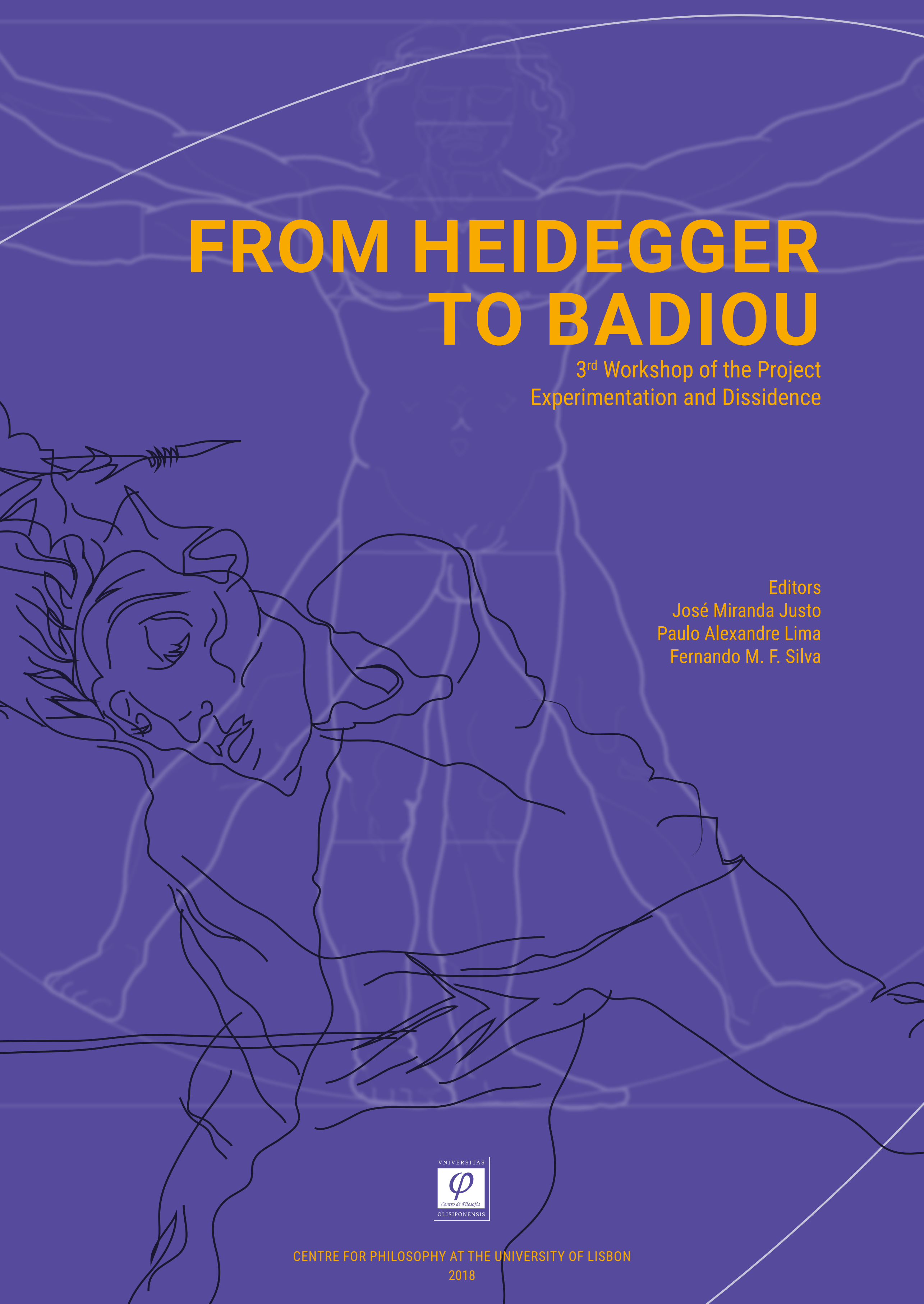

FROM HEIDEGGER TO BADIOU

3rd Workshop of the Project Experimentation and Dissidence

Editors
José Miranda Justo
Paulo Alexandre Lima
Fernando M. F. Silva

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CENTRE FOR PHILOSOPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LISBON
2018

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INTRODUCTION

The research project Experimentation and Dissidence presently offers to the public its third e-book – a gathering of the texts put forward during our Third Workshop held on the 1st and 2nd of February 2018 at CULTURGEST in Lisbon.

The main objectives of the project have been sufficiently explained in the introductions to the first and second e-books. We shall not insist on them at the present moment; nor shall we repeat the extensive considerations on the topic of the transformations of philosophy that were exposed in the introduction to the second e-book. We will rather dedicate the first part of this introduction to the problem of the multifariousness of topics, approaches, methodologies and theories that characterizes philosophical endeavors of the period covered in our Third Workshop: the period that runs from Heidegger to the present-day.

Never was philosophy as prone to multiplicity as in the second half of the 20th century and in the first two decades of the 21st century. This apparently trivial statement constitutes a problem from the point of view of the history of philosophy. We all know that the history of philosophy always proceeded in an arbitrary way when it excluded authors and approaches in order to elect others as its main dramatic personae or plots. But that was always understood as a result of a kind of physical impossibility of treating all past authors on an equal plane, and all past approaches as having the same theoretical value. The problem today is quite different. If there is a history of contemporary philosophy – and I believe there is one, and an extremely rich one –, if there is no radical contradiction between history and what is contemporary, namely in the area of philosophical studies, then the history of philosophy has to take up a position facing the enormous amount of proposals and controversies that appear to the common reader and to some commentators as a chaos or a landscape of total cacophony. For this task the history of philosophy needs, roughly speaking, a concept – in the strong sense of the word. I contend that this concept is one of *heterogeneity* and that, instead of fabricating some kind of artificial and reductionist unity, this operative concept is the only manner of dealing with completely unorganized forms of existence, like the one of the present-day broad spectrum of philosophical production.

If each of the directions taken by philosophy in recent times has its specific difference, if such differences emerge in an extremely complicated network of contradictions and complementarities, if this network is the opposite of a stable set of theoretical propositions and, on the contrary, is constantly growing in an obviously never-ending movement of expansion, it is certainly because the seeds of dissent inhabit the heart of this rhizomatic galaxy and completely open the way to a tendential infinity of prospects that has probably never been predicted before. Dissidence – that dissidence which is one of the meta-concepts that guide our project – has attained in the last six or seven decades a new qualitative degree; it makes sense to use the current economical and political expression, and say that dissidence is now globalized and no longer localized, meaning that we are no longer able to observe it in confined moments and situations, and instead we are confronted with its presence allover and at every second.

Why is heterogeneity the concept that can help us deal with this situation, without reducing it to an absurd unity, which, in fact, has never existed, but would be even more unacceptable today? Heterogeneity – contrary to diversity or multiplicity – does not take its explanatory power from a geometrical framework (an Euclidian one, where diversity is detectable along one same line, and multiplicity is apprehended in the relation between different points on different planes). Heterogeneity, as a concept, functions on the basis of the metaphor of explosion. An explosion does not send out particles of matter in an ordered manner, according to an irradiative symmetry; on the contrary, the different particles of the outburst interfere with other particles, causing crashes that are responsible for new particles, and so on. The heterogenic image is one of chaos, and the result is potentially infinite. This is the image that the history of philosophy has to construct of its object nowadays. We have attained the age in which the old dream of modernist artists has become reality, the age in which everyone can become an artist, and in which – at least potentially – anybody who wants to can become a philosopher. This age needs its conceptualization, and this conceptualization – in order to not be reactionary and reductionist – has to ascertain a place for the openness of the phenomenon and for its chaotic character. Only on this basis can we apprehend the heterogenic state of affairs of contemporary philosophy and simultaneously pave the way for a mitigated – humble, if not *poor* – principle for understanding the path that can lead us inside the chaos. The problem becomes one of simultaneously neither reducing nor effacing what is heterogenic, and creating forms of apprehension of globalized units inside the chaotic whole. In other words, to borrow Deleuze's luminous expression here, the problem becomes one of thinking and living (in) a *chaosmos*. And the philosophical concept of heterogeneity represents only the inchoative moment for such a thinking and living. The rest remains to be built – but surely without erasing the matrix that is the chaotic ground where thinking has always to spread its roots.

The trajectory from Heidegger to Badiou – and beyond, to Agamben – that gives body to the present volume is only a small example of what has been said above. In the myriad of references and elected approaches that it contains in addition to the authors and problems referred to in the titles of the articles, the book offers itself up to each reader as an occasion for a work of reconstruction of a certain possible articulation of a wide range of divergent topics and approaches. Each reader's reconstruction will be a production of sense that, in its own way, contributes to the history of contemporary philosophy.

The two first texts establish a connection with the last part of our second volume by returning to Heidegger's thought. But they do this in new directions that introduce important critical elements. Olivier Feron's contribution discusses the 1929 Davos debate between Heidegger and Ernst Cassirer on the Kantian legacy and on the weakening or radicalization – the Heideggerian view vs. the Cassirerian one – of Enlightenment's prospects. Paulo A. Lima's text, taking as a point of departure Derrida's lectures on Heidegger, being and history (1964–65), enables consideration of Heidegger's influence – but also of his critical reception – in the second half of the 20th century. With his text, Marcio G. de Paula contributes indirectly to this same problematic in that his treatment of Karl Barth's *Letter to the Romans* and of the relation of this commentary to its Kierkegaardian antecedents also raises the topic of the Barthian critical distance to Heideggerianism. Ângela Fernandes, in her contribution dedicated to the experimentalism of Ramón Gómez de la Serna, also engages deeply in the discussion of themes and problems that have dominated the philosophical and literary scenes during a great part of the 20th century, in particular the topics of nationalism, dehumanization and post-humanism. Having in view Levinas' horizon of argumentation, which lies in the "openness to the Other", Carlos João Correia's article focuses on the topic of time as the non-presence of the subject to herself that "breaks with the metaphysical solitude of the I." Alison Assiter addresses the question of sexual desire and sexual arousal in a critical discussion of Roger Scruton's points of view centered on the idea of a profound discontinuity between humans and animals, built upon a misreading of the Freudian legacy. Drawing on Shakespeare – but also on Celan –, Laura Llevadot addresses Derrida's conception of time as an invitation to let go of the common chronological perspective and "to articulate a new materialism without substance", which leaves room for the possibility of envisaging unexpected relations "between the human and the world." Two contributions to this volume take Gilles Deleuze's thought as their object. The main focus of Victor Gonçalves' paper is Deleuze's rhizomatic thought and the author's displacement from interpretation to experimentation, aiming to initiate a fertile discussion on "invention, action and the insoluble." José M. Justo deals with Deleuze's conception of the relation between philosophy and non-philosophy, giving special attention to the topic of the infinity of the field where percepts and affects develop their activity. The two next articles are dedicated to Michel Foucault. Elisabetta Basso, drawing on her knowledge of the author's archives, concentrates on Foucault's concept of an "historical apriori" at the basis of his archaeology, and develops the thesis of a strong connection between historicity and transcendentality. Marita Rainsborough, with a focus on Foucault's interest in the topic of "emotional economy", discusses the author's criticism of neo-liberalism and his accentuation of the "freedom of human self-design", which locates "issues of physicality, emotionality and desire in a socio-political dimension." The next two texts also deal with one and the same author: Guy Debord. Benjamin Noys argues that Debord was not only influential on philosophy but was also "profoundly philosophical in inspiration", and suggests that, as a "thinker of collective life", the theorist of the Situationist International opened the way for the conception of "a dialectics of life and non-life" that derives from the consideration of capitalism as "the accumulation of 'dead labor' in the form of the spectacle." Vasco B. Marques, starting from Debord's concept of a "spectacular time" – put forward in *The Society of Spectacle* –, embraces the task of establishing the determinations of this new time, presenting it as "the most basic form of alienation" and concluding that its concrete presence "prevents modern man from living his life in an authentic way." Bruno P. Dias directly confronts the presence of the meta-concepts of experimentation and dissidence in Alain Badiou's thinking, and he does so by scrutinizing the role that the philosopher reserves for philosophy and by dislocating the author's considerations on some non-philosophical domains of truth to the very domain of philosophy. Finally, Juan E. Valls envisages the task of analyzing Agamben's contributions to post-foundational political thought, in particular regarding the philosopher's concept of inoperosity, by examining the relations between aesthetics and politics and by conceiving of an understanding of how literature can develop "a space of critique and resistance through experimentation, indeterminacy of meaning and unreadability."

The volume does not end, however, before an appendix has been added. This appendix results from the fact that, for reasons that were beyond the control of the editors, one text that should have belonged to the second e-book arrived in our hands considerably late. Nevertheless, we are happy to be able to publish this enriching contribution authored by our colleague José Manuel Martins. It is a reflection on philosophy and film, more precisely on Terrence Malick, Martin Heidegger and the "technological salvation of modern technology."

To conclude I wish to express my gratitude to the Research Centre for Philosophy at the University of Lisbon that has always given all imaginable support to the project and its initiatives. Thanks are also due to the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, which is responsible for funding the project and its activities. I deeply appreciate all of those who participated actively in the Third Workshop of the project – speakers and respondents –, thus also contributing to the richness and success of the present volume. Finally, a special word of appreciation is due to those who, with extreme commitment and dedication, specifically helped out with the organizational tasks of the Workshop and the preparation of this volume: Elisabete de Sousa, Paulo Lima, Fernando Silva, and our editorial designer Catarina Aguiar.

