false.

The first belief is that in order to solve the problem of personal identity it is necessary to find a "core of permanence", a something which continues to be identical throughout one's life, regardless of the changes one goes through (physical or psychological changes, that is).

Then, the second false belief is our perseverance in thinking that such a "core of permanence" is to be found: after experiments, language adjustments, concepts reformulation, etc. we are going to be left with

something and that something should be the "answer to the most important question that there is".

The third belief is that having an answer to this question is important because we want to know what happens to us, we want to know how to protect ourselves from pain and how to increase our well-being. We are troubled as long as we do not have a clear, graspable idea of this "core of permanence". However, if we consider the "survival" cases and the thought experiments mentioned by Parfit, we should realize that such worries are unimportant. The conclusion Parfit draws from the undecidability of the puzzling cases is that the question posed was itself empty. If one holds that identity means sameness, that there is "something" that continues to be the same over time and that we can pinpoint that "something" out, then this conclusion is irresistible. Should we then give up in our attempt to provide an objective, scientific description in favor of something which is inherently subjective when it comes to personal identity?

#### **V. Language as Another Criterion?**

Is there perhaps another criterion for distinguishing personal identity? There have been positions which emphasize the importance of language, not only as an epistemological criterion for personal identity but also as an ontological criterion. To understand this, we should consider two opinions on the matter, both coming from the field of linguistics. The first one belongs to Saussure, the second, to Benveniste.

In his *Cours de linguistique générale*, Saussure sets on investigating the identity of things as it appears from a linguistic perspective. He takes as examples, a train traveling once a day at 8:45 in the evening, on the route Geneva – Paris, and a street which is demolished and then rebuilt.

Ainsi nous parlons d'identité a propos de deux express "Genève-Paris 8 h 45 du soir" qui partent à vingt-quatre heures d'intervalle. À nos yeux, c'est le même express, et pourtant probablement locomotive, wagons, personnel, tout est différent. Ou bien si une rue est démolie, puis rebâtie, nous disons que c'est la même rue, alors que matériellement il ne subsiste peut-être rien de l'ancienne. Pourquoi peu-on reconstruire une rue de fond en comble sans qu'elle cesse d'être la même? (Saussure 1916, 151)

What makes us say that the train is the same and that the street is the same? Obviously, they are made up of different parts, but they still are named to be the same. How is it then possible that we speak of the same things

although they underwent such radical changes? The answer Saussure gives is as follows:

Parce que l'entité qu'elle constitue n'est pas purement matérielle; elle est fondé sur certaines conditions auxquelles sa matière occasionnelle est étrangère, par exemple sa situation relativement aux autres; pareillement, ce qui fait l'express, c'est l'heure de son départ, son itinéraire et en général toutes les circonstances qui le distinguent des autres express. Toutes les fois que les mêmes conditions sont réalisées, on obtient les mêmes entités. Et pourtant, celles-ci ne sont pas abstraites puisqu'une rue ou un express ne se conçoivent pas en dehors d'une réalisation matérielle. Opposons aux cas précédent celui – tout différent – d'un habit qui m'aurait été volé et que je retrouve à l'étalage d'un fripier. Il s'agit là d'une entité matérielle, qui réside uniquement dans la substance inerte, le drap, les doublures, les parements, etc. Un autre habit, si semblable soit-il au premier, ne sera pas le mien. Mais l'identité linguistique n'est pas celle de l'habit, c'est celle de l'express et de la rue. (Saussure 1916, 151-152)

We can see now that Saussure distinguishes between things which need a physical continuity through time to be the same (the dress coat) and things for which this physical identity is no longer essential. Linguistic identity and, with it, a new identity criterion appear thus on the scene. Saussure considers that this sort of identity stems out of the linguistic value or role a certain object plays in a real context. This linguistic value does not have only a linguistic dimension but, above all, a pragmatic dimension (for example, a chess piece which is replaced by another piece during a match).

Another linguist, Émile Benveniste, while analysing the role of language as a communication instrument, claims that language has the propriety of constituting someone as *subject*, a subjectivity which is determined by the linguistic status of the person.

C'est dans et par le langage que l'homme se constitue comme sujet; parce que le langage seul fonde en réalité, dans sa réalité qui est celle de l'être, le concept d'"ego". [...] C'est cette condition de dialogue qui est constitutive de la personne, car elle implique en réciprocité que je deviens tu dans l'allocation de celui qui à son tour se désigne par je. (Benveniste 1974, 259-260)

Following Benveniste, we would have to notice that language establishes the concept of subject not only within its own dimension (linguistically) but within the realm of being as well. Benveniste points out that the "I" marks the linguistic condition for subjectivity. It is and stays an "empty signifier"

until the moment of discourse, when it becomes "full". One would not be able to understand "I leave tomorrow" without knowing who is the "I" and when the sentence is uttered. The "I" is not only the narrating subject; it is also the subject of the narration. In discourse, the speaking subject stands then at the crossroad between these two perspectives.

## VI. The narrative alternative

A narrative alternative in the discussion on personal identity tries to find a solution not by answering to the obsessive question "What?" but to another one, which changes the whole perspective, namely: "Who?"

The "technological" thought experiments are replaced now with literary fictions which allow us to grasp the subject of the "story" as a subject integrated in social life, interacting with others, living their life with all its projects. Literary fictions have a broader view, and integrate much more than they exclude (the more choices there are, the more chances we have to find something). Let us see how the concept of narrative fits into the analysis of personal identity.

Our inquiry follows the ideas of French philosopher Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur's preoccupations with the idea of narrative identity go back to his *Time and Narrative* trilogy. This work focuses, among other issues, on showing that human time is registered through narratives. Time, in the sense physics considers it, is regulated by the movement of the stars and this movement is measured by us with the help of mechanical devices. The lived time, time as we human beings perceive it, is the time of consciousness. The mediator between these two forms of time (lived and cosmic) is represented by a linguistic construction: by narratives. Narratives can either be fictions (which depart from reality but present themselves as works of imagination) or historical (which are based on documents and aspire at being objective). But both history and fiction go hand in hand, they influence each other, they "concretize their respective intentionalities only by borrowing from the intentionality of the other". (Ricoeur 1988, 181)

Fiction and history are intertwined, they change places and overlap and thus "the standing-for the past in history is united with the imaginative variations of fiction". (Ricoeur 1988, 192)

Now, by uniting fiction and history, Ricoeur claims that we can reach an interesting conclusion, namely, we can assign to an individual or to a community a particular kind of identity: a narrative identity. How does this

work? We know that stories are expressions of people's actions and sufferings. When we ask Who is the author of this or that action, Who did this or that, we are usually given a proper name as an answer and this name does not fail to always designate the same person. But then, Ricoeur asks, what is the basis for the permanence of this proper name? "What justifies our taking the subject of an action, so designated by his, her, or its proper name, as the same throughout a life that stretches from birth to death?" (Ricoeur 1988, 246) The only possible answer is none other than – narratives. Without the narrative dimension, we would not be able to meet the actor of an action. The identity of the actor, of the "Who" has to be a narrative identity. Let us take a more detailed look at this concept and try to understand what exactly does it mean. In order to do this, we will try to point out what Ricoeur understands with the words "narrative" and "identity". The idea of narrative comes from Aristotle's *mimesis*. Ricoeur considers it to be a three-layered concept. Then, the analysis of identity takes into account the struggles through which analytical philosophy had to go through (to no avail) and steers the investigation on a different ground. He distinguishes between *same* and *self* and takes them as two different concepts which can very easily be mistakenly taken one for another.

## VII. Narratives

In *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur takes up Aristotle's analysis of imitation (*mimesis*) from *Poetics* and points out that there are three levels on which it can be considered. Shortly put, for Aristotle, composition (*mythos*) means both fable (in the sense of imaginary story) and plot (in the sense of a well constructed history). The term *mimesis* is taken normally to point to a "description of the relation between the words of a literary work and the actions and events they recount". (Most 1998)

Let us see how Ricoeur understands the three-layered concept of *mimesis*. *Mimesis 1* refers to the events in the world, events which are imitated and about which the story is to be told. The world as such cannot be determined by things as beginnings, middles and ends the same way narratives are. However, Ricoeur considers, the world is "pre-narratively" organized in structural, symbolical and temporal dimensions. What does this mean?