José Miranda Justo
Main researcher of the Project E and D
April 2018

KANT AND MODERNITY BETWEEN GNOSTICISM AND RADICAL ENLIGHTENMENT: THE DAVOS DEBATE BETWEEN CASSIRER AND HEIDEGGER

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Abstract
The Davos debate held in 1929 around the relevance of Kant's oeuvre can be understood as the confrontation around the possible destiny of the Enlightenment movement itself. We will try to show that Heidegger's interpretation of critical finitude as the expansion of self-affection of consciousness to the whole of Experience can be understood as a radical weakening of the self-determination duty of the modern Man and the definitive invalidation of the modern emancipatory project through the instrumentalization of the work of its main figure, Kant. By contrast, the radicalisation of the Kantian interrogation "*Was ist Mensch*?" and its expansion throughout a multiplication of aprioristic symbolic horizons by Cassirer corresponds to a drastic attempt to fulfil the critical project. The vital dynamics of form-giving in all its complexity and richness must correspond to the actualization of the Kantian project, allowing to conceive the application of the transcendental to contemporary topics, such as expression, the body (*Leib*), political irrationalism or the ante-categorical representation.
Thesis: The confrontation in Davos in 1929 between Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger on the actuality and interpretation of Kant's legacy is interpreted here as a turning point in the history of philosophy and thought in general.

Keywords
Cassirer, Enlightenment, Finitude, Gnosticism, Heidegger, Man

The Davos debate took place in 1929, in a stylish resort in Switzerland, where philosophers from both Germany and France met in order to try to think together, almost 10 years after the massive slaughter of the Great War. For most interpreters, what was supposed to be an attempt to offer the possibility to reconcile the intellectuals from both side of the trenches ended up to be an omen of the coming horror. One episode incarnated this: paradoxically, the confrontation took place between two German philosophers, separated by generation, references, categories and intentions; the French intellectuals were reduced to be merely spectators of the exposition of the core of the conflict which would dilacerate the entire world, a few years later. The debate between Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger became, *volens nolens*, a paradigm, and incarnates the core of the violent opposition of the epoch.

But the traditional interpretation of the debate gave a quite distorted vision of the *enjeu*, of what was really at stake in the attempt to measure the relevance of Kant's oeuvre for contemporaneity. On one hand, the representative of a refined, bourgeois old-school world, the last survivor of the Enlightment sadly crushed in the field of Verdun, kind but obsolete. On the other hand, the *enfant terrible* of the new tendency in philosophy, the heir of the phenomenological school founded by Husserl, ready to take by storm the modern world he so deeply despises and to tumble down the whole metaphysical tradition in the way of a new, radical, starting over. Various elements contributed to the perpetuation of this caricature. First of all, the constant propaganda machine Heidegger developed during his whole life: from his special-made *völkisch* leather costume prepared for Davos or his escapades skiing while the congress took place, to his staging of the authentical thinker in his *Hütte*, an apparently modest stronghold against the rage of nihilistic modernity. Then, the very fate of all the resistance against nazi madness, from death to exile, sometimes in dreadful conditions, like Cassirer crossing the northern Atlantic on the last ship, miraculously spared by sea mines and U-Boots. Most of them never could make it back to Europe, to pursue their work of resistance and understanding of the irrational dark forces which devastated the old world. Paradoxically, it was rather the chancellor of the University of Freiburg in 1933 who provided the concepts to think the events, and had an overwhelming influence on the new French generation of thinkers, beginning with his seminal *Letter on Humanism.*[1] Finally, while the translation and the teaching of the mage of Freiburg determined the whole post-war academic and intellectual life of Latin Europe, Cassirer was destined to oblivion, his major work, the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, being translated into French only in the seventies, as an act of resistance of Pierre Bourdieu against the overwhelming influence of Heidegger in the university and the book market.

Nevertheless, the Davos debate must now, with distance, be interpreted not as the confrontation of characters, but as the moment of decision between two radical philosophical choices which could help us understand our very position in the modern epoch we are facing. The discussion focused on Kant is not a coincidence. From the fate of the critical heritage, the most radical foundation of modernity, depends our contemporary destiny. In this sense, the main and decisive attack on modern conscience by Heidegger was not fundamentally aimed at Descartes, confined to a substantial reduction of the world and the thought to a manipulating purpose.[2] Since Kant definitely dismissed metaphysics so as to recentre the realm of thought in the one of representation and experience, the critical undertaking was the absolute opponent to a radical journey back to ontology. In this sense, the interpretation of Heidegger began from the very core of the Copernican revolution, from a manipulation of the concept of finitude, locking up the whole Kantian consciousness into the net of temporal relativity.

1. Self-affection and phenomenological weakening of conscience *überhaupt*[3]

One of the fulcral points of the Heideggerian critique of Kant is without a doubt the one aiming at self-affection. The priority Heidegger gives to time subordinates the question of objectivity – one of the main problems of critical philosophy – to the pure form of inner sensibility. The finitude of the subject is measured by its sensible constitution, and this one, widened to the whole experience; that makes the sensible receptivity represent the originary fundamental dimension of any experience. If Cassirer agrees that the sensible moment is an essential moment of our relation with the world, the break with Heidegger comes when the latter reduces the unity of conscience to a temporal product, or when Heidegger operates

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[1] On the massive influence of Heidegger on the post-war generation in France, see the reference work of D. Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, 2 Volumes, Paris, Albin Michel, 2001.

[2] See M. Heidegger, *Die Zeit des Weltbildes* in *Holzwege*, Frankfurt, Klostermann, 1949.

[3] This paragraph is a synthesis of an analysis developed in the chapter "De Marburg a Davos, ou o outro colóquio da última Ceia" in O. Feron, *O intervalo de Contingência – Hans Blumenberg e outros modernos*, Lisboa, Centro de Filosofia da Univrsidade de Lisboa, 2011, pp. 117–127.

> (...) a double shift; from the objectivity in general to the Being in its difference with the being, from timeless ego to the temporal ex-tatic Dasein. In Kant, the *Etwas* überhaupt means the objectivity of any object, as a correlate of pure conscience. Turning the latter one temporal, Heidegger is obviously lead to also turn the former one into something temporal.[4]

The consequence of such a broadening focuses on the radical temporal character of the *Dasein* in its relation with itself. If the pure form of time establishes itself as the condition of each and every position in general, the original intentional aim of conscience, as pure, inclines towards time itself. In this case, pure conscience, being temporal, aims itself as temporally affected by itself. Time is here what affects itself originally and, simultaneously, establishes the whole field of the aimed. Caught in this movement that exceeds it and makes it possible, conscience, which is fully temporal, finds itself determined by the same determinations as time itself: its passivity.

> It is only as founded on this kind of ipseity that the finite being can be what it is aimed to be a being submitted to receptivity.[5]

Crossing conscience completely, time undoes the distance that Kant maintained between the sensible dimension, that is labile, of conscience and the consistency through which it perceives its own modifications. In one word, what Heidegger suggests is to reduce the analytical unity of apperception to the sole synthetical unity. The consequence of this deed is, based on the Copernican revolution, that the whole experience is reduced to the sensible character, and therefore passive, receptive of the ek-static temporal conscience. In spite of the heterodoxical character of his interpretation, Heidegger can claim an authentically Kantian position (a position in front of which Kant, frightened, would have stepped back... unlike Heidegger himself, of course), in so far as he intends to conclude the critical undertaking, founding philosophy itself on the soil of finitude. Kant, according to him, would have remained trapped in the snare of this last manifestation of metaphysics which is its modern metamorphosis, science, and would have sacrificed finitude to the ambition of the universality of scientific objectivity.

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[4] D. Giovannangeli, *La passion de l'origine* (A paixão da origem), Paris, Galilée, 1995, p. 82.

[5] "This pure intuition solicits itself through (the object) that is object of intuition, forming it without the help of experience. Time, by nature, is self-affection of itself. Even more, it is precisely what forms (the aimed) that, going out of itself, aims-towards... [so etwas wie das 'Von-sich-aus-hin-zu-auf...'], in such a way that the aimed, formed like this, emerges and flows back on this aimed". M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, Frankfurt am Main, Klostermann, 1973, § 34, p. 183.

2. The gnostic conviction of Man

This revolution concerning the conception of the temporality of conscience has tremendous consequences on the anthropological reflexion inspired by the main Kantian interrogation: *Was ist Mensch* ? The reduction of conscience to a fundamental passivity – through the instrumentalization of time as operator of this movement – extracts from man the very possibility of self-determination (*Selbstbehauptung*) which was the main purpose of the Enlightenment, or, as Kant put it, the possibility of autonomy. As a consequence, Man is condemned to a condition of incompatibility, of restlessness that transforms the pure Husserlian intentionality into an emotional drift and removes any possibility of dwelling in his own life. As a sentimental castaway, the human being (*Mensch*) is sentenced by Heidegger to be an inauthentical generalization, a *Verfallen*; therefore, he opts for an alleged authenticity of the individuality that appears sporadically in the temporality of the instant (*Augenblick*), but without any possibility for man to take part in the process. As such, the drifter into existence is condemned to a cruel fate which appears like an open jail with no possibility of escape. Unlike Christian metaphysics, there is no perspective of salvation or redemption here; not even the Augustinian *Qui voluit* threw Man in such an abyss of helplessness.

Cassirer denounces here a religious inspiration in Heidegger's comprehension of temporality not as *Werden* but as an experience of the spiritual basic phenomenon of anxiety/care (*Sorge*).[6] This rejection of any kind of universality around the Kantian *Mensch*, which is nothing less than a repetition of the gesture already launched by Feuerbach and the left Hegelians (*sic*) in the name of a greater authenticity, throws back the *Dasein* into an insurmountable loneliness, only exceeded through "a fundamental event (*Grundgeschehen*) of the internal dynamic of the metaphysics of *Dasein*".[7]

The definition of the *Dasein* as an event, and not as a structure or the dynamics of determinations, matches with the Heideggerian analysis of Kant's schematism and its originarity, determined as "'exhibition', an exhibition of presentation (*Darstellung*), of the free 'giving itself', which contains a necessary relation to a 'receiving' (*Hinnehmen*)".[8] Heidegger's insistence on the receptive character of conscience, at the most intimate and native level, always aims at the reduction of any possible free determination of its re-presentations, defined as inauthentic or/and insufficiently native (this authentic-inauthentic duality works here systematically as a term of disqualification of Cassirer's philosophy of representation – i.e. symbolic. A pure receptivity is hence a promise of authenticity).

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[6] "Für Heidegger, der nicht von der *Biologie*, sondern von der *Religionsphilosophie* herkommt, – dessen Anschauung von der "Existenz" u. von der "Zeitlichkeit" nicht wie diejenige Bergsons durch die Betrachtung des *Lebens*phaenomens, des Phanomens des natürlichen "Werdens" und "Vergehens" bestimmt wird – sondern dem alle Zeitlichkeit im "Augenblick" (religiös gesehen) wurzelt – dem sie durch die "Sorge" konstituiert wird und durch das religiöse Urphaenomen des Todes – und der Angst (vgl. Kierkegaard)". E. Cassirer, *Zur Metaphysik der Symbolischen Formen*, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1995, p. 219. This fragmentary analysis is drawn from the manuscript of the fourth volume of Cassirer's main work, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, unpublished until 1995; however, it was written during 1928, directly in the wake of the discovery of *Time and Being*.

[7] *Davoser Disputation* in M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1991, p. 285. It should be noted that the transcription of the Davos debate has hardly been available as an independent publication, since Heidegger's heirs – and will executors – were against its publication outside Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*. On the other hand, Tony Bondi, Cassirer's widow, always authorized the publication, as an independent book, of the discussion transcriptions between her husband and Heidegger. This incomprehensible ban on the part of Heidegger's clan even led to the withdrawal of the French edition (Paris, Beauchesne, 1972), reinforcing the absence of discussion on the topic and extending Cassirer's exile from the philosophical discussion.

[8] *Davoser Disputation in* M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, op. cit.*, p. 280.

In so doing, Heidegger breaks up with the Kantian tradition, a rupture expressed by his reduction of Man to his very peculiar understanding of finitude. It was easy for Cassirer to remember him of the infinite dimension developed by man, particularly in the practical realm of Reason.[9] Not only Cassirer is undeniably in line with of Kantian philosophy, but he also performs an inversion of the Heideggerian pretension of developing a practical philosophy, thus breaking with the theoretical tradition of metaphysics assimilated to its last avatar, science, and whose ultimate representative was his old master Husserl.[10] The practical result here is that Man finds himself in a situation in which it is impossible to develop a project of self-determination; on the contrary, he must be submitted to an emotional passiveness facing an inauthentical world which awakes the only emotional disposition promising authenticity: anxiety (*Angst*).

If this whole configuration appears to be as anti-modern as it can be, it can now be understood why the confrontation with critical philosophy, through its last and most innovative representative, was so crucial to Heidegger. But if Cassirer perfectly identified countless elements borrowed from the religious determination of Man (particularly from Augustine and Luther), he also perfectly points out that the determination of Man as Angst cannot in any case be answered by a religious calming down:

> He [Heidegger] does not allow anxiety, as mankind's basic state of mind, to be pacified through either theological metaphysics nor a religious Gospel of salvation.[11]

---

[9] See *Davoser Disputation* in M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, op. cit.*, pp. 276–7

[10] See the profound analysis of J. Taminiaux on the differences between Heidegger and Hannah Arendt in *La fille de Thrace et le penseur professionnel*, Paris, Payot, 1992, where he establishes the Heidegger's reduction of the Aristotelian Theorein to his own practical definition of reappropriation by the Dasein. "... le temps dans lequel le passé et l'avenir comptent autant que le présent est la temporalité finie du *Dasein*. (...) Heidegger s'accorde encore avec Aristote et Platon pour attribuer au *biôs theôrétikos* le statut de possibilité la plus haute du *Dasein*, de l'exister. Mais il en diverge du tout au tout lorsqu'il change l'orientation de la *Theôria*. Au lieu de considérer l'être perpétuel de la *physis*, la *theôria* de l'ontologie fondamentale heideggérienne n'a de regard que pour l'être mortel du *Dasein*. Dès lors, au lieu de se séparer de la phronesis, la *sophia* au sens heideggérien lui est intimement associée. " *Ibidem*, p. 20.

[11] E. Cassirer, *Zur Metaphysik der Symbolischen Formen, op. cit.*, p. 223.

Here is probably the moment when Cassirer identifies the core of Heidegger's existential nihilism. As the author of *Being and Time* countlessly said, his philosophy is not religious, in the sense that it would be one more philosophical interpretation of Christianity. But the inspiration he found in Christian tradition is here decisive. And it was an ancient student of Heidegger who identified the actual root of his inspiration: Hans Jonas.

3. Jonas' identification of gnostic structures in Heidegger's radical ontology

Jonas will undertake the task of interpreting the profound inspiration of Heidegger's thought where Cassirer had to leave it: the total absence of possible relief for the anxious living being named Man. His vast studies and knowledge of the gnostic nebula led Jonas to switch his methodological assumption that Gnosticism as an ancient form of nihilism could be fruitfully interpreted through the categories of nowadays existentialism.[12] But, soon enough, Jonas realized that he should invert his method and use gnostic categories to understand current nihilism, even with all the hermeneutical resources he should use. The result is that Jonas gives a conceptual form to the intuition Cassirer had, when he identified the total absence of an horizon of salvation in Heidegger's description of the inauthentic life of man.

In a cosmos absolutely deserted by the Gods and deprived of any possibility to inhabit a world described as cruelly indifferent to human life, Jonas is going to draw the portrait of a gnostic existentialism in its structure, even if Heidegger never would admit such an approximation. The analysis of Jonas gives us a coherent structure of characteristics shared by Gnosticism and Heideggerian existencialism:

> — Both refuse any kind of universality in this world (critique of the *nomoi*);
>
> — The gnostic good is the absolute Other (without any possibility of thinking it through the means of this world), such is the Being of Heidegger: *nihil* instead of *ens*, refusal of any universal law of thought

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[12] H. Jonas, "Gnosticism and Modern Nihilism" in *The Gnostic Religion*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1958 (1970); cited here from *La religion gnostique*, trad. L. Évrard, Paris, Flammarion, 1978, pp. 417–442.

that could be embedded in a rational enunciation;

— Man has no *nomos*: it is impossible to have a being of man, rather he is thrown into an indifferent world, which is hostile to him: life is thrown into the world of darkness; for the gnostic this is the *Geworfenheit* of *Dasein*;

— Original violence of this fall into the world, which reduces existence to a dynamic of a temporal throwing, a casting without existentials but only contingency. There is no meaning in such an existence;

— This cold and indifferent world induces a despise for nature and its vital inner principle;

— This leads to a thought of absolute atrocious dualism, a dualism without metaphysics.

This atrocious condition of man is utterly expressed by Hans Blumenberg:

> The analytical description of "existence" neither replaced nor renewed the old "sinner"; it created another guilty [or: indebted, *Schuldigen*] person of unequally more horrible insolvency. For this person, not only is there factually no redemption; there can be none.[13]

Facing this terrifying condition, Jonas will later develop his famous reflection on the basic phenomenon of Life, as a unique possibility to survive nihilism, and to inhabit a world where the respect of life itself should be counted as the foundation of any practical reflection, any ethic, any inspired *phrônesis*. Paradoxically, Jonas' separation from his old teacher goes in the very same way chosen by Cassirer 50 years sooner. In their despise for an indifferent world both will oppose a determined bet on the immanence of life *within* the world.

In the case of Cassirer, we could say that, if Newtonian physics functioned as a paradigm for Kant, the phenomenon of life became for the philosopher of Hamburg the *Urphänomen*, the Basic Phenomenon from which all the various manifestations of meaning spread: the symbolical world. Updating the Kantian epokhè of any ontology, Cassirer will develop a thought of pure immanence in the realm of representation, which is to say: within the realm of meaning. Life itself is enabled for man through his active participation in the dynamic, ever renewed creation of significations through the multiple symbolic forms that draw the territory of *Mensch*. There is no remote possibility to "jump" out of the symbolic horizon that defines human existence. This is the radicalism we can recognize in the Cassirerian position: *finitude* must be understood as the acknowledgment of the impossibility to do without the symbolic forms. Widening and updating the Kantian concept of experience to forge the multiple dynamic of the symbolic worlds (i.e. universes of representation), Cassirer carries out a work of modernization of the critical undertaking. This finitude is obviously unacceptable to Heidegger. And paradoxically, this is the last argument that Cassirer opposes to Heidegger in Davos, when it is absolutely evident for this conciliatory man that Heidegger was there to "destroy" the logos, reason and culture, opposing himself to Kant:

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[13] Hans Blumenberg, , Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1987; *Care crosses the river*, trad. P. Fleming, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010, p. 47.

> In this sense, Kant was lead by his radicalism to a position where he could not do anything but throw back.
> This position means: destruction (*Zerstörung*) of what have been the founding principles of the western metaphysic (Spirit, Logos, Reason).[14]

Even when they absolutely disagree with each other, Cassirer points out that there is language, as a symbolic form, which is the condition of possibility of the discussion in Davos. This argument is not circumstantial, but radically transcendental in the strongest critical way. When Heidegger refuses pure mediation (*das blosse Vermitteln*) as non-productive – or rather: inauthentic – Cassirer sees in the functional multiplicity of mediation the productive possibility of meaning. There is no possibility to come before or out of the realm of symbols because they establish the conditions of existence of man as a symbolical animal: there is a relation of reciprocity between man and symbol. The very existence of man is within the pulse of symbolic creation and recreation. Symbols are not theoretical, but products of the life within sense.

> If we define the world of Geist by means of this totality [totality of possible ways of giving form or meaning], then the "Archimedean point" of certitude that we are seeking can never be given to us from outside of it, but always

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[14] *Davoser Disputation in* M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, op. cit.*, p. 272.

> be sought within it. The mind cannot peel off, like snakeskins, the forms in which it lives and exists, in which it not only thinks but also feels and perceives, sees and gives shape to things.[15]

This is the answer Kant gives, through the words of his heir, to the radicalism of Heidegger's desperate nihilism: there is no salvation neither out of the symbolic horizon nor through a return to the cosmological desperation the Gnostics first elaborated. In this sense, Cassirer anticipates in Davos the further path that Jonas will follow, years later, to overcome nihilism and restore the ethical commitment inherited by the Enlightenment: the obligation to protect life through the multiple, inexhaustible process of creation of meaning. The multiplicity of the different modes of representing, understanding, feeling and seeing is here not just a theoretical approach to the human ability to create symbols. It also means to underline the very ethical possibility of recognition of diversity. The symbolic *praxis* is a vital and never ending exercise of modern phrônesis, an Hadrian wall against all kind of inhumanity.

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[15] E. Cassirer, *Zur Metaphysik der Symbolischen Formen*, *op. cit.*, p. 47–8.

IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS HEIDEGGER. DERRIDA BECOMING HIMSELF

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Abstract

Jacques Derrida was one of the first French philosophers to seriously engage with Heidegger's works (in particular with *Sein und Zeit* and its relation with Heidegger's later texts). Heidegger's works – or rather Derrida's interpretation of them – were extremely important in the definition of the latter's way of thinking. Near the beginning of his philosophical, academic career (1964–1965) Derrida gave a series of lectures at the *École normale supérieure* (Paris) on *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*. These lectures, which focused mainly on *Sein und Zeit* and the reappearance of its fundamental questions in Heidegger's later thinking, give a very clear sense of Derrida's skilful art of interpretation. During the course of the lectures, by means of a close reading of several key passages in *Sein und Zeit*, Derrida introduces some of the philosophical concepts he will later be known for.

The main focus of my presentation is the way in which Derrida, in his reading of Heidegger's texts and his movement towards an original kind of thinking, differs from a canonical, philological reading of Heidegger. I try to show that the extent to which Derrida differs from this type of reading may be considered as being the exact measure of the productiveness of his own reading. This could be demonstrated by taking up several examples in Derrida's lectures. Since I cannot consider them all here, I will concentrate on the question of metaphor. According to Derrida, the concept and the activity of metaphor are the instruments that allow to think about, and try to overcome, the difficulties in escaping traditional, metaphysical ways of thinking. Although Heidegger does not pause over metaphor as such in *Sein und Zeit*, Derrida points to the fact that the problem of metaphor was already present in Heidegger's *opus magnum*. During the course of my presentation, I attempt to identify Derrida's hermeneutical strategies in doing this, in order to indicate that they constitute fruitful means of conceptual innovation in philosophy through the interpretation of texts in the philosophical tradition.

Keywords
Derrida, Destruction, Heidegger, History, Language, Metaphor

1.

I will start my presentation in a very Heideggerian and Derridean fashion, by commenting on its title. However, there is at least one detail that makes this beginning less Heideggerian and Derridean, namely the fact that the following comments will have to be brief.

The title of this presentation apparently makes use of two common places. First, it seems to presuppose that on the basis of Derrida's thinking, as it were, there is only one main philosophical figure, which is Heidegger. Secondly, it seems to endorse the view that there is a particular moment in which Derrida authentically becomes himself, that is, the thinker he was destined to be since the beginning of his philosophical activity.

"In the beginning there was Heidegger". I should perhaps say: "In the beginning there was Heidegger and so forth". For, as we may well know, in the beginning there was first of all Husserl (who, by the way, was also one of the main thinkers behind Heidegger's philosophical beginnings). In truth, at least in the case of Derrida's thinking – but I would dare to say in the case of all thinkers – many fatherly figures, so to speak, are present in their beginnings. And at least in Derrida's case, there are as many beginnings as there are these fatherly figures.

In my presentation, I simply intend to assess the significance of one of these main figures (namely Heidegger) for the inception of Derrida's way of thinking. For contextual reasons, I will restrict my analysis of Derrida's confrontation with Heidegger throughout his philosophical career to a series of lectures he gave at the ENS-Ulm, which date back to 1964–1965. Indeed, Heidegger was one of the key catalysing figures in Derrida's philosophical path – a path which is not reducible to any stabilized doctrinal content and which, in virtue of its plasticity and continuing metamorphosis, should be characterized through its metaphoricity (in very much the same terms as Derrida himself characterizes Heidegger's thinking as a whole at the end of his lecture series; I shall come back to this point later on). Of course, this is not the place to determine each and every step taken by Derrida in his philosophical path; but my presentation will not have been in vain if it can give a tiny glimpse of the way in which Derrida, very early on and by means of an analysis of Heidegger's texts, finds encouragement to begin – or rather, to continue beginning – his incessant, unfinished becoming.

2.

Let me now enter into some more detail as to the significance of the aforementioned lectures by Derrida for the development of his thought and also as to the key topic of my presentation.

Derrida was one of the first French philosophers to seriously engage with Heidegger's works.[1] Near the beginning of his academic career (1964–1965) Derrida gave a series of lectures at the École normale supérieure (Ulm, Paris) on *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*. These lectures focused mainly on *Sein und Zeit* (1927) and the reappearance of its fundamental aspects in Heidegger's later writings. The fact that in the course of his lectures Derrida presented his own renderings of several passages of *Sein und Zeit*, as well as significantly modified versions of already existent translations into French of other works by Heidegger – such as *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (1935), *Überwindung der Metaphysik* (1936–1946), *Brief über den Humanismus* (1946), among others – testifies to the originality and pioneering character of Derrida's reading of Heidegger in the context of the French reception of the latter's work. Moreover, Derrida's lecture series already foreshadowed his subsequent analyses of Heidegger's thinking in later texts such as *De la grammatologie* (1967), *Ousia et grammè: note sur une note de Sein und Zeit* (1968), *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question* (1987), *Geschlecht I* (1983), *Geschlecht II* (1987), *Apories* (1993), and so forth. Another link between Derrida's reading of Heidegger in 1964–1965 and his later writings on the German philosopher is the fact that he explicitly says at the very end of his lecture series that during the course of the semester he did not carry out the analysis of the word *question,*[2] which will be the subject of an extensive enquiry in *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question.*

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[1] For the reception of Heidegger's thought in France, see notably D. Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, 2 vols, Paris, Albin Michel, 2001; E. Kleinberg, *Generation Existential: Heidegger's Philosophy in France 1927–1961*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2005. On Derrida's philosophical career between 1963 and 1965, see B. Peeters, *Derrida: A Biography*, transl. A. Brown, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2013, 127–169.

However, the purpose of this presentation is not so much to provide a survey of the contents of Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger as to determine the importance of Derrida's reading of Heidegger for the inception and development of his path of thinking. Since Derrida's 1964–1965 lectures on Heidegger were not part of the *programme de l'agrégation de philosophie* and the nature of his post at the ENS allowed him to freely chose the subject of the lectures not included in the programme of the *agrégation*, it can be said that the lectures on Heidegger reflect Derrida's own research interests – in other words, the fact that he considered the confrontation with Heidegger's texts a matter of the utmost importance for the development of his thinking.[3] Indeed, Heidegger's works were so important for Derrida that, according to his own testimony,[4] he planned to write a book on Heidegger on the basis of the 1964–1965 lectures. During the course of these lectures, by means of a close reading of several key passages in *Sein und Zeit* and other texts by Heidegger, Derrida introduces some of the concepts he will later be known for: *écriture, texte, greffe, déconstruction, métaphore, rature, inscription, trace, présent/présence*, and so on. Furthermore, in the period when Derrida was teaching at the ENS, he was preparing and then published three of his most significant works: *De la grammatologie, La voix et le phénomène* and *L'écriture et la différence* (all of them in 1967).