To say that the world is structurally pre-narrative amounts to say that, inasmuch as emplotment is concerned, all intentional actions have the



potential of being narrated, of being set in a story which would show why an actor acted in a specific way. Thus any action is part of a certain net of action-concepts like "agent", "aim", "context", "reasons" (as in motives), etc. although not all actions make it to the point where they are explained as a "full-fledged narrative", not all actions are "assembled" into a story.

Further, actions are "readable items": the others are able not only to see what I do but they can also understand what I do because actions incorporate signs, rules and norms which are openly accessible. The others then would be able to qualify my actions, to appreciate them as good or bad, etc. Moreover, they will be able to understand my actions without me explaining them, narrating them. Without symbolic mediation this would not be possible.

Now, from a temporal dimension, we should mention that actions are oriented both towards the future (because they are a project, an intention) and towards the past (from which they receive their force as motivation). So much for the first level of mimesis. It applies thus to the events in the world, a world which has a "pre-narrative" structure.

Mimesis 2, is the actual "configuration" of events into a story. "In short", writes Ricoeur, "emplotment is the operation that draws a configuration out of a simple succession. [...] Emplotment transforms the events or incidents into a story". (Ricoeur 1984, 65) To put this in relation to the pre-narrative elements mentioned above, we should say that Ricoeur underlines the fact that the plot itself is, in this case, the creation of the author. If on the level of mimesis 1 we had to do with the idea of "a story not yet told", on this level we have to understand that "narrating, following and understanding stories, is nothing but the continuation of such untold stories". (Ricoeur 1991b, 435)

Mimesis 3 is the place where the world of the text and that of the hearer and reader intersect, through the act of reading. At this stage, mimesis 3 is the appropriation of mimesis 2 by the world of the readers. Narratives are built on what daily life has to offer but these stories, in turn, come back in the public sphere and thus reconfigure the daily life. This is why we should conceive life as being a very complex "web" of narratives which emplot actions as well as experiences (as varied as they may be) and speech as well. Then, these actions and experiences, once emplotted, return to life and influence it as we read and go through the process of self-understanding.

Thus, while Ricoeur states that the making of a story is both an organisation of events into a story with a plot (mythos) and an "imitation of an action" (mimesis), Ricoeur does not equate mythos with mimesis as Aristotle does. Mimesis contains more than the emplotment, more than the level of mimesis<sup>2</sup>. Mimesis consists also of a reference to the world of action (mimesis<sup>1</sup>), and to the event of reading (mimesis<sup>3</sup>). In one sense, the structure is completed only when the reader reads the text. Reading always takes place in the context of the pre-understandings of the reader, and thus mimesis<sup>3</sup> contains a reference to the world of the reader as well. (Laitinen, 2002)

To sum up, narratives, that is "emplotted narratives", have the power to organize seemingly disparate events into coherent wholes. They bring comprehension into a world which has the potential and is constantly being narrated. Events which might seem not to "follow", things which might seem unexpected receive, through narratives, a "readable" dimension: they become part of a coherent story. "The unity of a human life is the unity of a quest which has to be narrated", said MacIntyre. Ricoeur brings in a finer perspective. For him, a narrated life is the play between concord and discord and subjectivity is to be found somewhere between an immutable and unchangeable substance and a bundle of "incoherent successions". Only narratives have the necessary dynamism to create such kind of identity.

Thus, narratives give us a "representation" of the unity of a life with its ups and downs, with its expectedness and unexpectedness, with its observable and non-observable past, etc. This kind of rendering is to be found in the area of historiography as well as in fictions. Here we have the chance to meet with characters, follow their actions and learn from them. But this is not all: there are also the identity-narratives which intervene in the discussion about temporal persistence. We can have, Ricoeur considers, temporal persistence which is based on the enduring features of our character and temporal persistence which is based on the deliberate decisions we take to attest to our self-constancy. Through "character" Ricoeur designates that extent of our identity which changes at a very slow pace and cannot be easily re-affirmed. On the other hand, *keeping one's word* designates that which falls under our own voluntary "administration". The role of narratives is now obvious since, Ricoeur considers, they mediate between these two poles, they span between *character* and *keeping one's word*.

### VIII. Identity

Ricoeur draws attention to a very important process of which we should be aware when we talk about identity: "individualization". With individualization we attempt to designate one and only one specimen in a class. We individualize with the help of operators: proper names (as "Wittgenstein", for example), or definite descriptions ("the man who created the first computer mouse"), or we use indicators ("here", "now", "you", "I"). Now, the "I" and "you" operators are also *deictic* terms: they are capable of proof, as their name suggests (*deiktos* / *dicere* – capable of proof) and they also refer back to their own utterance which is "an event in the world". There is, in the whole universe, only one being capable of saying "I" and by doing that, of designating me.

At this point, the discussion is set around three important concepts: identifying reference, identity of ascription and identical ascriptions. Although it might not look like they differ too much, they circumscribe the whole research area when it comes to the "primitive concept of person".

With the concept of *identifying reference* Ricoeur means that the notion of person is determined by making use of the predicates that are ascribed to it. This way, Ricoeur inserts the theory of person within the theory of predication applied to logical subjects.

This is the great strength of the approach to the person by way of identifying reference. It is now important to stress, however, that the question of the self continues to be hidden to the extent that the ascription of these predicates to the person carries with it no specific character to distinguish it from the common process of attribution [...] Ascribing is what is done by anyone, by each one, in relation to anyone, each one, etc. (Ricoeur 1992, 35)

Within this dimension, talking about persons is not different than talking about logical subjects due to the similar way of using predicates.

Now, with the idea of *identity of ascription* what is emphasized is that to the concept of person one can ascribe two different kinds of predicates – physical predicates (which the persons share with the bodies) and mental predicates (which distinguish them from bodies).

The major advantage of this identity of ascription is [...] that it eliminates, through a simple analysis of the grammar of our discourse on the person, the hypothesis of a double reference to the soul or to consciousness, on the one hand, and to the body, on the other, of two series of predicates. (Ricoeur 1992, 36)

To make it more explicit: it is the same thing that thinks that today is Friday and the same thing that has a scar on the right arm. There are two kinds of predicates which apply to the same thing, when it comes to persons. Hence the "identity of ascription", as Ricoeur calls it.

To this Ricoeur adds another dimension, that of *identical ascription* which consists of the fact that the mental events which we transferred above from the level of basic entities to that of predicates, have the remarkable property, precisely as predicates, of retaining the same sense whether they are attributed to oneself or to others, that is, to anyone else: "the ascribing phrases", Strawson says, "are used in just the same sense when the subject is another as when the subject is oneself". (Ricoeur 1992, 37)

What this means is that the process of ascription is done in a similar way by all persons. This reminds us of Strawson's considerations in *Individuals* where he says that:

One can ascribe states of consciousness to oneself only if one can ascribe them to others. One can ascribe them to others only if one can identify other subjects of experience. And one cannot identify others if one can identify them only as subjects of experience, possessors of states of consciousness. (Strawson 1964, 100)

What makes this possible? We ascribe states of consciousness to ourselves, and therefore, to others, only if we are capable of identifying ourselves and, respectively, others as subjects of experience. How do we do this? Within the landscape of language we, as speaking subjects, not only ascribe predicates but also utter them. The act of speaking, on its own, designates, in a reflexive manner, the speaker.

The "I" belongs, thus, to the system of language, as other pronouns do. By using it, any speaker designates themselves. They refer to themselves by identifying themselves through using this pronoun. This implies that with every speaker, the "I" is used anew, the "I" points out to a huge variety of referents. Everyone is an "I". However, every time it is "fixated", or *anchored*, as Ricoeur calls it, the "I" designates just one and only one person; it designates a single *Weltanschauung* to the exclusion of any other. How do these two perspectives coexist? How is it possible for the "I" to be both a "shifter" and an "anchor" at the same time? Ricoeur's suggestion is that the dimension of identifying reference and that of reflexivity of utterance should be made to converge.

What we have so far is a basic particular which takes over attribution of physical and mental predicates. Then, with the (reflexive) utterance, we have a way of designating the subject as a speaking subject. I am saying something about myself. And to me I can attribute both physical and mental predicates. The third person, in turn, can be regarded in a similar way if it has the capacity to self-designate, to anchor the I "in his or her heart" (we will return to this below).

However, we should be careful to distinguish between two forms of identity. Ricoeur points out that analytical philosophy run into difficulties because it failed to recognize these two forms and to treat them accordingly. He considers that within the realm of personal identity we should distinguish between same-identity (*idem*) and self-identity (*ipse*).