To be more precise: the main focus of my presentation is the way in which Derrida, in his reading of Heidegger's writings and his movement towards an original kind of thinking, differs from a philological reading of the German philosopher – and by this I mean a kind of reading that rigorously sticks to the letter of Heidegger's texts, as it were, and tries to protect it from the threat of a supposedly illegitimate expansion of its meaning.[5] To consider this sort of reading of Heidegger's works is key to understanding

[2] J. Derrida, *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*, Paris, Galilée, 2013, 326.

[3] See T. Dutoit, "Note du responsable de la publication", *ibidem*, 17.

[4] Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, vol. 2, 96.

[5] For a different, historical account of the notion of philology, see M. Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Paris, Gallimard, 1966, 292–307.

the extent to which Derrida's interpretation differs from it, thus giving form to an original and philosophically more productive confrontation with Heidegger. I will try to demonstrate that the extent to which Derrida differs from this type of reading may be considered to correspond to the exact measure of the productiveness of his own "misreading"[6] (if one speaks from the philological point of view). In fact, the extent of Derrida's dissidence in relation to the philological interpretation and therefore of the philosophical productiveness of his reading can only be perceived if one constantly moves back and forth between the philological and the Derridean perspective on Heidegger – in what could be called a "pendular movement", "pendular oscillation" or "pendular dialectic",[7] as it were.

This could be shown by taking up several examples in Derrida's lectures. Since I cannot consider them all here, I will concentrate on the topic of metaphor.[8] According to Derrida, the concept and the activity of metaphor are the instruments that allow one to think about, and try to overcome, the difficulties in escaping traditional, metaphysical ways of thinking. Although Heidegger does not pause over metaphor as such, Derrida points to the fact that the problematic of metaphor was already present in Heidegger's texts. During the course of my presentation, I attempt to identify Derrida's reading strategies in doing this, in order to indicate that they constitute fruitful means of conceptual experimentation and innovation in philosophy. By the end of my presentation, I expect to have made clear that the notion of metaphor is not just one among others in Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger but rather the key operator of such an interpretation, something that lies at the very centre of Derrida's reading strategies. In sum, I hope to have made clear by then that at the centre of Derrida's interpretation lies a *metaphorization of*

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[6] I borrow the concept from H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, New York/Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, 2nd ed. but I use it in a much broader sense and apply it to philosophical texts.

[7] U. Eco, *L'opera aperta: forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee*, Milano, Bompiani, 1997, 4th edn, 118 ("moto pendolare"), 121 ("oscillazione pendolare"), 124 ("dialettica pendolare").

[8] On the topic of metaphor in Derrida, see p. Ricœur, *La métaphore vive*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1975, 356–374; G. Bennington and J. Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, transl. G. Bennington, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1993, repr. 1999, 119–133; C. Cazeaux, *Metaphor in Continental Philosophy: From Kant to Derrida*, New York and London, Routledge, 2007, 175–198.

Heidegger's thinking, a fundamental reading strategy that brings Heidegger *into* the field of metaphor, *into* the framework of its problematic.

3.

Derrida begins his 1964–1965 lecture series by explaining its title: *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*. As a result of this explanation, Derrida's audience also gets an explanation of the fundamental articulation of the lectures, namely the relationship between Being and History. In fact, as Derrida himself will suggest at the end of the final lecture,[9] the whole lecture series will consist of a long justification of its title. As I shall try to indicate, Derrida's initial considerations on the title and main articulation of the lectures already implicitly point to the problematic of metaphor, which will be explicitly addressed by Derrida later on in the course of the semester.

According to Derrida, Heidegger's thinking has to do with the *question of Being* and not with the *foundation of an ontology*. As Derrida maintains, Heidegger's philosophical project is that of a *destruction of the history of ontology*. In Derrida's own phrasing, which very much resembles Heidegger's in *Sein und Zeit* §6, ontology has been covering over and dissimulating an authentic questioning of Being under ontic sedimentations.[10] In Derrida's view, the Heideggerian task of destructing the history of ontology amounts to that of destructing *ontology itself*:

> (...) the destruction of the history of ontology is a destruction of ontology itself, of the entirety of the ontological project itself. What I'm saying goes against appearances and against public rumor, and it is true that it is in the name of an *ontological* point of view and, especially in *Sein und Zeit*, using the word ontological, that Heidegger destroys the tradition and conducts his analyses. But if these destructions mean to be ontological, what he wants to constitute is anything but an *ontology*. Here we must consider Heidegger's thought in its movement; or here, rather than his thought, his terminology. There is no doubt that in *Sein und Zeit* the term *ontology* is taken positively and what Heidegger wishes to awaken is a fundamental ontology slumbering beneath special or general metaphysics, which is interested only in beings and does not ask the question of the being of beings. He wants to awaken

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[9] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 326.

[10] *Ibidem*, 23.

> the fundamental ontology under metaphysical ontology and the ontological under the ontic. But immediately after *Sein und Zeit*, and increasingly as he advances, the word *ontology* will seem more and more dangerous to him, both because of its traditional use and the meaning that at bottom legitimates this traditional use, ontology meaning not thought or *logos of* being (double genitive on which he will insist in the "Letter on 'Humanism'") but discourse on the *on* – that is, on the *being* in general, on the being *qua* being (general metaphysics).[11]

Derrida's perspective in this regard differs significantly from the mainstream interpretation of Heidegger's thought. Derrida explicitly mentions two books that are representative of what, according to him, is a common, superficial reading of Heidegger:[12] Alphonse de Waelhens' *Chemins et impasses de l'ontologie heideggerienne*[13] and Albert Chapelle's *L'Ontologie phénoménologique de Heidegger.*[14] As the titles of these books indicate, de Waelhens' and Chapelle's views on Heidegger assume that the

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[11] *Ibidem*, 36: "(...) la destruction de l'histoire de l'ontologie est une destruction de l'ontologie elle-même, du tout du projet ontologique lui-même. Ce que je dis va contre l'apparence et contre la rumeur publique et il est certain que c'est au nom d'un point de vue *ontologique* et en se servant, surtout dans *Sein und Zeit*, du mot «ontologique» que Heidegger détruit la tradition et conduit ses analyses. Mais si ces destructions veulent être ontologiques, ce qu'il veut constituer n'est rien moins qu'une *ontologie*. Ici il faut considérer la pensée de Heidegger dans son mouvement; ou ici, plus que sa pensée, sa terminologie. Il ne fait aucun doute que dans *Sein und Zeit* le terme d'ontologie est pris en bonne part et ce que Heidegger veut réveiller c'est une ontologie fondamentale sommeillant sous la métaphysique spéciale ou générale qui ne s'intéresse qu'à l'étant et qui ne pose pas la question de l'être de l'étant. Il veut réveiller l'ontologie fondamentale sous l'ontologie métaphysique et l'ontologique sous l'ontique. Mais immédiatement après *Sein und Zeit*, et de plus en plus à mesure qu'il avancera, le mot d'ontologie lui paraîtra de plus en plus dangereux à la fois en raison de son usage traditionnel et de la signification qui, au fond, légitime cet usage traditionnel, ontologie voulant dire non pas pensée ou *logos de* l'être (double génitif sur lequel il insistera dans la *Lettre sur l'humanisme*) mais discours sur l'*on*, c'est-à-dire sur l'*étant* en général, sur l'étant en tant qu'étant (métaphysique générale)." For the English translation, I borrow from J. Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being & History*, transl. G. Bennington, Chicago/London, The University of Chicago Press, 2016 (the page numbers are the same as in the original French edition).

[12] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 45–46.

[13] A. de Waelhens, *Chemins et impasses de l'ontologie heideggerienne. À propos des "Holzwege"*, Louvain, Nauwelaerts/Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1953.

[14] A. Chapelle, *L'Ontologie phénoménologique de Heidegger. Un commentaire de "Sein und Zeit"*, Paris, Éditions universitaires, 1962.

Heideggerian project is ontological, one that intends to build a (new) ontology. For Derrida, however, the Heideggerian destruction of the history of ontology does not leave the ontological project intact but rather intends to abandon the ontological tradition (that is, the enquiry into the being of beings) as such in favour of the thinking of Being Itself.

Let us pause over Derrida's claim for a short moment. If one looks at *Sein und Zeit*, which is the work Derrida proposes to mainly reflect on in the course of his lectures, one can easily see that Heidegger intends to carry out a destruction of the history of ontology on behalf of an ontological point of view, and in doing this he explicitly uses the term "ontological". Derrida is well aware of this fact, and he senses the apparent contradiction involved in his position.[15] Indeed, if Heidegger intends to carry out a destruction of the history of ontology that is itself ontological, then Heidegger is seemingly trying to build a (new) ontology.

How should one understand Derrida's claim in regard to the Heideggerian project? In what way did he try to solve this apparent contradiction? Although Derrida conceives of his lectures as mainly consisting in an interpretation of *Sein und Zeit*, he tries to solve the aforementioned contradiction by going beyond an analysis of merely this work, that is to say, by also considering some of Heidegger's later writings. This means that Derrida's reading of *Sein und Zeit* is fundamentally *retrospective*; it is conducted on the basis of Heidegger's later works and the way the German philosopher by then sees the ontological problematic he developed in his *opus magnum*. In other words, Derrida does not stick to the problematic of *Sein und Zeit* itself but rather interprets it by resorting to later works in which Heidegger grows ever more suspicious about the dangers of his early, specifically ontological terminology.[16] To use Derrida's own terms, he attempts to escape the above-mentioned contradiction by means of an enquiry into Heidegger's thinking – or rather, Heidegger's terminology – "in its movement" (*dans son movement*).[17] From a philological standpoint, what is problematic in Derrida's position, and therefore only apparently solves its contradiction, is the fact that he does not respect the different phases in Heidegger's thought nor the different philosophical projects they embody.[18]

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[15] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 36.

[16] *Ibidem*, 37. See *ibidem*, 119, where Derrida speaks of his "Justification *rétroactive*" of *Sein und Zeit*.

[17] *Ibidem*, 36.

However, this is not all. In his reading of Heidegger, Derrida does not merely indiscriminately move back and forth between different phases in Heidegger's thinking. Derrida also *hyperbolizes* and *radicalizes* Heidegger's position, thus presenting an inaccurate reading of the latter's writings, when he says that in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* the German thinker proposes the abandonment of the term "ontology".[19] If one reads the passage of *Einführung in die Metaphysik* quoted to this effect by Derrida, one can see that he is right in saying that Heidegger becomes suspicious of ontological terminology; but the terminology the latter becomes suspicious of does not concern his own conception of ontology nor his own ontological project; it concerns rather ontology in the traditional sense. In fact, Heidegger does not claim that the term ontology should be abandoned but rather that, by virtue of its ambiguity and the differences between the project of traditional ontology and his own *ontological* project, one should use different terms for each one of them. That there is room in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* for a legitimate use of the term ontology may be testified by the fact that in the passage in Derrida's lecture Heidegger himself allows for a broader use of the word, the meaning of which would be opposed to the traditional, narrow use of it.[20]

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[18] On the controversial question of the different phases in Heidegger's philosophy, see O. Pöggeler, *Der Denkweg Martin Heideggers*, Pfullingen, Neske, 1963; W. J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1963 (New York, Fordham University Press, 2003, 4th edn), VIII–XXIII, 229–245, 623–641 *et passim*; I. Görland, *Transzendenz und Selbst: Eine Phase in Heideggers Denken*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1981; R. A. Bast, *Der Wissenschaftsbegriff Martin Heideggers im Zusammenhang seiner Philosophie*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Frommann-Holzboog, 1986; J. Greisch, *Ontologie et temporalité: esquisse d'une interprétation intégrale de Sein und Zeit*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1994; J. Greisch, "Der philosophische Umbruch in den Jahren 1928–32: Von der Fundamentalontologie zur Metaphysik des Daseins", in D. Thomä (ed.), *Heidegger-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung*, Stuttgart/Weimar, Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2003, 115–127; J. Greisch, "De l'ontologie fondamentale à la métaphysique du *Dasein*: le tournant philosophique des années 1928–1932", in M. Caron (ed.), *Heidegger*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 2006, 417–447; P. A. Lima, *Heidegger e a fenomenologia da solidão humana* (PhD dissertation), Lisboa, 2012, vol. I, 56, n. 10.

[19] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 40.

[20] See M. Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Gesamtausgabe 40), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1983, 43–44: "Man kann freilich, scheinbar sehr scharfsinnig und überlegen, die längstbekannte Überlegung wieder ins Feld führen: »Sein« ist doch der allgemeinste Begriff. Sein Geltungsbereich erstreckt sich auf alles und jedes, sogar auf das Nichts,

However, what I think is most significant in the Derridean approach to Heidegger is that although (or because) it is retrospective and philologically inaccurate, it allows for a *displacement* of the meaning of the German philosopher's writings towards their metaphorization. The first sign of such a

das als Gedachtes und Gesagtes auch etwas »ist«. Also gibt es über den Geltungsbereich dieses allgemeinsten Begriffes »Sein« hinaus im strengen Sinne des Wortes nichts mehr, von wo aus dieses selbst noch weiter bestimmt werden könnte. Man muß sich mit dieser höchsten Allgemeinheit abfinden. Der Begriff des Seins ist ein Letztes. Und es entspringt auch einem Gesetz der Logik, das sagt: Je umfassender ein Begriff seinem Umfang nach ist, – und was wäre umfassender als der Begriff »Sein«? – desto unbestimmter und leerer ist sein Inhalt.

Diese Gedankengänge sind für jeden denkenden Menschen – und wir wollen alle Normalmenschen sein – unmittelbar und ohne Einschränkung überzeugend. Aber, dies ist doch jetzt die Frage, ob die Ansetzung des Seins als des allgemeinsten Begriffes das Wesen des Seins trifft oder es nicht von vornherein so mißdeutet, daß ein Fragen aussichtslos wird. Dies ist jedoch die Frage, ob das Sein nur als der allgemeinste Begriff gelten kann, der in allen besonderen Begriffen unvermeidlich vorkommt, oder ob das Sein völlig anderen Wesens ist und somit alles andere, nur nicht der Gegenstand einer »Ontologie«, **gesetzt, daß man dieses Wort in der herkömmlichen Bedeutung nimmt**.

Der Titel »Ontologie« wurde erst im 17. Jahrhundert geprägt. Er bezeichnet die Ausbildung der überlieferten Lehre vom Seienden zu einer Disziplin der Philosophie und zu einem Fach des philosophischen Systems. Die überlieferte Lehre aber ist die schulmäßige Zergliederung und Ordnung dessen, was für *Platon* und *Aristoteles* und wieder für *Kant* eine *Frage* war, freilich eine schon nicht mehr ursprüngliche. **So wird das Wort »Ontologie« auch heute noch gebraucht.** Unter diesem Titel betreibt die Philosophie bereits die Aufstellung und Darstellung eines Faches innerhalb ihres Systems. **Das Wort »Ontologie« kann man aber auch »im weitesten Sinne« nehmen, »ohne Anlehnung an ontologische Richtungen und Tendenzen« (vgl. Sein und Zeit 1927, S. 11ob.). In diesem Fall bedeutet »Ontologie« die Anstrengung, das Sein zum Wort zu bringen, und zwar im Durchgang durch die Frage, wie es mit dem Sein [nicht nur mit dem Seienden als solchem] steht. Da aber diese Frage bisher weder Anklang noch gar Widerklang gefunden hat, sondern durch die verschiedenen Kreise der schulmäßigen Philosophie-gelehrsamkeit sogar ausdrücklich abgelehnt wird, die eine »Ontologie« im überlieferten Sinne anstrebt, mag es gut sein, künftig auf den Gebrauch des Titels »Ontologie«, »ontologisch« zu verzichten. Was in der Art des Fragens, wie sich jetzt erst deutlicher herausgestellt, durch eine ganze Welt getrennt ist, soll auch nicht den gleichen Namen tragen.** (...)

Wir *fragen* die Frage: Wie steht es um das Sein? Welches ist der Sinn von Sein? nicht**, um eine Ontologie überlieferten Stils aufzustellen** oder gar kritisch ihren früheren Versuchen die Fehler vorzurechnen. Es geht um ein ganz Anderes. Es gilt, das geschichtliche Dasein des Menschen und d.h. immer zugleich unser eigenstes künftiges, im Ganzen der uns bestimmten Geschichte in die Macht des ursprünglich zu eröffnenden Seins zurückzufügen, all das freilich nur in den Grenzen, innerhalb derer das Vermögen der Philosophie etwas vermag." (Bold emphasis and underlining added)

metaphorization appears precisely when Derrida indicates he aims to consider Heidegger's terminology in its movement. In the context of Derrida's lectures in 1964–1965, the problematic of metaphor will *grosso modo* be that of the movement of philosophical terminology, that of the possibility or impossibility of overcoming ontological/metaphysical terminology.

4.

This much as to Being and ontology. What about History?

In his second lecture (30th November 1964) Derrida directly addresses the problem of History in Heidegger's thinking. In fact, the topic had already surfaced in the first lecture (16th November 1964) in the context of Derrida's presentation of the Heideggerian concept of the destruction of the *history* of ontology; but in the second lecture he connects the topic of the destruction of the history of ontology with that of *language,* which is where – in Derrida's view – the problem of History in Heidegger finds its roots and most significant manifestation.[21]

In other words, the question of the destruction of the history of ontology is a question of language; but – Derrida asks – what is the language of the *destruction*? Should one resort to the language of the ontological tradition while carrying out the destruction of the history of ontology, or should one create an entirely new language to this effect? Furthermore: Is this creation of a new, non-ontological and non-metaphysical language possible in the first place? According to Derrida, the project of the *destruction* is faced with a linguistic problem: on the one hand, since it consists of a project of destruction of *traditional* ontology, it cannot straightforwardly use the language of the ontological *tradition*; but on the other hand, it cannot completely abandon traditional ontological language, as if such a language were already definitively overcome and an entirely new language were possible. As Derrida indicates, the project of the *destruction* both uses and does not use the language of tradition. On the one hand, the *destruction* resorts to the language of tradition in the sense that it is a *Wiederholung* of traditional ontological language, a repetition of its own language, a self-retrieval insofar as the *destruction* is itself a language. On the other hand, the *destruction* distances itself from traditional language, for it corresponds to the self-destruction of the discourse of ontology:

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[21] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 53ff.

> Clearly we cannot borrow them [i.e. the concepts, the terms, the forms of linkage necessary for the discourse of Destruction] simply from the tradition that we are in the process of deconstructing; we cannot simply take them up again, that much is obvious. But *neither* can we, because destruction is not a demolition or an annihilation, erase them or abandon them in some conceptual storage room, as definitively outdated instruments. Because *Destruktion* is in its gesture like a *Wiederholung*, a repetition, it can neither use, nor simply deprive itself of the traditional logos.[22]

For Derrida, the project of the *destruction* does not simply have to do with lexicology, the meaning of isolated words coined by the ontological tradition, but first and foremost with syntax, the way in which concepts are linked.[23] This is why Derrida, resorting once again to Heidegger's later writings, connects the project of the *destruction* with the task of Thought and Poetry, although from a strictly philological point of view such a connection seems to be lacking in textual evidence.[24] In fact, if one remains faithful to the letter of Heidegger's writings, when he speaks of the task of Thought and Poetry, he is no longer referring to the project of the destruction of the history of ontology. Moreover, in the period when Heidegger is trying to undertake the *Destruktion*, which is strictly merely one of the steps involved in the wider project of a *Fundamentalontologie*, the syntax of the Heideggerian project remains structurally the same as that of the ontological tradition, the difference between the Heideggerian project and that of the ontological tradition being that the former intended to replace the Categories with the Existentials.[25] In this sense, Derrida's lectures extend the Heideggerian project of the *Destruktion* beyond the texts in which it is explicitly dealt with and actually carried out by Heidegger, thus being characterisable as proposing in this regard a *prospective* reading of Heideggerian thinking. Together with Derrida's retrospective reading of *Sein und Zeit*, this prospective interpretation of the *destruction* reveals a fundamental *totalization* and *unification* of Heideggerian thought (or rather, terminology) on Derrida's part, who sees it as moving in a single, definite direction. As shall be made clear, this is the never-ending movement of metaphor towards its overcoming.

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[22] *Ibidem*, 54: "On ne peut visiblement pas les emprunter simplement à la tradition qu'on est en train de déconstruire, on ne peut pas *non plus*, la destruction n'étant pas une démolition ou une annihilation, les effacer ou les abandonner dans quelque remise conceptuelle, comme instruments définitivement périmés. La *Destruktion* étant dans son geste comme une *Wiederholung*, une répétition, elle ne peut ni se servir ni se priver simplement du *logos* traditionnel (...)." See *ibidem*, 55: "En raison de ce problème de langage, la destruction de la philosophie sera toujours *surprise* dans la philosophie, surprise par la philosophie, enveloppée par la philosophie au moment même où elle veut la détruire, ne serai-ce que parce que c'est le *logos* philosophique qui procède à sa propre destruction."

[23] *Ibidem*: "Ce n'est pas seulement un problème de lexicologie philosophique mais c'est un problème de syntaxe qui concerne les formes d'enchaînement des concepts."

[24] *Ibidem*, 56. Derrida quotes a passage from Heidegger's *Brief über den Humanismus* as evidence for his claim that a connection exists between the *destruction* on the one hand and Thought and Poetry on the other, but in the passage there is no talk about *Destruktion* on Heidegger's part. See M. Heidegger, *Brief über den Humanismus* (Gesamtausgabe 9), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 2004, 3rd edn, 313–314.

On the whole, the second lecture presents Derrida's view on the connection, which occurs in Heideggerian thought, between Being and History, according to which such a connection is made through the problem of language. As Derrida says at the end of the lecture, there is no language without History and no History without language; and the question of Being is the question of History insofar as History is the history of Being (or rather, of the self-destruction and limited self-transformation of the language of Being):

> All I wish to emphasize here is that starting from the *Faktum* of language, and of a language in which the word *be* is heard, precise and unavoidable, Heidegger ties the possibility of his question and therefore of his whole subsequent discourse to the possibility of *history*. For there is no language without history and no history without language. The question of being is the very question of history. It is born of history, and it takes aim at history. It is the absolution of history itself on itself as history of being.[26]

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[25] See M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer, 2001, 18th edn, 44: "Alle Explikate, die der Analytik des Daseins entspringen, sind gewonnen im Hinblick auf seine Existenzstruktur. **Weil sie sich aus der Existenzialität bestimmen, nennen wir die Seinscharaktere des Daseins *Existenzialien*. Sie sind scharf zu trennen von den Seinsbestimmungen des nicht daseinsmäßigen Seienden, die wir *Kategorien* nennen.** Dabei wird dieser Ausdruck in seiner primären ontologischen Bedeutung aufgenommen und festgehalten." (Bold emphasis mine) See also *ibidem*, §§3–4.

[26] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 83: "Ce que je veux seulement souligner ici, c'est qu'en partant du *Faktum* du langage et d'un langage où le mot être est entendu, précis et incontournable, Heidegger lie la possibilité de sa question et donc de tout son discours ultérieur à la possibilité

Derrida's interpretative move in doing this already announces and prepares the introduction of the problematic of metaphor and metaphoricity later on in the course of the lectures. As already indicated, the question of the destruction of the history of the language of Being is both that of the extent of the possible transformation of such a language and that of the nature of the language used in the *destruction*. The Derridean concept of metaphor and metaphoricity, such as Derrida will present it later on in the lectures, has precisely to do with trying to displace traditional ontological/metaphysical language and the limited success of such efforts to overcome tradition.

5.

Derrida's explicit and extensive treatment of the question of metaphor in Heidegger begins in his third lecture (17th December 1964). One important thing that should be borne in mind is that Heidegger – as Derrida himself recognizes[27]– never uses the term metaphor in his works (at least to refer to the problematic Derrida is pointing to when he speaks of metaphor in Heidegger's thought). I shall therefore, in what follows, try to briefly explain not simply the problematic itself that Derrida presents as being that of metaphor in Heidegger, but first and foremost Derrida's *metaphorizing strategy* in his reading of Heidegger's writings – a *metaphorization of Heidegger*, as it were, of which Derrida's first and second lectures are two preparatory steps.

As already pointed out, in Derrida's perspective the question of metaphor in Heidegger occurs within the framework of the latter's treatment of language, namely the *language of Being*. Heidegger's starting point, as Derrida indicates, is the *Faktum* that all human beings make use of "a language (...) in which the signification (*Bedeutung*) of the word *is* (to be) is always already pre-comprehended".[28] According to the sequence of Derrida's exposition of the Heideggerian problematic of ontological language, it seems that

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de l'*histoire*. Car il n'y a pas de langage sans histoire et pas d'histoire sans langage. La question de l'être est la question même de l'histoire. Elle naît de l'histoire, et elle vise l'histoire. Elle est l'absolution de l'histoire elle-même sur elle-même comme histoire de l'être."

[27] *Ibidem*, 325.

[28] *Ibidem*, 86: "(...) un langage (...) dans lequel la signification *(Bedeutung)* du mot *est* (être) est toujours déjà pré-comprise."

Heidegger's concern in assuming such a starting point is to demonstrate that the most immediate use of ontological language by human beings in their everyday lives (in the form of the conjugation of the verb *être, sein,* εἶναι) in a sense legitimates the employment of the verbal substantive (*l'être, das Sein,* τὸ εἶναι) for philosophical purposes:[29] because the immediateness and seeming proximity involved in the use of the finite forms of the verb *to be* are – upon closer, philosophical inspection – in fact illusory, the employment of the verbal substantive is preferable, for – in spite of the substantivation and substantialisation involved in its formation, and in spite of its resulting insufficiency and inadequacy as a means of expressing the thinking of Being and revealing the truth of Being – it points to the transcendental horizon on the basis of which the everyday use of the finite forms ("I am", "you are", "he/she/it is", and so forth) is possible.[30]

Derrida's *superimposition* of the problematic of metaphor on Heidegger's Kantian problematic of the *Bathos der Erfahrung*[31] (of the *geheime Urteile der gemeinen Vernunft)*[32] makes its first main appearance in the lectures precisely at this juncture. According to Heidegger, Derrida maintains, the fact that when one says "I am" this proposition, against everyday evidence, is not fully understood – is not clearly and surely grasped, does not manifest an absolute proximity of one's being to itself, an identity of one's being with itself, but rather the exact opposite of this, that one is furthest from oneself[33] – consists in the very core of the metaphoricity of Being. In other words, the metaphorical nature of one's relation to one's being and Being Itself is tantamount to the illusory, dissimulating character of the everyday evidence of the proposition "I am", which expresses one's everyday evidence about one's own being. To put it differently, as long as the meaning of being involved in the "I am" does not become explicit, this proposition – that is to say, one's relation to one's own being – will remain metaphorical. Metaphor, as well as metaphysics and a particular form of empiricism – according to Derrida – amounts therefore to the persistence of the unquestioned evidence of the "I am", of the dissimulation of the transcendental horizon on the basis of which such a proposition becomes possible and its proper meaning may eventually be recovered:

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[29] *Ibidem*, 90–91.