The identity of sameness appeared to me to suit the objective or objectified features of the speaking and acting subject, while identity as selfhood appeared to me better suited to characterizing a subject capable of designating himself or herself as the author of words and actions, a nonsubstantial and nonimmutable subject, yet nevertheless one responsible for his or her saying and doing. (Ricoeur 1995, 49)

The ipse-identity applies only to persons, whereas idem-identity applies to non-persons as well; it represents sameness as synchronous unity and sameness as diachronous persistence and similarity. The suggestion Ricoeur makes here is that analytical philosophy, when dealing with the issue of personal identity focused mostly on idem-identity. Questions of numerical identity, of qualitative identity, and basically, the acorn and the oak type of questions are to be regarded as cases of idem-identity. But in the sphere of personal identity, this is not enough to give a comprehensible account of Who we are. Because this question is to be dealt with at a different level, namely, of ipse-identity, of selfhood. Having a self over time does not mean that we look for something that is preserved over time, that is the same in the sense the acorn and the oak tree are the same. Were we to do this, we would already be on the territory of idem identity.

If we look for the self, we should try somewhere else: ipse identity, which is not susceptible to being easily determined.

The relationship between these two forms of identity in time is expressed using two concepts: the concept of one's *character* and the concept of *keeping one's word*.

My hypothesis is that the polarity of these two models of permanence with respect to persons results from the fact that the permanence of character expresses the almost complete mutual overlapping of the problematic of *idem* and of *ipse*, while faithfulness to oneself in keeping one's word marks the extreme gap between the permanence of the self and that of the same and so attests fully to the irreducibility of the two problematics one to the other. (Ricoeur 1992, 118)

The *character* is that "set of lasting dispositions by which a person is recognized". (Ricoeur 1992, 121) To put it simply, the *character* is the "what?" of the "who?". It represents the "distinctive marks" which make possible the identification of someone as being numerically and qualitatively the same, ensuring uninterrupted continuity and permanence in time. The *character* has an immutable nature. It stands for that particular perspective through which we "accede to values and to the use of our powers". (Ricoeur 1992, 119) The *character* is the limit point where *idem* and *ipse* tend to be undistinguishable. My *character* is me, it is the *ipse* which manifests itself as the same, as *idem*. *Keeping one's word* expresses the self constancy of the "who". "The perseverance of *character* is one thing, the perseverance of *faithfulness to a word* that has been given is something else again. The continuity of character is one thing, the constancy of friendship is quite another." (Ricoeur 1992, 123) *Keeping one's word* can be regarded as a challenge to time, a sort of attempt to deal with change. One can change an opinion, a point of view but, at the same time, one "will hold firm".

The dialectical relationship involved in being true to oneself also makes it possible for the self to be true to others. In Ricoeur's words, "to be faithful to oneself is for a person to behave in such a way that another person can rely upon him or her". (Ricoeur 1992, 202) Being self-engaged in keeping my word makes it possible for the others to trust me and this, in turn comes back to me in the form of a reassurance of my own internal consistency.

Thus, Ricoeur considers that the place of narrative identity in the conceptual constitution of personal identity is fundamental. Narrative identity, then, oscillates between these two limits: a lower limit, where *idem* and *ipse* tend to coincide (as *character*) and an upper limit, where *ipse* is detached from *idem* (and where *keeping a promise* is in focus). With Ricoeur the subject of thought experiments does not receive brain transplants any longer and is not sent traveling to Mars. The subject of thought experiments

is granted an existence in time. A person has a life history, it exists with the others and, together, they share a world.

### IX. Conclusion

If we are to sum up, we should say that Ricoeur's work gives us a well structured framework through which we can embark in a more honest inquiry into the issue of personal identity. Narratives are the place where both history and fiction meet, where one's biography is put together as the story of "who someone is". Stories or life narratives are fundamental in bringing together our idea of who we were, of who we are and of who we might be in various contexts of our lives (as family and friends, work, citizens of a country, religion and culture). The story of our life is made up of other, interconnected stories and interwoven with the stories of the others. This is how I find myself as an accountable and responsible self in a community of selves. The self is thus not only the storyteller but also the stories told. It emerges through them as they are told to oneself, in silence and to the others.

The problems of personal identity (as we have seen at the beginning of this essay) stem from a failure to distinguish between *idem* and *ipse*. If we keep looking for a *what* as the underlying principle of personal identity we will invariably end up with a world-view in which personal identity does not matter (see Parfit), which is a rather gloomy perspective. Ricoeur's work helps us go over these difficulties and bring back a sense of purpose and engagement in personal identity related research.

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# DISCURSIVE IDENTITY AND PROBLEM OF SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION

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**Abstract:** *The article examines the phenomenon of discursive identity, its nature and sources of the formation. Attributive characteristics of the discursive identity such as plasticity and processuality, interactive nature and its embedment into the broad cultural context, fragmentation, and decentralization of the subject are studied. Also, the interrelations between subject's autonomy and discursive identity are considered.*

**Keywords:** *identity, discourse, discursive identity, linguistic identity.*

## I. Introduction

The variability of contemporary world phenomena, activation of transformational social changes has led to the need for understanding the complex ontological issues of a new reality. In this circle of questions, identity issues occupy a special place because of their explicit/tacit /implicit presence in any communicative act.

## II. Speech acts: the concept of discursive identity

Based on the ideas of modern social theory and political philosophy we are going to use the concept of “discursive identity” for the understanding the actual problems of social communication with the Other. At this point, it is important to clarify what we mean using the concept of discursive identity. We support B. Brown’s opinion on discursive identity, where it «reflects an understanding that speakers select genres of discourse with the knowledge (tacit or implicit) that others will ... interpret their discourse as a signal of their cultural membership»<sup>3</sup>.

The concept of discursive identity is derived from the context of the general belief of philosophers, culture theorists, and linguists in the change of paradigm that caused the adoption of a fundamentally new ontology – discursive. Speech acts and discourses play a major role in creating the

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<sup>3</sup> Brown, B.A., Reveles, J.M., and Kelly, G.J., 2005. Scientific literacy and discursive identity: a theoretical framework for understanding science learning. *Science Education*, 89 (5), p. 783

social ontology. As it is was seen by J. Austin, we not only describe the world, but also do things with the words<sup>1</sup>. In studies of the “discursive revolution”, there are observations that discursive phenomena occur primarily in the social and psychological sphere, in the process of communication between individuals, who perform appropriate communicative, social, cultural, interpersonal, ideological and psychological roles.

In this regard, we should pay attention to the S. Hall’s analysis of the three main concepts of identity, which are very different:

- 1) Enlightenment subject;
- 2) Sociological subject;
- 3) Post-modern subject.

The first concept, according to S. Hall, based on the conception of human being as fully centered. This was the very individualistic conception. The second concept is the product of modern world and tendencies of social and cultural development. S. Hall writes: “The notion of the sociological subject reflected the growing complexity of the modern world and the awareness that this inner core of the subject was not autonomous and self-sufficient, but was formed in relation to “significant others”, who mediated to the subject the values, meanings, and symbols – the culture – of the worlds he/she inhabited”<sup>2</sup>. The third concept of identity has a connection to post-modern conditions. This kind of identity is defined as “moveable feast”. S. Hall states that we have a deal with “[...] formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us”<sup>3</sup>.

The problem of identity is the very actual issue within this new paradigm. The solution of this problem depends primarily on discourse in the context of which it is discussed. At this point, let us consider the attributive characteristics of discursive identity phenomena in more detail.

Firstly, among the most important attributive characteristics of discursive identity should be considered its *plasticity* and *processuality*.

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<sup>1</sup> Austin J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, pp.1-11.

<sup>2</sup> Hall S. (1996). The Question of Cultural Identity, in: *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, Ed. by Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert, Kenneth Thompson, p. 597.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 598.

The identity of a subject within this new paradigm is ticklish because the discourse theory offers understanding subject primarily as a subjective position within the discursive structure. Therefore, subject “loses” the selfness, and its identification becomes dependent of the discourse. The subject is not autonomous in this case; it is determined by the different social and political discourses and manifested in social space as fragmented. The modern theory of discourse (Ch. Mouffe, E. Laclau<sup>1</sup>, M. Jorgensen, and L. Philips<sup>2</sup>) states that subjective position is not established by one discourse. It is more probably that subject gets many different positions which are created by different discourses. Thus, a person is dependent on conditions (rules and principles) of the discourse. In some aspect, this problem can be explained with using the term “linguistic identity” which we can find in linguistics.