[30] See *ibidem*, 91, especially the following extract: "Doit-on abandonner une forme grammaticale si menaçante pour la pensée juste de l'être, pensée qui n'est ni un concept ni la pensée d'un étant? Heidegger feint de le penser mais c'est pour montrer que le simple renoncement à cette forme, le simple effacement de ce mot qu'est le substantif verbal obscurcirait encore davantage le problème."

[31] See I. Kant, *Prolegomena*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Berlin, Reimer/De Gruyter, 1902–, vol. IV, 380.

[32] See I. Kant, *Reflexion* 436, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Berlin, Reimer/De Gruyter, 1902–, vol. XV, 180. See also Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 23: "Am Ende sind gerade die Phänomene, die in der folgenden Analyse unter dem Titel »Temporalität« herausgestellt werden, die *geheimsten* Urteile der »gemeinen Vernunft«, als deren Analytik *Kant* das »Geschäft der Philosophen« bestimmt."

[33] See Derrida, *Heidegger*, 92.

> So long as being, the meaning of being implied in the proposition of absolute proximity that the *I am* is, so long as the meaning of being that is implied in it is not made explicit, the proposition of proximity does not have its *proper meaning*. That is to say it is merely metaphysical. And the metaphysics that rests on the unquestioned evidence of the I am is also a *metaphorics*. And it is also an empiricism since it is the gesture of empiricism to dissimulate the transcendental horizon on the basis of which the determined is determined; here wishing to hear being only in its determination as I am, you are, he is, and so on, or he is this or that, and so forth.[34]

In the course of his third lecture, Derrida continues to insist on his metaphorization of Heidegger's thinking by means of the connection between language – or rather, the contrast between common and philosophical language – and Being. More precisely, Derrida pauses over what he calls Heidegger's "expressionist-romantic-Nazi" metaphor or rhetoric of the dwelling and over the way in which common sense tends to inadequately understand this kind of metaphorics.[35] Derrida maintains that Heidegger's metaphor of the dwelling is one about language: its historicity and relation to Being. Derrida points out that according to Heidegger language is the shelter or dwelling of Being, that without which the very appearance of Being, as well as the appearance of the difference between Being and beings, would not be possible; such a shelter, dwelling or house of Being is historical in nature, in the sense that it has not existed since eternity and had to be constructed at some point in time,[36] and in the sense that the use of language by human beings has always had a history or a past that transcends the present moment in which language is being used.[37] According to Derrida's metaphorising version of Heideggerian thought, Heidegger's claim is that common sense, in understanding the metaphor of language as the dwelling of Being, tends to presuppose that it knows what a dwelling actually is; and it is on the basis of such a presupposition that common sense, by means of a transference of meaning, is able to grasp what the metaphor of the dwelling of Being corresponds to. For Heidegger, however – Derrida indicates – common sense does not really grasp where the metaphor actually lies and therefore takes it in the wrong sense; as a result of this, common sense tends to understand as a metaphor what Heidegger means in the proper sense (namely, his reference to the dwelling of Being) and to conceive of as the proper sense what Heidegger points to as being the metaphor (that is to say, the usual sense of dwelling). In the Derridean view, Heidegger's appropriation of a so-called housing crisis has to do with this commonsensical confusion between the proper meaning of dwelling and its metaphorical sense – in other terms, with the fact that common sense inhabits a metaphor that is not conscious of its own existence as such and therefore possesses a metaphysical nature.[38]

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[34] *Ibidem*, 94: "Tant que l'être, le sens de l'être impliqué dans la proposition de proximité absolue qu'est le *je suis*, tant que ce sens de l'être qui y est impliqué n'est pas explicité, la proposition de proximité n'a pas son *sens propre*. C'est-à-dire qu'elle n'est que métaphysique. Et la métaphysique qui repose sur l'évidence non questionné du *je suis* est aussi une *métaphorique*. Et elle est aussi un empirisme puisque c'est le geste de l'empirisme de dissimuler l'horizon transcendental à partir duquel le déterminé se détermine; ici, de ne vouloir entendre l'être que dans sa détermination de je suis, tu es, il est, etc., ou il est ceci ou cela, etc."

[35] *Ibidem*, 98ff.

Derrida goes on with his metaphorising interpretation of Heidegger by arguing that the latter tries to think of metaphor and metaphoricity as such and in their origin in the thinking/truth of Being: commonsensical language is not capable of grasping the proper sense of shelter/dwelling/house – in other words, it is metaphorical in this respect – because it does not speak on the basis of the truth of Being; the origin of metaphor and metaphoricity is the thinking or the truth of Being, which has always been present in commonsensical language, although this language is not able to grasp it; commonsensical language, inasmuch as it is metaphorical, is tantamount to the forgetting of the proper, non-metaphorical originary language of Being. According to the Derridean take on Heidegger, the German philosopher makes clear that, insofar as one always has to start by using commonsensical language, metaphor corresponds to the very beginning of language, the origin of which is the thinking or the truth of Being. As Derrida says, "One does not begin with the originary; that's the first word of the (hi)story."[39] In other terms, commonsensical language, the language one necessarily has to start by using, is not originary because it is historical, that is, because it precedes one and has always been in use before one starts making use of it, to the point that one will never be totally in control of it, that one's use of it will always involve layers of meaning one will never be fully aware of. One thing seems to be clear by now: commonsensical language – and in fact all existing language – is metaphorical; but the question is also: will it ever stop being so?

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[36] *Ibidem*, 101.

[37] See *ibidem*, 105.

[38] See *ibidem*, 102–103: "C'est au sens propre que l'on doit dire que le langage est la maison de l'être dans laquelle habite l'homme. Et on parle métaphoriquement – ce qui en dit long sur le statut de la métaphore – quand on dit la maison hors de ce rapport à l'être. La *crise du logement* – pourrait-on dire – en sautant beaucoup de chaînons intermédiaires, est l'expression de cette déportation dans une métaphore qui ne se pense même plus comme telle, c'est-à-dire dans la métaphysique. Il y a une racine métaphysique à la crise du logement, au sens historial où Heidegger entend la métaphysique – racine historico-métaphysique."

The following step in Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger tries to provide an answer to this question. As Derrida maintains, metaphor should not be conceived of as being a disguise of the thinking or the truth of Being, for Being has never been— and will never be – undressed; It has never – and will never – become naked; It has never been— and will never be – thought and revealed in Its proper meaning, as such. To put it differently: although the movement of metaphor is that of trying to grasp the proper meaning of Being, it will never attain it:

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[39] See *ibidem*, 105: "Là, vous l'avez vu, et ce schème se retrouverait partout où le langage de Heidegger semble métaphorique – le sens propre du mot *maison* ou du mot *habitation* est hors de portée pour une parole qui ne parle pas à partir de la vérité de l'être. Quand nous croyons savoir ce que nous disons quand nous disons maison tous les jours dans le langage courant et non poétique, nous sommes dans la métaphore. Or la pensée de la vérité de l'être est à venir mais à venir comme ce qui a toujours déjà été enfoui. Il s'ensuit que la métaphore est l'oubli du sens propre et originaire. La métaphore ne survient pas dans le langage comme un procédé rhétorique; elle est le commencement du langage dont la pensée de l'être est pourtant l'origine enfouie. **On commence pas par l'originaire, c'est cela le premier mot de l'histoire.**" (Bold emphasis mine)

> (...) there is no chance, (...) there will never be any chance for those who might think of metaphor as a *disguise* of thought or of the truth of being. There will never be any chance of undressing or stripping down this naked thinking of being which was never naked and never will be. The proper meaning whose movement metaphor tries to follow without ever reaching or seeing it, this proper meaning has never been said or thought and will never be said or thought as such.[40]

As Derrida indicates in the ensuing passage, "metaphor is interminable", and insofar as "metaphoricity is the very essence of metaphysics", "there is no possible overcoming, no *Überwindung* of metaphysics", that is to say, no possible overcoming or *Überwindung* of metaphor/metaphoricity.[41] For Heidegger, as Derrida puts it, metaphor is not an extraneous, rhetorical procedure that supervenes upon a language being used in its proper sense, but rather the originary state of language itself;[42] metaphor is therefore not something opposed to proper meaning, but on the contrary something that should be characterized through its incessant movement towards its proper meaning;[43] in other words, metaphor and proper meaning are part of one and the same movement of metaphor towards the proper meaning. Derrida identifies this movement, which characterizes metaphoricity itself and consists of the never-ending attempt of metaphor to overcome itself, with Heidegger's ideas of the historicity of Being on the one hand and the co-originariness of concealment and unconcealment involved in the truth of Being on the other. According to Derrida in a surprising comment on a passage from Heidegger's *Überwindung der Metaphysik*, what Heidegger calls metaphysics – which, as pointed out earlier, is for Derrida the predominance of an unquestioned evidence as to the meaning of Being – is nothing less than a "metonymy for metaphor".[44] But is "metaphor" the proper meaning of the Heideggerian term "metaphysics"? Is the Heideggerian term "metaphysics" a metaphor for "metaphor"?

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[40] *Ibidem*, 105–106: "(...) il n'y a aucune chance, (...) il n'y aura jamais aucune chance pour ceux qui penseraient la métaphore comme un *déguisement* de la pensée ou de la vérité de l'être. Il n'y aura jamais aucune chance de dévêtir ou de dépouiller cette pensée nue de l'être qui n'a jamais été nue et qui ne le sera jamais. Le sens propre dont la métaphore tente de suivre le mouvement sans jamais le rejoindre ni le voir, ce sens propre n'a jamais été dit ou pensé et ne le sera jamais comme tel."

[41] *Ibidem*, 106: "Si l'on considère que la métaphore est interminable et qu'elle est le recouvrement ontique de la vérité de l'être, que la métaphoricité est l'essence même de la métaphysique, alors on prend conscience (...) qu'il n'y a pas de dépassement simple, d'*Überwindung* possible."

[42] *Ibidem*, 105: "La métaphore ne survient pas dans le langage comme un procédé rhétorique; elle est le commencement du langage dont la pensée de l'être est pourtant l'origine enfouie."

[43] See *ibidem*, 106: "Le sens propre dont la métaphore tente de suivre le mouvement sans jamais le rejoindre ni le voir, ce sens propre n'a jamais été dit ou pensé et ne le sera jamais comme tel. C'est l'opposition même du sens propre et de la métaphore dont il faut non pas se détourner mais se méfier si on est tenté de les penser comme l'opposition de deux termes."

Up to this point, Derrida had been conducting his identification of the Heideggerian problematic as a whole with that of metaphor/metaphoricity on the basis of analyses of three among Heidegger's later writings, namely *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, *Überwindung der Metaphysik* and *Brief über den Humanismus.* However, Derrida subsequently comes back to *Sein und Zeit*, in order to carry out what he himself calls a "*retroactive* justification"[45] of a key issue in Heidegger's major work, to wit the problematic of the *Faktum* that human beings have always possessed a pre-comprehension of the *Bedeutung* of what it means to be, which Derrida retrospectively considers as an early, implicit presence of the problematic of the historicity of Being and therefore – in Derrida's metaphorising terms – of Its metaphoricity. The point is that human *Dasein* has always possessed an understanding of Being that exceeds or transcends the word "being" and its meaning.[46] Following Derrida's account, this seems to be again the issue of the historicity of the language of Being, which I considered above under the headings of the unquestioned evidence of the proposition "I am" and the commonsensical understanding of the metaphor of the dwelling of Being. As Derrida maintains, the fact that in *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger chooses human *Dasein* as the starting point for his analytic, thus carrying out an analytic of the historicity of *Dasein*, has to do with *Dasein*'s proximity to itself – which Derrida associates with the illusory, dissimulating proximity of language to itself, that is, with a language that is not thought on the basis of the truth of Being and is therefore metaphysical/ metaphorical;[47] this is why *Sein und Zeit*, in spite of its merits and "progress", is a philosophical work that, while already announcing the end of an epoch – the epoch of metaphysics – "still belongs to it in that the historicity it describes (...) concerns the historicity of one form of beings, beings *qua Dasein*".[48] The metaphysical/metaphorical nature of *Sein und Zeit*, Derrida claims, derives from the fact that the *Da* differs from the *Sein* (to wit, not the *Sein des Daseins* but rather the *Sein selbst*). However, as Derrida immediately recognizes, the shortcomings of *Sein und Zeit* are not overcome in Heidegger's later works, but are instead a kind of inevitability inherent to human thought: one will always have to think about metaphor and within metaphor:

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[44] *Ibidem*, 107: "[(...) là on peut dire métaphore au lieu de métaphysique, la métaphysique est une métonymie pour la métaphore (...).]" Derrida is commenting on a passage that can be found in M. Heidegger, *Überwindung der Metaphysik* (Gesamtausgabe 7), Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 2000, 70.

[45] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 119: "Justification *rétroactive*".

[46] See *ibidem*, 119–120.

> (...) is setting off into the analytic of the historicity of Dasein and the Da of Sein not justified by Heidegger in the style and within the limitations of metaphysics still? Heidegger would no doubt not deny it, and would not deny that the Da of Da-sein has a certain metaphorical meaning; and when the Da is metaphorical, when absolute proximity is metaphorical, of what can it be a metaphor? Of another proximity? Or of a distancing, and is not the other proximity, the other Da, a fort? Is not the difference between fort and Da the first metaphor of Sein, the first metaphysical occultation of the question of Being? Heidegger would no doubt not deny it, but then what? Then... we can do nothing other than keep talking about it and talking within it.[49]

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[47] See *ibidem*, 121: "Compte tenu de ce que nous avons questionné, avec Heidegger lui-même, cette signification, énigmatique, métaphorique, de la *proximité* <est la> proximité de la parole à elle-même tant qu'elle n'est pas encore pensée à partir de l'essence de l'être. Tant que le *Da* du *Dasein* n'est pas pensé à partir du *Sein*."