Linguistic identity is a kind of identity that has a set of discursive properties at all phases of intellectual intercourse, such as orientation and planning speech and non-verbal actions, formulating action plans in linguistic form, correction (if necessary) speech acts. Based on this definition of linguistic identity, we can state that the realization capacity of discursive possibilities depends on the communicative situation. Also, individual identity is acquired only in the realization of its specific discursive properties. In other words, we can talk about a particular linguistic identity only in the case of realization its specific discursive properties of the subject in a particular discourse.

Secondly, it is important to note, *interactive nature* of discursive identity and its *embedment into a broad cultural context*.

The notion of discursive identity makes a shift of identity per se from the individual/private sphere to the collective/social one. Discursive identity as such is manifested and developed on the basis of one's own communicative experience and is woven into the broad cultural context. The social being makes us meet the Other/Alien, interpret his/her actions, and therefore – identify them. Such demand is caused by the fact that in an attempt to create our own identity, we feel the necessity to relate to something that is different from us. In other words in our social being, we

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<sup>1</sup> See: Laclau, E., Mouffe, Ch., (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London: Verso, 197 p.

<sup>2</sup> Jorgensen, M., Phillips, L. (2002), *Discourse analysis as Theory and Method*, London: Sage Publications, 229 p.

try to comprehend the Other all the time, because it makes us possible to answer the question: "Whom are we?". The problem of our time is that the human itself appears as an alien, human being is presented as being which is covered by discursive practices and technologies. Moreover, in its social being human feels the abundance of signs and meanings that surround his/her, and as a result the social actor finds no other way to identify itself than through signs and discourses.

Discursive identity is a phenomenon of our time, as it is related to the nature of the culture and society in the postmodern era. According to Zygmunt Bauman, " [...] while it is true that identity 'continues to be the problem', this is not 'the problem it was throughout modernity'. Indeed, if the modern 'problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern 'problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open"<sup>1</sup> (Bauman 1996, 18).

*Thirdly*, among the most important attributive characteristics of discursive identity should be considered *fragmentation of the identity* and *decentralization of the subject*.

In the modern social and cultural context, it is an evident tendency to the fragmentation the identity, and this process has a strong connection to decentralization of the subject. Such tendencies have their origins in general feature of modern thinking which can be called "anti-Cartesianism" or "criticism the Descartes' conception of cogito". The analysis of this problem has been presented in S. Hall's paper "The Question of Cultural Identity".

### **III. Hall's five moments that decentrates subject**

S. Hall defined five moments which had been influenced on the final decentralization of Cartesian cogito. The first one is connected to Marxist social theory. S. Hall states that new reading of Marx's works in 1960th established a point of view according to which persons are not real "authors" or acting actors of the history. This view is based on the belief that humans can act only in historical conditions created by others and they are forced to use resources which had been prepared by previous generations. The update interpretation of Marxism we can find in Z.

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<sup>1</sup> Hall S. (1996). The Question of Cultural Identity, in: *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*, Ed. by Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert, Kenneth Thompson, pp. 595-694.

Bauman's work *The Individualized Society*. He writes: "[...] people make their lives but not under conditions of their choice. In the original as well as in its updated version, however, the thesis may be thought to imply that the realm of the conditions beyond choice and the field of action hospitable to purpose, calculation and decision are separate and stay so; that though their interaction presents a problem, the boundary which sets them apart is unproblematic – objective, and so not negotiable"<sup>1</sup>. Such convictions make the background for social and cultural imagination, according which the identity of the subject could not be strong and stable.

The second moment of decentration the subject, as S. Hall states is Z. Freud's "discovery" the unconscious mind. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, our identity, our sexuality and the structure of our desires are based on psychic and symbolic processes that occur in the area of unconscious mind and operate according to the "logic" is quite different from the logic of reason. These convictions undermine the idea of the subject, that cognizes rationally and has fixed and unique identity. In this context, the example and kind of continuation of Freudian conception of the subject that led to its decentration are the J. Lacan's conception of the subject. This conception is based on the assumption that the idea of a true, holistic subject is a myth. Individual is structured through discourses, but this structuring is never complete. In addition, J. Lacan argues that identity is equivalent of identification with "something", and this "something" is a position of the subject that discourses give for the person. After all, if we refer to modern psychology, we find within the psychological concepts of identity (individual and social) general statement of dynamism and variability of human identity. There is the observation that identity develops throughout life nonlinearly and uneven, and the direction of its development can be as progressive, as regressive.

According to S. Hall, the third moment which has caused the decentration the subject and fragmentation of identity is the appearance of the structuralism. Within this methodological and philosophical conception, the meaning can be obtained only through language. Later the structuralists, such as J. Derrida, added the idea that person is never able to fix the meaning, including the meaning of its identity because the words often have polysemy.

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<sup>1</sup> Bauman Z. (2001). *The individualized society*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 7.

The fourth moment, which S. Hall determines, has a strong connection to the conception of the disciplinary power of M. Foucault. According to this conception, the main task of “disciplinary power” is the creation of such person, which can be treated as a body that is exposed orders. So the identity of a person depends on a network of disciplinary power and its strategies in social relations.

And the last moment that decentrates subject in the modern socio-cultural situation is the influence of feminism as theoretical social critique and political movement. Within feminism, we can find thinking of the problem of gender identities and denial the similarity between identities of men and women. Feminist theorists point out the functioning of suppression, occurred because of patriarchal discourse created by men. The following features are inherent in this discourse: the reflection of male experience as the norm, the identification of the feminine with the irrational, the definition of women as a person who is not a man, the exclusion of women's perspectives on the study, consideration of man's activity as a source of important changes, representation of the low status of women compared to man. Researchers often presume that “linguistic markers of men’s style and women’s style would be functionally linked to the traits and roles of men and women”<sup>1</sup>. Moreover we can add that in gender studies the subject becomes decentrated more and more. Because of the fact that since the early 1970s, gender studies were under the influence of different theories and concepts that sometimes contradict one another: postmodernism, empiricism, psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, Marxism, critical theory, critical race theory, postcolonial theory, queer studies, LGBT studies, critical study of sexuality, concepts of physicality, and a wide range of feminist theories.

#### **IV. Conclusions**

Summarizing all abovementioned, we can conclude that the notion of discursive identity is a postmodern era “product”, which characterized by plasticity and processuality, interactive nature and its embedment into a broad cultural context, fragmentation and decentralization of the subject.

But how the eternal querying of philosophers on person’s freedom is reflected in the discursive paradigm? Ontological dimension of human existence is associated with the ratio of such philosophical categories as

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<sup>1</sup> *Concise Encyclopedia of Semantics*, p. 348.

"choice" and "freedom." Choice is treated as a spiritual and practical procedure, during which individual consciousness performs selective advantage of some values and norms, rejecting others. Necessary ontological foundation of choice is the diversity of reality, diversity of life phenomena; the objective contradictions of any of the realities and the inability of human to cover everything at once. And in case of discursive identity, a person finds himself/herself in a kind of discursive captivity. As were mentioned before, subject "loses" the selfness, and its identification becomes dependent of the discourse. The subject is not autonomous in this case, it is determined by the different social and political discourses and manifested in social space as fragmented. It is more probably that subject gets many different positions which are created by different discourses. Thus, a person is dependent on conditions (rules and principles) of the discourse.

In a such situation of discursive captivity, a person has only a fragment of the phenomenon of the Other, the integrity of which was de-centered. At the same time, as John E. Joseph mentioned "identities are double-edged swords because, while functioning in a positive and productive way to give people a sense of belonging, they do so by defining an "us" in opposition to a "them" that becomes all too easy to demonise"<sup>1</sup>

In the context of such problems with identity, the important issue of our times is cognition the Other and comprehension its authentic identification. It's obvious that new cultural reality demands to rethink the principles that we usually use for the cognition of the Other and development of our relations with him/her. Cultural reality makes us think whether we are able to perceive, understand and accept the way of seeing and structuring the world, aspirations, motives, feelings and expressions of the Others as carriers of cultural meanings that are incommensurable with ours.

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<sup>1</sup> John E. Joseph. Linguistic identities. Double-edged swords. University of Edinburgh, p. 261



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## RECENZII

Nicolae Răzvan Stan (editor), *Demnitatea și libertatea persoanei umane: abordare interdisciplinară*, Editura Universitaria, Craiova, 2016, 589 p.

Apărut sub egida Centrului de Studii Teologice și Interreligioase (CSTI) al Universității din Craiova, volumul *Demnitatea și libertatea persoanei umane : abordare interdisciplinară* reunește mai mult de patruzeci de studii și articole prezentate, de cadre didactice și cercetători, de personalități ale vieții spirituale și culturale, în cadrul a două simpozioane internaționale organizate de CSTI în anul 2014: „Paradigma demnității umane, între simplificare și mistificare : analiză teologică, filosofică și juridică” și „Demnitate și libertate umană, realitate și ideal. Modelul Sfântului Voievod Martir Constantin Brâncoveanu”. Scopul volumului, după cum scrie editorul în prefață, este de a încerca „să creeze cadrul teoretic și să ofere perspectivele practice ale definirii și manifestării demnității și libertății umane”.

Dintre studiile și articolele care conturează cadrul teoretic, unele tratează valorile libertății și demnității ca valori în sine, dintr-o perspectivă teologică sau filosofică, în special metafizică, explicită. Dintre acestea, unele se raportează la o perioadă istorică anume, la o tradiție religioasă sau culturală, sau pun în evidență contribuția unui autor sau a unei personalități. Spre exemplu, unele articole accentuează anumite determinații, considerate în mod tradițional esențiale, ale libertății sau demnității, cum ar fi libertatea ca libertate de alegere – Nicolae Răzvan Stan, „Libertatea de alegere ca dar și ca responsabilitate potrivit învățaturii Filocaliei”, libertatea ca libertate spirituală – Hilarion Alfeyev, „Învățătura patristică despre om”; Adrian Agachi, „Maica Domnului ca model al demnității și libertății umane” - , libertatea și demnitatea ca înzestrări ontologice – Ioniță Apostolache, „Epectazele libertății umane în teologia siriană”; Nicolae Moșoiu, „Chipul slavei Tale celei negrăite sunt – considerații despre valoarea omului și despre suferința bolnavilor în stadiu avansat”; Ion-Sorin Bora, „Demnitatea copiilor potrivit învățaturii Noului Testament”; Mihai Burlacu, „Valoarea omului în teologia Sf. Maxim Mărturisitorul”; Nicolae Morar, „Problema libertății în religiile monoteiste”; Teofan Mada, „Martiriul ca o afirmare a libertății și iubirii în Hristos”.

Alte studii pun libertatea și demnitatea în relație cu alte valori morale sau concepte filosofice, dintre care unele cu caracter mai curând personal, cum ar fi destinul - Adriana Neacșu, „Libertate și destin la Plotin” ;

smerenia – Lorena-Valeria Stuparu, „Treptele smereniei și demnitatea umană” -, mândria sau orgoliul – Ioan Lascu, „Mândrie, orgoliu, demnitate” -, iar altele cu caracter social, cum ar fi egalitatea – Constantin Băjău, „Sfântul Ioan Hrisostom și învățătura despre libertate și egalitate”; Ion Resceanu, „Demnitate și umanitate în Vechiul Testament : atitudinea față de sclavi” - sau dreptatea – Gunnar Heiene, „Religia și drepturile omului : o perspectivă luterană”; Ciprian Iulian Toroczka, „Izvoarele teologice ale drepturilor omului. Viziunea Părintelui Georges Florovsky”; Marin Bălan, „Demnitatea umană și recontextualizarea ei teologică”. În fine, unele articole plasează libertatea și demnitatea în contexte teoretice și tematice mai largi - Ana Bazac, „Criza societății și demnitatea umană : o perspectivă epistemologică”; Georghe Dănișor, „Libertatea umană – aspecte filosofico-juridice”; Ion Popescu, „Cunoaștere și libertate din perspectivă filosofică și teologică”.

O serie de studii contextualizează cele două valori, analizându-le din diverse perspective, cum ar fi cea a pluralismului religios, a multiculturalismului, a dialogului interconfesional – Alexandru Mălureanu, „Libertatea religioasă și libertatea de exprimare în contextul multicultural și multireligios actual” ; Octavian Moșin, „Demnitatea omului în viziunea Bisericii Ortodoxe Ruse” ; Cristinel Ioja, „Mutații antropologice în contextul ideologiilor modernității” -, a educației – Adrian Boldișor, „Educația religioasă în România. Probleme religioase, ecumenice și interreligioase” ; Marian Cojoc, „Educație, umanism și libertate în Bizanțul sec. XIII-XIV” ; Camelia Nicoleta Zamfir (Iacob), „Ora de religie – factor de responsabilizare a părinților și/sau reflex civic identitar” ; Olivia Andrei, „Educația și drepturile, între secular și religios”-, și a democrației și pluralismului social și politic – Marina-Irina Lazăr, „Libertatea – participare a individului la exercitarea puterii publice” - ce caracterizează societatea contemporană.

Dintre studiile și articolele care concretizează perspective practice, ilustrări și definiții sau redefiniri ale valorilor demnității și libertății, unele evocă modele istorice sau culturale – Irineu Ion Popa, „Demnitatea și libertatea umană, realitate și ideal. Modelul Sfântului Voievod Martir Constantin Brâncoveanu”; Răzvan Theodorescu, „Oltenia lui Constantin Vodă Brâncoveanu”; Emilian Lovișteanu, „Sfinții Martiri Brâncoveni – familia Domnitorului și jertfa ei pentru credința în Dumnezeu” ; Remus Onișor, „Modelul macabeu ca ideal al mântuirii creștine” ; Claudiu Cotan, „Demnitatea unui mare neam – boierii Brâncoveni”; Cătălin Dan, „Aspecte

ale vieții bisericești în timpul domniei Sfântului Martir Constantin Brâncoveanu”. Altele au un caracter practic mult mai explicit și abordează libertatea și demnitatea din punct de vedere juridic. Cele mai multe dintre studii se referă la drepturile și libertățile fundamentale ale omului ca modalități concrete de definire și redefinire a valorilor libertății și demnității – Oana Ghiță, „Demnitatea copilului”; Ruxandra Răducanu, „Ocrotirea libertății persoanei prin mijloacele dreptului penal”; Mădălin-Savu Ticu, „Demnitatea umană în contextul actual al proliferării drepturilor omului” ; Sonia Drăghici, „Demnitatea umană și statutul juridic al embrionului”; Raluca Voinea, „Protecția libertății umane prin reglementări de natură penală”; Andreea Loredana Golli, „Aspecte ale consimțământului informat în cercetarea medicală”; Roxana Gabriela Albăstroi, „Drepturile și îndatoririle personale ale soților, sanctuar al libertăților omului?”; Relu Eduard Voinea, „Protejarea dreptului la viață privată prin noi reglementări penale”.

Prin diversitatea temelor și problemelor abordate, prin varietatea stilurilor și perspectivelor de analiză, volumul este un important reper în cercetarea multidisciplinară și interdisciplinară academică umanistă și socială.

(Cătălin Stănciulescu, University of Craiova)

Carl Menger, *Principiile economiei*, Editura Liberalis, Iași, 2016, 458 p.

Studiile academice cu profil economic au apărut târziu în istoria școlii românești. Astfel, în principatul Transilvaniei deși au fost înființate și au funcționat școli comerciale și de meserii încă din 1834, nu s-a putut vorbi de învățământ universitar de profil decât începând cu 1872, adică abia atunci când, după model german, în programele de studii ale Facultății de Drept și Științe de Stat, din cadrul nou înființatei la acea vreme Universități din Cluj, au fost introduse primele discipline economice. În Vechiul Regat, istoria învățământului economic a fost și mai săracă. Nu doar că școlile comerciale românești au apărut foarte târziu, adică abia odată cu 1864, dar prima instituție academică de învățământ economic românesc va fi fondată la aproape 50 de ani de la înființarea Universităților din Iași și București, adică în 1913, când prin decret regal apărea Academia de Înalte Studii Comerciale și Industriale din București.