[48] See *ibidem*, 217: "*Sein und Zeit* (...) annonce la fin de cette époque mais lui appartient encore en ce que l'historicité qu'elle décrit, elle la décrit bien sans doute dans l'horizon *cette fois explicite* de l'être – et c'est le progrès, la question de l'être est posée comme telle dès les premières pages de *Sein und Zeit*. Mais – et c'est en quoi elle reste encore dans l'époque de la métaphysique —, la description de l'historicité dans *Sein und Zeit* concerne encore l'historicité d'une forme d'étant, l'étant comme *Dasein*."

[49] *Ibidem*, 121: "(...) est-ce que le départ dans l'analytique de l'historicité du *Dasein* et du *Da* du *Sein*, n'est pas justifié par Heidegger encore dans la limitation et dans le style de la métaphysique? Heidegger ne le nierait sans doute pas, et ne nierait pas que le *Da* de *Da-sein* a un certain sens métaphorique; et quand le *Da* est métaphorique, quand la proximité absolue est métaphorique, de quoi peut-elle l'être? Est-ce d'une autre proximité? Ou d'un éloignement, et l'autre proximité, l'autre *Da*, n'est ce pas un *fort*? La différence du *fort* et du *Da*, n'est-ce pas la première métaphore du *Sein*, la première occultation métaphysique de la question de l'être?

In a later lecture (15th March 1965) Derrida refers to this continuing talk about metaphor within metaphor as being a de-metaphorization,[50] a destruction of metaphors "with the help of other metaphors".[51]

However, if the only way possible is to continuously carry out a work of de-metaphorization – in other terms, a destruction of metaphors by means of different ones – in what sense can it be said that *Sein und Zeit* already represents a progress in relation to the metaphysical tradition and Heidegger's later texts an advance in comparison to his major work? How can a metaphor, if it is indeed a metaphor (that is, a non-transparent use of language) and will always remain so, have the means to assess its progress, its greater proximity to its proper meaning – unless there are metaphors which are less so than others?

6.

At the very end of the last lecture (29th March 1965) Derrida looks back to his analyses of Heidegger from the point of view of the question of metaphor. Although Derrida refers mainly to the previous lecture, I think Derrida's remarks can be applied to his lecture series as a whole:

> During the session before last, in a series of architectonic considerations, I tried to indicate what the move from *Sein und Zeit* to the other writings signified: notably the move from the *Geschichtlichkeit* of *Dasein* to the *Geschichtlichkeit* of *Sein*. We also recognized along the way what was signified by the epochal essence of being and, by the same token, the simultaneously

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Heidegger ne le nierait sans doute pas mais alors? Alors... on ne pourra rien faire douter que de continuer à en parler et à parler en elle."

[50] See *ibidem*, 278: "(...) le travail de la pensée n'est en somme rien d'autre (...) que chaque fois et partout où elle se produit, cette opération de destruction de la métaphore, de réduction déterminée et motivée de la métaphore. Ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'on sorte de l'élément métaphorique du langage mais que dans une nouvelle métaphore la métaphore précédente apparaît comme telle, est dénoncée dans son origine et dans son fonctionnement métaphorique et dans sa nécessité. Elle apparaît comme telle. On peut peut-être appeler pensée et pensée de l'être (...) ce qui appelle à un tel geste de dé-métaphorisation."

[51] See *ibidem*, 277: "Le discours philosophique ou plutôt le discours de la pensée détruisant la métaphorique grammatico-métaphysique a pour fonction cette destruction de la métaphore, destruction conduite avec la certitude qu'on ne fera jamais que détruire les métaphores à l'aide d'autres métaphores."

> unveiling and dissimulating essence of language. This essence opened us to the meaning of metaphoricity as such, before any linguistic determination of language, or any scientific or onto-theological determination of beings.
> It was implied in all these considerations that Heidegger's path of thought presented itself as epochal and historical: that is, as metaphorical. But here what is announced in the metaphor is the essence of metaphor, metaphoricity *as such*, metaphoricity as historicity and historicity *as such*. But it belongs to this *as such* that it hides what it announces (i.e., that it does not reach proper meaning as such). There is history only of being and being is only history [*sic*], but by its essence this proposition is still metaphorical.
> Heidegger knows this and says so.[52]

As this passage shows, what I have been calling Derrida's metaphorization of Heideggerian thought is now explicitly recognized by Derrida himself; he claims that the transition from *Sein und Zeit* to Heidegger's later works has metaphoricity at its centre, is metaphoricity itself, in the sense that it reflects the historicity of the language of Being, the never-ending movement of de-metaphorization of such a language; it is a movement in which the thinking or truth of Being functions as the announcement of the horizon of the non-metaphorical proper meaning of the language of Being:

> No doubt the thinking of being announces the horizon of non-metaphor on the basis of which metaphoricity is thought. But it does not announce itself prophetically like a new day (prophets only ever announce other metaphors), as something that will be; it announces itself as the impossible on the basis

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[52] *Ibidem*, 323: "Lors de l'avant-dernière séance, dans une série de considérations architectoniques, j'avais essayé d'indiquer ce que signifiait le passage de *Sein und Zeit* aux autres écrits, le passage, notamment de la *Geschichtlichkeit* du *Dasein* à la *Geschichtlichkeit* du *Sein*. Nous avons aussi reconnu, chemin faisant, ce que signifiait l'essence épochale de l'être, et du même coup l'essence à la fois dévoilante et dissimulante du langage. Cette essence nous a ouverts au sens de la métaphoricité comme telle, avant toute détermination linguistique du langage, ou scientifique, ou onto-théologique de l'étant.
Il était impliqué dans toutes ces considérations que le chemin de pensée heideggerien se donnait lui-même comme époqual et historique, c'est-à-dire comme métaphorique. Mais ici ce qui s'annonce dans la métaphore, c'est l'essence de la métaphore, la métaphoricité *comme telle*, la métaphoricité comme historicité et l'historicité *comme telle*. Mais il appartient à ce *comme telle* qu'il cache ce qu'il annonce, c'est-à-dire, qu'il n'atteigne pas au sens propre comme tel. Il n'y a d'histoire que de l'être et l'être n'est pas historique [*sic*], mais par essence cette proposition est encore métaphorique.
Heidegger le sait et le dit."

> of which the possible is thought as such (announce ≠ event here). (...) So the thinking of being announces the horizon of non-metaphor. But the gesture whereby it announces this horizon, even though it denounces the entirety of *past* metaphor (onto-theology), happens in a metaphor about which it does not yet know – because it is irreducibly to-come – what that metaphor is hiding.[53]

Derrida conceives of the movement of Heideggerian thought, which exemplarily reflects that of the metaphoricity or historicity of the language of Being, as progressive,[54] to the extent that it is a movement of thought that grows ever more conscious of itself as being metaphorical and consists in the (impossible) effort to overcome its own metaphorical nature. However, in virtue of its metaphoricity or historicity, the movement of Heidegger's thinking does not simply carry out a destruction of past metaphors by means of new ones; it also does not know the proper meaning of these new metaphors: what they actually hide and will reveal in a future still to come. Derrida suggests that Heideggerian thinking aspires to abolish the predominance of the present, of presence itself; but thought always has to be materialized in (a) language, and therefore an irreducible materiality – an ineffaceable *écriture* or *trace*, which amounts to the very essence of the metaphorical process itself – remains.[55] According to Derrida's interpretation, the crossing out – the *kreuzweise Durchstreichung* – of the word *Sein* in a text such as

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[53] *Ibidem*, 323–324: "Sans doute la pensée de l'être annonce-t-elle l'horizon de la non-métaphore à partir de laquelle la métaphoricité est pensée. Mais elle ne s'annonce pas prophétiquement comme un lendemain (les prophètes n'annoncent jamais que d'autres métaphores), comme quelque chose qui sera, elle s'annonce comme l'impossible sur le fond duquel le possible est pensée comme tel (annoncer ≠ événement ici). (...) Donc la pensée de l'être annonce l'horizon de la non-métaphore. Mais le geste par lequel elle l'annonce, s'il dénonce le tout de la métaphore *passée* (l'onto-théologie), se produit dans une métaphore dont il ne sait pas encore, parce qu'il est à-venir irréductible, ce qu'elle cache."

[54] See *ibidem*, 324.

[55] See *ibidem*: "Parler d'une question de l'être c'est par la simple élocution du mot être le déterminer, déterminer métaphoriquement le chiffre de la non-métaphore. Le déterminer en quoi? Eh bien par exemple, encore par la détermination linguistique à laquelle essentiellement on ne peut pas ne pas faire appel. Et cette détermination linguistique reste encore une détermination par le présent, par la présence du présent, au moment même où, au nom de la question de l'être, on détruit la dominance de la présence. (...) Cette dimension irréductiblement grammaticale du sens, cette écriture, cette trace nécessaire du sens est le procès métaphorique lui-même, l'historicité elle-même."

Zur Seinsfrage (1955) reflects Heidegger's attempt to efface the dominance of the present; it manifests "the unity of metaphoricity and non-metaphoricity as unity of language"[56] on the basis of which Heideggerian thinking as a whole should be understood. Derrida's metaphorization of Heidegger's thought is *totalizing*, in such a way that the two key concepts of his interpretation of the German philosopher, namely Being and History – but also the designation "Heidegger" itself – end up being denounced as metaphors as well.[57] Derrida calls this the unpredictability of the results or consequences of a destruction of current metaphors by means of new ones, in order to abolish the dominance of the present, "the future itself".[58] In this sense, the movement of Heidegger's thinking – the metaphoricity or historicity of the language of Being – is the very movement towards the future, the movement of *futurization itself*. The metaphoricity or historicity of the language of Being corresponds to the very movement of *futurization of "Heidegger"*, of his destruction insofar as he is conceived of as a metaphorical element in the language of Being, a metaphorical substitute for Being Itself. However, because it is impossible to stop the movement of metaphoricity, to reach the proper meaning of the language of Being, Heidegger still remains with us – though with his name crossed out.

* * *

Let me briefly sum up the trajectory of my reflections here, in order to draw some preliminary conclusions from, or address some preliminary questions to, Derrida's reading of Heidegger. As I have been attempting to demonstrate by means of a close reading of some key passages in Derrida's lectures, Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger involves a set of strategies that surface in the former's discourse at central moments in his lectures. Derrida picks up key topics in Heidegger's texts – for example, the destruction of the history of ontology, the abandonment of the language of ontology, the different phases in Heidegger's thinking, and so forth – and transforms them into issues belonging to the problematic of metaphor (as he understands it). Derrida's main interpretative strategy, as I have tried to point out, consists of a *double-directional, retrospective-prospective* reading of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, which ends up taking the German philosopher's thought in its entirety as corresponding to the *unified self-conscious and self-reflecting movement of metaphoricity itself, of de-metaphorization itself*. As a result of this, not only Heidegger's key concepts but also the name "Heidegger" itself are transformed by Derrida into metaphors, figures of metaphoricity itself, stages in the continuing movement of the very historicity of the language of Being. No doubt, by means of such reading strategy(ies), Derrida was very early on able to develop a highly original, non-conventional and wide-ranging conception of metaphor, which he turned into a major figure of thought, applicable beyond the restricted sphere of philosophical reflection.[59]

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[56] *Ibidem*, 325: "Et la remarque de Heidegger montrant que le mot être appartient encore à une pensée de la présence, cette remarque trouve sa confirmation dans le texte connu auquel j'avais aussi fait allusion (*Zur Seinsfrage*, 1955) en expliquant pourquoi Heidegger avait jugé nécessaire de biffer par une croix le mot Être. Cette croix, cette écriture négative, cette trace effaçant la trace du présent dans le langage est **l'unité de la métaphoricité et de la non-métaphoricité comme unité du langage**." (Bold emphasis mine) See *ibidem*, 50.

[57] *Ibidem*, 326: "Le titre de ce cours, je le rappelle: Heidegger, la question de l'être et de l'histoire. Vous vous rappelez que j'avais essayé en commençant de justifier chacun des mots de ce titre. Chacun s'est révélé, et même le nom de Heidegger, comme métaphorique." See *ibidem*, 325: "Dès lors, si la signification être est encore une métaphore et si la signification histoire est pensable seulement comme histoire de l'être, eh bien la signification histoire est aussi, comme celle de l'Être, une métaphore à détruire."

[58] *Ibidem*, 325: "l'avenir lui-même".

Of course, the power of Derrida's interpretation, its attractive and seductive nature, may perhaps tempt one to immediately adopt the Derridean perspective on Heidegger as being tantamount to Heidegger's own perspective. Curiously enough, at a few points in his lectures, Derrida himself seems not to be able to distinguish between Heidegger's perspective and his own, between the letter of Heidegger's texts and his interpretation of these texts. In moments such as these, Derrida seems to lose his awareness of the fact that what he was doing during his lecture series could be interpreted, as I indeed have tried to do here, as being in general a *metaphorization of Heideggerian thought*. Moments of acute awareness regarding this fact – for instance, "(Destroy the word *metaphor* = linguistics. **Heidegger does not use**

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[59] On the relationship between Derrida and literary theory, see notably T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996, 2nd edn, 110–130; F. Cusset, *French Theory: Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze & Cie et les mutations de la vie intellectuelle aux États-Unis*, Paris, La Découverte, 2005, 2nd edn, 86–139; L. Hill, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

it)"[60] – are contradicted by other statements such as: "There is history only of being and being is only history [*sic*], but by its essence this proposition is still metaphorical. **Heidegger knows this and says so**".[61] However, one should be aware that in order to understand Derrida's reading of Heidegger, both its strategic nature and productiveness, one needs to look at, and pause over, Derrida's metaphorization of Heidegger, the interpretative operations through which Heidegger becomes Derrida or Derrida becomes himself by reading Heidegger – in other terms, those moments of overlap between Derridean and Heideggerian thinking when Derrida no longer knows where Heidegger ends and he himself begins.