Care au fost cauzele acestei întârzieri instituționale? Fără a intra în detalii de istorie socială, o explicație generală, suficientă nouă în cazul de față, o găsim în faptul că instituțiile de învățământ în general nu au reprezentat până la sfârșitul primului sfert al secolului al XIX-lea, instituții de interes pentru domnitorii, boierii și clerul autohton. Lăsând la o parte câteva excepții remarcabile, educația tineretului nu a preocupat de fel elitele românești ale vremii, și cu atât mai puțin populația de rând, școala fiind privită în general de către români mai degrabă cu ostilitate ori indiferență, decât ca o întreprindere cu rost. Abia după 1821, odată cu începutul modernizării statelor românești, interesul pentru școală al românilor a început a crește. Totuși, în ciuda acestei transformări, în școala românească a secolului al XIX-lea studiile economice nu s-au bucurat nici de atenție, nici de recunoaștere. Faptul poate fi explicat în primul rând prin caracterul elitist și naționalist al școlii românești a secolului al XIX-lea. Criza geopolitică orientală provocată de dezagregarea Imperiului Otoman și a structurilor feudale autohtone, menținute în funcțiune de acesta, și mai apoi, odată cu 1864, lupta politică a clasei conservatoare dusă pe fondul tensiunilor provocate de necesitatea rezolvării marii probleme a "Chestiunii Rurale" au împiedicat răspândirea în școlile românești a economiei politice, știința de factură iluministă, care demonstrând contradicția dintre privilegiile politice și productivitatea muncii, trebuia să afecteze puternic interesele claselor boierești privilegiate. Nu doar interesele feudale ale clasei boierești conservatoare sunt responsabile însă de întârzierea apariției studiilor economice la români, ci în egală măsură și interesele naționaliste ale nou formatei clase a burgheziei liberale, cea care, deși în prima fază a afirmării sale se declarase partizana curentului "Drang nach Osten", imediat după dobândirea puterii politice, susținea în mod declarat politica protecționismului, intervenționismului și monopolismului economic național-burghez, politică prin care această clasă – în răspăr cu principiile economiei politice clasice, urmărea sustragerea economiei românești dinamicii și competitivității pieței capitalismului european. În sfârșit, cel de-al treilea factor care explică întârzierea apariției învățământului economic la români l-a constituit inadecvarea dintre sistemele teroretice aflate la baza educației profesorilor români, școlii în secolul al XIX-lea și această ramură nouă a științei, care ridica probleme epistemologice noi, pe care aceștia nu erau încă pregătiți să le soluționeze. Formați în majoritatea lor la școala romantismului european, aceștia erau marcați de influența ideologică a teoriilor naționaliste germane ale

*Volkgeist*-ului ori franceze ale *Caractèrului National*, teorii metafizice de factură idealistă, centrate pe valorile colectiviste ale etniei, realitate concepută asemeni unei entități vii, matriciale și providențiale, care se manifestă în istorie independent și separat de viața și acțiunile particulare, "înguste" și "egoiste" ale indivizilor ce o compun. Rod al preocupărilor utilitariste și ale metodelor seculare ale raționamentului logic, elaborate și dezvoltate în afara profesiunilor de credință metafizice, economia politică, aparea în aceste condiții, intelectualilor români nu doar ca o unealtă a intereselor "păturilor" suprapuse și venetice ale capitalismului occidental, ci și ca o disciplină abstractă, străină culturii și spiritualității naționale.

Această influență deosebit de puternică a romantismului asupra mediului cultural românesc, manifestată nu doar pe parcursul secolului al XIX-lea, ci în bună măsură pe parcursul întregului secol următor, ne ajută să înțelegem atât întârzierea cu care economia politică a devenit disciplină de studiu în universitățile românești, dar și condițiile particulare în care aceasta a fost în cele din urmă recunoscută în cadrul lor. Astfel, înființarea primelor instituții de învățământ economic superior românesc la începutul secolului al XX-lea a devenit posibilă în primul rând ca efect al creșterii rolului universităților celui de-al doilea Reich german, focare ale naționalismului european și al Sozialpolitik, în școlirea intelighenței românești a epocii. Nu riscăm prea mult când spunem că studiile economice universitare de la noi au stat încă de la începutul lor atât sub înrâurirea modelului universitar german, model impus de legea Spiru Haret din 1899, cât și sub influența orientării teoretice a Școlii Istorice Germane, ale cărei teorii, înrădăcinate în ideologia idealismului romantic fuseseră concepute să vină în întâmpinarea aspirațiilor politice și intereselor economice ale burgheziilor naționale. Dovezile în acest sens le putem găsi atât în orientarea germanofilă a majorității universitarilor români ai vremii, cât mai ales în formația intelectuală a celor mai mulți dintre profesorii de economie care au activat până la mijlocul anilor 40 în Academia de Înalte Studii Comerciale și Industriale din București, de la I. N. Angelescu, Ion Răducanu, Virgil Madgearu, Victor Slăvescu, Gromoslav Mladenatz ori Nicolae Iorga etc, profesori școliți direct sau indirect sub influența teoriilor acestei școli istoriciste.

De altfel, învățământul economic universitar românesc a continuat și după 1947 să se desfășoare sub înrâurirea teoriilor Școlii Istorice Germane. Astfel, mai bine de 40 de ani, fie că s-a desfășurat în cadrul Academiei de Științe Comerciale și Cooperatiste (1947-1948), a Institutului

de Științe Economice și Planificare (1948-1958), Institutul de Științe Economice (1958-1967), ori începând cu 1967 în cadrul Academiei de Studii Economice, acest învățământ a fost promotorul teoriilor istoriciste ale marxismului și al doctrinelor economice ale socialismului de stat. Mai mult, impactul Școlii Istorice Germaine asupra studiilor economice românești a fost atât de puternic încât el a lăsat urme greu de șters inclusiv asupra gândirii economice actuale, gândire intrată, este adevărat, odată cu căderea comunismului și cu falimentul economiei socialiste planificate, într-un proces lent de emancipare de sub constrângerile teoretice ale marxismului și etatismului.

Un rol important în această emancipare recentă a gândirii economice românești de sub tradiția școlii istoriciste germane l-au avut câteva inițiative în cea mai mare parte a lor private și izolate, întreprinse în mod curajos după 1989 de către o serie de tineri teoreticieni economiști, care sub egida Institutul Ludwig von Mises România, a Centrul de Economie Politică și Afaceri „Murray Rothbard”, a Institutului Friedrich von Hayek România, ori a Centrului pentru Economie și Libertate – ECOL, au tradus, traduc și promovează lucrările și ideile reprezentative ale exponenților unei școli economice care deși a funcționat de la începuturile sale și până astăzi ca „singurul concurent serios” al Școlii Istorice Germaine, a fost ignorată sistematic în mediul economic românesc: Școala Austriacă de Economie. Datorită activității acestor oameni beneficiem astfel de traducerea în limba română a unora dintre lucrările fundamentale ale lui Ludwig von Mises, Friederic von Hayek ori Murray Rothbard, reprezentanți ai generației a treia și a patra ai acestei școli, autori care deși au marcat, începând cu anii 1920, istoria liberalismului occidental, au rămas multă vreme necunoscuți publicului românesc.

Totuși, în ciuda traducerii și promovării operelor reprezentanților generației a treia și a patra a Școlii Austriece de Economie, se impunea de la o vreme, din nevoia recuperării în cultura română a întregii tradiției a *Österreichische Schule*, traducerea și introducerea pe piața românească atât a lucrărilor lui Eugen von Bohm-Bawerk și Friedrich von Wieser, gânditori ai generației a doua a Școlii Austriece, dar mai ales a operelor lui Carl Menger, fondatorului acesteia. Proiectul a prins contur abia în anii din urmă, când cu o întârziere de mai bine de 140 de ani de la publicarea celei dintâi ediții a *Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre*, a apărut la Editura ASE, în sfârșit și varianta în limba română a acestei lucrări a lui Carl Menger, cea prin care alături de William Stanley Jevons și Leon Walras, acesta a pus

bazele teoriei subiectivismului și marginalismului și a schimbat din temelii, începând cu anii 70 ai secolului al XIX-lea bazele științelor economice.

Începând de anul acesta, *Grundsätze* beneficiază de o nouă ediție în limba română. Tradusă de Bogdan Tatavura și publicată, sub îngrijirea lui Gabriel Mursa, în cadrul colecției Catalaxia la Editura Liberalis, *Principiile economiei* tălmăcește, de fapt, una din edițiile americane ale *Grundsätze* apărută în 1976 la The Institute for Humane Studies în traducerea din germană a lui James Dingwall și Bert F. Hoselitz. Deși pentru chibiții filologiști, această versiune românească pare să aibă neajunsul de a nu fi fost tradusă direct după originalul austriac, pentru cititorii conștienți de nevoia depășirii cât mai rapide a întârzierii și decalajului enorm cu care publicul românesc a ajuns să ia contact cu resursele *Österreichische Schule*, poate cea mai importantă dintre școlile liberalismului contemporan, acest aspect ajunge să conteze prea puțin. Aceasta cu atât mai mult cu cât *Grundsätze*, asemeni celorlalte lucrări ale lui Carl Menger, este recunoscută a fi o lucrare scrisă într-o germană simplă și clară, ferită de orice controversă hermeneutică. Această calitate stilistică a permis, de altfel, deloc întâmplător, ca stilul clar și accesibil al gânditorului austriac să se reflecte atât în edițiile americane cât și în această nouă ediție românească a cărei apariție o salutăm și o semnalăm în aceste pagini.

Publicată de Carl Menger în 1871, *Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre*, apare la prima vedere, cu deosebire cititorilor obșnuiți cu vastele tratate de economie contemporane, asemeni unui mic volum, care pe parcursul a opt capitole - excluzând notele de subsol, aceste capitole nu depășesc fiecare mai mult de treizeci de pagini – prezintă treptat o serie de teorii generale, care sunt construite unele cu ajutorul celorlalte, începând de la teoria privitoare la natura bunurilor și sfârșind cu aceea referitoare la natura banilor, teorii privitoare la condițiile generale care fac posibil *faptul* economic. Astfel, plecând de la analiza relației cauzale dintre nevoile umane și lucrurile prin care acestea sunt satisfacute, lucruri care în anumite condiții capătă caracter de bunuri, Menger elaborează o tipologie stratificată a acestora din urmă, deosebind, pe de o parte bunurile libere de bunurile economice, și pe de altă parte, în sfera bunurilor economice, distingând între bunurile de ordin primar (de consum) și bunurile de ordin superior (de producție), care, fie secundare, terțiale etc. întrețin după caz, unele cu altele în cadrul structurii de producție, relații de *complementaritate*. Pe baza acestei tipologii, dar mai ales a relațiilor de complementaritate și ordonare pe care le stabilește între bunurile de producție și acelea de consum,



Menger formulează apoi, ceea ce Wieser va numi ceva mai târziu, *legea imputației*. Analizând în continuare relațiile dintre nevoile umane și bunurile rare (în *Grundsätze* este folosit termenul de "cantitate insuficientă", nu acela de "raritate") economistul austriac dezvoltă o teorie a valorii, de care se va folosi în capitolele IV-VIII, atât la elaborarea teoriei schimbului și a prețului, cât și la aceea a mărfii și a banilor, toate acestea, așa cum spuneam, într-o lucrare de mici dimensiuni. Și totuși, nu trebuie să ne lăsăm înșelați de aparențe. În ciuda micilor sale dimensiuni – inițial textul a fost gândit ca parte a unui tratat cuprinzător – *Principiile Economiei* s-a dovedit a fi cea mai revoluționară scriere economică apărută de la *Avuția Națiunilor* lui Adam Smith încoace.

Departate de a se lăsa explicată prin simplul recurs la influența determinantă a contextului cultural al Austriei, aflată la *Fin de siècle*, elaborarea acestei lucrări a fost, totuși, favorizată, asemeni altora "austriece" ale vremii, care la rândul lor s-au dovedit deschizătoare de drumuri în cultura europeană, de climatul liberal instalat în Viena începând cu anii 1870, perioadă în care Menger a activat ca jurnalist al Cabinetului Austriac, apoi ca angajat al Universității din Viena. Este vorba de aceeași perioadă în care Universitatea din Viena, beneficiind de o lărgită autonomie universitară față de autoritățile politice, dar și de o inspirată organizare academică internă, ce atrăgea numeroși profesori și studenți din întreaga Europă, devenise una din cele mai influente universități occidentale. Totuși, în ciuda acestui mediu, atât de prielnic cercetării și creației universitare, în materie de economie "până la finele anilor 1870 - la Universitatea din Viena - nu exista o școală austriacă. Exista doar Carl Menger" (Ludwig von Mises). Dacă s-a vorbit până la urmă de o Școală Austriacă de Economie, s-a vorbit numai după publicarea de către Menger a *Grundsätze* în 1871 și mai apoi a *Untersuchungen über die Methode der Sozialwissenschaften, und der politischen Oekonomie insbesondere* în 1883, mai exact după declanșarea mării polemici privitoare la natura metodelor în științele economice ("*Der Methodenstreit*") polemică dusă între Carl Menger, apărător al orientării neoclasice, empiric teoretice/deductiviste și Gustav von Schmoller, continuator al orientării istoriste lansate de Wilhelm Roscher, Karl Knies și Bruno Hildebrand, de fapt între adepții Școlii Istorice Germane de Economie, și dișcipolii a ceea ce s-a numit *Österreichische Schule*.

*Grundsätze* reprezintă, așadar, piatra de temelie a Școlii Austriece de Economie, fundament pe baza căruia aceasta din urmă reușește nu doar să

polemizeze și să se opună Școlii Istorice Germane, ci și să se desprindă de Școala Clasică Britanică. Astfel, conștient de contradicțiile interne ce afectau teoriile clasice ale costului obiectiv, ale valorii-muncă ori ale schimbului. elaborate de Adam Smith în *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) perfecționate de David Ricardo în *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817) și definitivare de J.S. Mill în *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), teorii înscrise într-o tradiție intelectuală ce coboară până la Aristotel (autorul grec este, de fapt, primul gânditor care deosebește între ceea ce mai târziu va purta numele de *value in use*, respectiv *value in exchange*) și urcă până la Marx și la socialiști, Carl Menger își va elabora teoria despre utilitatea marginală – miezul din *Grundsätze* - considerând că valoarea lucrurilor, deosebită de utilitatea lor, apare și capătă sens doar în legătură cu aceasta. Concepând-o a fi un atribut al bunurilor rare (bunuri economice), luată individual, adică al lucrurilor care îndeplinesc simultan patru condiții necesare pentru a fi tratate ca bunuri ( existența unei nevoi umane, existența unor însușiri ale lucrului care pot fi puse în relație cauzală cu satisfacerea unei nevoi, cunoașterea acestei relații cauzale, controlul asupra lucrului în vederea folosirii lui pentru satisfacerea nevoii), dar a căror cantitate nu acoperă nevoile și cerințelor umane față de ele, valoarea, departe de a fi echivalentă cu costul determinat de cantitatea de muncă și de capital cheltuite (David Ricardo), nu poate fi, potrivit economistului austriac, "intrinsecă bunurilor, nici o însușire a acestora și nici un lucru independent, existent de la sine. Ea este doar o judecată a oamenilor asupra importanței bunurilor aflate la dispoziția lor pentru menținerea vieții și pentru bunăstare. De aceea, valoarea nu există în afara conștiinței oamenilor". (p.137) Totuși, deși pentru Menger valoarea apare doar în sfera conștiinței și a cunoașterii umane și capătă prin asta un caracter subiectiv, nu are, totuși, o existență arbitrară. Astfel, dacă aceasta este condiționată atât de nevoile omului, cât și de capacitatea lui de cunoaștere, și dacă aceste nevoi depind la rândul lor de voința și de obiceiurile sociale, ea nu încetează, totuși, a face obiectul unei cercetări economice empirico-teoretice, deoarece "îndată ce nevoile noastre au început să se manifeste, nu mai există niciun element arbitrar în valoarea pe care bunurile o au față de noi." (p. 135) Valoarea nu are, așadar, nici caracter material pentru a fi confundată cu marfa ori cu banii, nici caracter psihologist pentru a fi considerată o ficțiune ("*als ob*") a liberului nostru arbitru. Cunoscând contradicțiile teoriilor istoriciste despre valoare, Menger evită în *Principii* să cadă în capcana psihologismului acestora. Dacă pentru istoriciști ca

Schmoller "psihologia este cheia tuturor științelor spiritului și deci și a economiei politice", pentru Menger economia politică nu este o știință a regulilor concrete ale activităților omului, ci știința legilor și condițiilor, independente de voința umană, în care oamenii își desfășoară activitatea lor anticipativă pentru a-și satisface propriile nevoi".

Cum în *Principii* Menger concepe nevoile umane ca apanaje ale naturii indivizilor, nicidecum ca surse motivaționale ale grupurilor sociale ori ale entităților colective atribuite în regim metafizic, sociologist și organicist, în mod abuziv cu *personalitate*, el pune aici bazele *invidualismului metodologic*, una dintre cele mai importante componente metodologice (metoda "atomistă", "compozivă") ale programului Școlii Austriece de Economie. Potrivit acestei componente, analiza economică trebuie să înceapă cu studiul acțiunii umane individuale, urmărind atât investigarea preferințelor și semnificațiilor personale implicate de individ în acesta, cât și cercetarea proceselor de deliberare voluntară/ rațională prin care acesta alege să-și utilizeze mai mult sau mai puțin adecvat mijloacele deținute cu scopul de a-și satisface – în unitate cu idealurile lor de valoare - propriile nevoi, preferințe și procese deliberative care, însă, din pricina caracterului lor ireductibil, deși fac obiectul psihologiei, nu pot genera în cadrul acesteia, așa cum cred istoriciștii, concluzii economice cu caracter științific. Analiza economică începe, așadar, cu studiul nevoilor fiecărui agent individual în parte. Aceste nevoi individuale sunt considerate a fi "forța motrică a mecanismului economic, cu excepția economiei de tip Robinson Crusoe sau a economiei în care schimbul este absent" (J. Schumpeter). Pentru Menger, aceste nevoi sunt organizate ierarhic în funcție de rolul pe care ele îl au în menținerea și asigurarea vieții și bunăstării individuale. "Este de necontestat faptul că oamenii tind să atribuie cea mai mare importanță satisfacerii acelor nevoi de care depinde conservarea vieții lor și că celelalte satisfacții sunt ierarhizate în funcție de gradul (durata și intensitatea) plăcerii dependente de ele". (p.141) Este vorba de o sumă de nevoi, respectiv de *clase de dorințe* care, dacă ar fi să le măsurăm, vom reuși cel mult să le ordonăm, niciodată să le adunăm. Această organizare a nevoilor joacă la Menger un rol fundamental în înțelegerea conceptului de valoare economică. Datorită ei, procesele de satisfacere a nevoilor sunt supuse unei regularități care va primi numele de *legea utilității marginale* (termenul nu-i aparține lui Menger, ci lui Friedrich von Wieser ) și *a valorii marginale descrescătoare*, o lege pe care nu trebuie să o confundăm nici cu teoria *mensura sortis* a lui Bernoulli, nici cu legea Weber-Fechner. Potrivit

acestei legi, pe care Menger o va formula independent de celebra *lege a saturației dorințelor* a lui H. H. Gossen (Menger nu a cunoscut ideile lui Gossen decât, cel mai probabil, odată cu 1870, adică după finalizarea muncii la *Grundsätze*), dar în deplină unitate cu ea, există o proporționalitate inversă între consumul unui bun și satisfacția pe care acesta o produce. Astfel, cu cât consumăm mai mult dintr-un bun, cu atât satisfacția produsă de acesta scade. În funcție de această scădere a satisfacției apărută pe fondul consumului nostru, descrește atât utilitatea cât și importanța subiectivă a bunului consumat. Astfel, utilitatea marginală a unui bun este valoarea pe care aceasta o capătă în raport cu cea mai puțin importantă dintre nevoile noastre, acea nevoie care, saturată deja, într-o oarecare măsură, înregistrează la prezent cea mai scăzută dintre intensitățile sale. Utilitatea marginală a "oricărei porțiuni din întreaga cantitate disponibilă de bun este, așadar, egală cu importanța satisfacției cel mai puțin însemnate dintre cele asigurate de către întreaga cantitate și realizată cu o porțiune inegală." (p.155) Această utilitate nu poate fi măsurată cantitativ, ci doar relativ. Fiind în întregime subiectivă, utilitatea marginală ne ajută să înțelegem că în funcție de raportul dintre nivelul nevoilor și cantitatea bunurilor, un bun poate căpăta valori economice diferite de la individ la individ, indiferent de gradul de muncă și de capital care au fost investite în acest bun. Relativitatea *utilității marginale* provine din faptul că ea nu se stabilește în funcție de satisfacerea nevoilor (*utilitatea totală*), ci în funcție de satisfacția obținută în urma acoperirii acestor nevoi (*utilitatea finală*), satisfacție care rămâne mereu una variabilă. În aceste condiții, pentru Menger unitatea de măsură a valorii economice nu poate sta nici în natura, nici în munca, nici în capital, ci în ceea ce acesta numește "avuția" indivizilor, în bunăstarea economică a lor, adică într-o cât mai bună satisfacere a nevoilor acestora.

În ciuda faptului că ideea utilității marginale era prefigurată deja în lucrările unor Ferdinando Galiani, E. B. de Condillac, Louis Say, August Walras, Jules Dupuit ori W.F. Lloyd și apăruse în mod cu totul independent încă de anii 70 ai secolului XIX-lea în mintea altor doi economiști importanți ai epocii, englezul W. S. Jevons ori francezul Léon Walras, situația nu a scăzut cu nimic din meritele gânditorului austriac, de a fi descoperit, teoretizat și popularizat această idee. Îl vor fi ajutat în acest sens, nu doar cunoștințele sale enciclopedice de literatură socio-umanistă ori stilul său clar, natural, lipsit de prețiozitate, cât mai ales faptul că a ales, în mod cu totul surprinzător, să nu se folosească de matematică în

argumentarea și demonstrarea teoriei sale. Nu în ultimul rând l-au ajutat în acest sens, Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk și Friedrich von Wieser, primii doi mari discipoli ai săi, care au meritul de a fi dezvoltat și modernizat teoria marginalistă, precum și celelalte idei economice ale sale.

Și totuși, *Principiile* nu sunt scrise de Menger cu gândul expres la ideea utilității marginale. Încă din prefața acestei lucrări, economistul austriac ne informează că scopul cărții sale este altul. Pentru el, analiza nevoilor, respectiv teoria valorii și utilității marginale, dacă folosesc la ceva, folosesc în primul rând la descoperirea și formularea unei legi unitare de formare a prețurilor. În opinia teoreticianului austriac aceasta ar fi legea fundamentală a economiei, legea capabilă să explice fenomenele prețului, dobânzilor, salariilor, chiriei etc., acea lege din care pot fi deduse toate celelalte regularități ale sistemului economic. Elaborată pe baza teoriei valorii marginale și a stabilirii prealabile a condițiilor în care schimbul economic devine posibil, teoria mengeriană a prețului are meritul de a scoate la lumină comportamentul și evaluările relative ale indivizilor ce participă la procesele de piață în stabilirea ponderii schimbului și a prețurilor bunurilor tranzacționate. Prețul unui bun nu determină în opinia lui Menger valoarea economică și nici nu este egal cu cantitatea de muncă ori de capital (David Ricardo și K. Marx) investită în aceasta. Din contră, și pentru a evita orice explicație circulară, pentru el, valoarea economică a unui bun, marcată de utilitatea marginală a acestuia (condiționată de utilitate și de raritate) este cea care determină costul de producție al bunurilor. În ciuda acestor calități, pentru mulți economiști, teoria prețului reprezintă veriga slabă a marginalismului mengerian. Fără a putea intra în detalii aici, nu trebuie să uităm că teoria mengeriană a prețului a pus bazele teoriei alegerii raționale și ale calculului în economie. Această teorie a dobândit acest rol, deoarece, spre deosebire de Jevons, Wallras, Pareto ori de ceilalți mari economiști marginaliști, care au recurs la analiza matematică și au fundamentat teoria echilibrului general, autorul său, preocupat de analiza proceselor economice, a făcut din *timp* un concept fundamental al teoriei economice. Într-adevăr, pentru Menger, timpul nu poate fi exclus din calculul economic, la fel cum predicția economică, în ciuda limitelor sale evidente, nu poate fi ignorată din acțiunile umane ale societății civilizate.

S-ar putea ca această semnificație majoră pe care Menger a acordat-o timpului în economie să fie motivul pentru care acesta a păstrat distanța până la capăt atât față de tendința generalizată de matematizare a științelor

economice, cât și față de cealaltă tendință aflată la modă inclusiv în momentul de față și înrudită cu ea, cea de aplicare a acestor științe nu la ordinea concretă și dinamică a realității acțiunilor individuale, ci la ordinea ideatică, teoretică și statică a universurilor macrosociale? Nu știm. Ceea ce știm este că, în ciuda scurgerii acestui timp, științele economice, și nu doar ele, datorează astăzi Principiilor Economiei lui Menger ceea ce au datorat ele inclusiv la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea. Nu doar reformarea bazelor lor teoretice și metodologice, dar și trasarea celor mai fecunde și mai actuale dintre teme de reflexie ale liberalismului contemporan. Să fie aceasta un motiv suficient pentru ca lucrările lui Menger să înceapă a se bucura, în sfârșit, de un interes mai mare și în rândul românilor ?

(Cristinel Trandafir, University of Craiova)

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