In fact, no matter how revealing Derrida's interpretation of Heidegger may seem to be, it should always be borne in mind that it is the Derridean metaphorization of Heidegger – in other words, the transformation of Heideggerian thinking as a whole into a decisive stage in the unified movement of the metaphoricity of Being – that makes Heidegger's indirect contributions to the formation of the Derridean conception of metaphor possible in the first place. This being so, it seems that *non-metaphor* lies at both ends of Derrida's metaphorization of Heideggerian thinking, in the sense that it does not simply consist in the proper meaning of Heidegger's thinking itself, which could be revealed if its metaphorical nature could be overcome, but also in the irreducible materiality of the letter of Heidegger's texts, which Derrida had to be confronted with at the very inception of his metaphorising reading of Heidegger, and which the interpreter of Derrida will need to consider in order to get an adequate view of the key move in Derrida's interpretative work during his 1964–1965 lectures.

At the very core of Derrida's main strategy in reading Heidegger lies therefore an *irreducible difference – an irreducible deferral or différance – between text and interpretation, between non-metaphor and metaphor*. So, at least as a reader of Heidegger – but most certainly also as representing a decisive stage in the movement of the metaphoricity of Being or of that which comes after Being – this is Derrida's *à-venir lui-même*.

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[60] Derrida, *Heidegger*, 325: "(Détruire le mot de métaphore = linguistique. **Heidegger ne l'utilise pas.**)" (Bold emphasis mine)

[61] *Ibidem*, 323: "Il n'y a d'histoire que de l'être et l'être n'est pas historique [*sic*], mais par essence cette proposition est encore métaphorique. **Heidegger le sait et le dit.**" (Bold emphasis mine)

One awaits his promise – *hors métaphore* (outside the metaphor that he – by interpreting the movement of the historicity of Being as metaphoricity and by locating his own thinking within the framework of such a metaphoricity – turned himself into).

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KARL BARTH'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS: ITS BACKGROUND IN KIERKEGAARD AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE EXISTENTIAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to investigate how *The Letter to the Romans*, the classic work of the Swiss theologian Karl Barth, received a strong influence from Kierkegaard's interpretation of Christianity, and how this work in turn influenced a whole generation of existentialist philosophers in the twentieth century. Thus, the proposal is divided into two central parts: the first aims to investigate Kierkegaard's influence on Karl Barth and the second intends to show how such a theological work is key to understanding, among other things, Christian existentialism in the twentieth century.

Keywords

Existentialism, Philosophy of Religion, Kierkegaard, Karl Barth, 20th century

Introduction

The Letter to the Romans, attributed to the apostle Paul, is perhaps one of the inspiring sources of great reflection at the core of Christianity, and goes even beyond its borders, reaching a debate that is of interest to the sphere of ethics and politics. From the earliest days of Christianity, the epistle has been accepted in the work of the greatest theologians of the Church of all times, and thus Leenhardt seems to be correct in his comment on the degree of comprehension of the Pauline text:

> Impossible and useless would be to give exhaustive bibliography of works devoted to the Epistle to the Romans or that refer to it in a dominant proportion. A more complete information set will be found in the works whose consultation is, in any case, indispensable for further work... The sixteenth century saw the emergence of two capital works, which have exercised in the history of the Church the primordial function which they recognize: the commentary on Romans of Luther (1515–1516) and the LOCI THEOLOGICI of Melanchthon (1521). Calvin, for his part, commented on the Epistle to the Romans with the other books of the New Testament... (Leenhardt, 1969, p. 27).

It should also be remembered that Luther's Bible obviously contains the translation of the epistle itself, and this would have been surprising in his discussion about the freedom of the Christian individual and his choices, a central theme in Lutheran thought. Thus, David and Pat Alexander are correct in perceiving the degree of importance of the Letter to the Romans in a Christian context:

> The influence exerted by this epistle has been enormous. She has influenced great men – St. Augustine, Luther, Karl Barth... – and through them has shaped the history of the Church, just as it has influenced the lives of countless anonymous individuals, simple men and women who, in reading it, believed in their message and acted accordingly (Alexander, 1985, p. 582).

The Letter to the Romans dates from 57 D.C. During this period Paul, despite being a Roman citizen, had not yet gone to the imperial capital and, in fact, only entered it a few years later as a prisoner. The core of the epistle lies in the central debate, so dear to early Christianity, between the new faith (still in formation and very different from the form we know today) and paganism.

The theme of the letter is quite significant and therefore has become central to the theological reflections of the rising faith. Here Paul stands in a unique way in front of legalistic Jews, Christians from various places and pagans, in defense of the Christian faith and of a subject that will be very dear to the Lutheran tradition, namely the context of subjectivity and human freedom, which, in the future, will be fundamental to modernity.

The Pauline letter has a structure of 16 chapters, but here we cannot enumerate them or analyze them with the appropriate exegetical rigorousness, but we can highlight some important aspects of the Pauline letter. The affirmation of the faith of the Christian, for example, is highlighted right at the first chapter (1:17), and Paul textually states there that "he that is righteous shall live by faith." As we know from the tradition, this text had a profound resonance in Luther who, in reading it, perceives the ineffectiveness of both the ecclesiastical magisterium and the practice of good works for the salvation of men and, in this sense, is convinced that human salvation is given by God through faith, which is by no means a merit or something that man can attain by his efforts.

In the same sense, the epistle mentions the important inheritance of Abraham (chapter 4) for the rising faith, and there is a curious aspect here. The patriarch of Israel now abandons the position of merely the father of the Jews and reaches all members of this new faith. That is, Paul universalizes his figure, giving him, beyond the already well-known position of patriarch of the faith, the title of our predecessor in it. It should be noted that in a context of a rising Christianity, where a portion of it came from Judaism and another composed of non-Jews who were generally discriminated against and taken as a kind of "secondhand disciples", the Pauline text shows itself in a vigorous, courageous and innovative position.

The same theme of the articulation between the old Jewish faith and the new Christian faith can also be observed in chapter 5, where there is an approximation between Adam and Christ. Paul also discusses the early life of a Christian and his new life in Christ. Here there is an analogy of the new humanity that now has its nature transformed, a Christian theme par excellence. Finally, the letter will also address the theme of divine election, the freedom and responsibility of the Christian in the face of his choices. Thus, like the definition of faith at the beginning of the epistle, the definition of sin given by the apostle will be equally provocative: "But everything that does not proceed from a conviction of faith is sin" (14:23). Now, what Paul seems to try to accomplish here is, in fact, to construct a rational theological discourse which can be applied to Christianity. His opposition to paganism undoubtedly brings an aspect of moral condemnation of it, but it goes further to the extent that paganism seems to be rejected insofar as it can no longer operate rationally, so that, as Jaeger suspects, there seems to be in rising Christianity a new *paideia*, which will constitute the Christian West and, at the same time, will differentiate itself from the old Greek and Roman *paideia*, although it has nourished itself of some of its aspects.

Let us now turn to an assessment of how the Danish thinker Kierkegaard had a decisive influence on the reading of the Swiss Protestant theologian Karl Barth in his classic interpretation of the Letter to the Romans. The themes of freedom, choice, the possibility of faith, as well as the theme of what it means to be an apostle or follower of Christianity are clearly perceived in the works of Kierkegaard and, of course, he takes it from his Christian and Protestant tradition, as we may see.

1. Kierkegaard's influence on Karl Barth: the case of the *Letter to the Romans*

Karl Barth's classic *Letter to the Romans* was published in 1918, as its first preface attests. However, in general, it is recognized as being dated from 1922, when its second version was released. Six prefaces for the work were written, respectively in 1918, 1921, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928.

The Barthian text follows basically the same structure as the Pauline one, that is, practically every chapter by the theologian corresponds to a chapter by the apostle in the epistles. The topics taken up and interpreted by the Swiss theologian are Pauline themes, such as human justice, God's justice, faith, grace, freedom, the Spirit and the Church. Cornelis van der Kooi and Katja Tolstaja, current editors of the most up-to-date version of Barth's *Letter to the Romans*, point out in their preface a singular aspect of the theological construction of the Swiss thinker, namely, the confrontation between Christianity and culture.

While in 19th century cultural Protestantism, Christianity and Western culture were still widely identified, and Christian values were valuable as cement and leaven in society, Barth now differentiates between revelation and Christianity. Christianity is a cultural phenomenon, a sum of convictions and habits that shape human existence and structure the life of the community. *The revelation of God*, in turn, must be differentiated from these cultural expressions. Faith deals with the confrontation with God as a category of an entirely different order. God is now thematized in an expressionist and rigorously paradoxical fashion as something shockingly incomprehensible and unfamiliar, that approaches itself dangerously (van der Kooi, Tolstaja in Barth, 2016, 7).

Here we can already see how much Barth is under Kierkegaardian influence. The confrontation between Christianity and culture will be something constant throughout the work of the Danish author and can be especially highlighted in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments,* where the pseudonym Climacus jokingly questions whether Christianity can be a question of geography, and also in the final controversy of *The Moment,* where Kierkegaard explicitly states that New Testament Christianity is dead and thus seems to synthesize Luther's 95 theses in only one. The theme of divine revelation is equally noticeable in numerous of his writings and we would highlight here two of them that were known to the Swiss theologian: *The Book on Adler* and *On the Difference Between the Genius and the Apostle*. Both deal with the subject of revelation and the affirmation of apostolic authority. In the first writing, through a real case related with Pastor Adler, who claimed to have received a divine revelation which impelled him to abandon his role of Logic teacher and pastor of the Lutheran Church, Kierkegaard sees in such an episode a satire both of the Church and Hegelian speculation, both marked by the confusion of his time between culture and Christianity. In the second text, which, as well as the first, belongs to the posthumous writings of the Danish author, Kierkegaard points out that the *telos* of an apostle is in transcendence (as in the case of Paul, for example), while the *telos* of a genius such as Plato or Shakespeare, lies in immanence. The two spheres should not mix, and the authority of an apostle does not therefore stem from his brilliance as a genius, but from transcendence, which gives him his vocation and legitimizes his mission. As Barth himself acknowledges, in the first chapter of the *Letter to the Romans,* quoting Kierkegaard directly, "the apostolic vocation is a paradoxical fact" (Barth, 2016, 71).

It should be noted that Barth, as Cornelis van der Kooi and Katja Tolstaja rightly note, made the first draft of the work in 1919, but soon remade it in 1922 (officially recognized version) because of having received several influences in this period from other readings and interpretations: "Barth enumerates a number of factors that led him to make a fundamental revision: the progressive study of Paul; the reading of Overbeck; a better insertion in the world of the ideas of Plato and Kant, thanks to his brother Heinrich

Barth and the influence of Kierkegaard and Dostoievsky" (van der Kooi, Tolstaja in Barth, 2016, p. 8).

The Swiss theologian read the Danish thinker in the German editions of Gottsched, Pfleiderer and Schrempf (1909–1922, 12 volumes), possessing German editions of the time of works such as *Philosophical Fragments*, *Concluding Unscientific Postcript to Philosophical Fragments*, *The Judge's Book* (a part of the *Journals*), *Practice of Christianity,* and *Works of love.*[1] It is also necessary to point out some limits concerning his readings and approaches in virtue of the editions of his sources, and considering that at that moment a more critical edition of Kierkegaard's works was not available in German, which certainly did not prevent the theologian Barth to make excellent use of the resources that were available to him. In this sense, Barrett's warning seems to be fundamental: "Because of its centrality in Barth's early positive appropriation of Kierkegaard, the citations of Kierkegaard in *The Epistle to the Romans* must be explored with some care" (Barrett, 2012, p. 26).

In his preface to the second edition, for example, Barth points to the endless qualitative difference between time and eternity, as well as the absolute difference between God and man, as Schwöbel states: "Much of the expressionistic rhetoric of *Romans* is intended to emphasize the distinction between God and the world. Famous is Barth's famous appeal to Kierkegaard in the preface to the second edition" (Schwöbel in Webster, 2000, p. 20). The same note is made by Barrett: "Kierkegaard's influence is most evident in the second edition of Barth's *The Epistle to the Romans,* both in the texts quoted and the themes articulated. In this text Barth echoes Kierkegaard's phrase "the qualitative distinction" (Barrett, 2012, p. 8).

We perceive here with immense clarity an attentive reading of the motivating themes of Kiekegaard's reflections in works such as *Concept of Anxiety* and *Philosophical Fragments*. Already in its first chapter of the *Letter to the Romans*, the word paradox appears clearly, taken not only in its broad sense both in the fields of the history of theology and in logical discussions, but directly from the Kierkegaardian reflection, and even with the name of the author referred to in parentheses shortly after its use. In this same chapter, the Swiss thinker also reveals his knowledge of an important work by Kierkegaard: *Practice of Christianity*. There, through the reflection on the God-man theme, the theologian recovers a crucial theme from the theological tradition, that is, the divine incarnation, and applies it with a very Kierkegaardian language, namely, the incognito and unknown, the God which is not captured only by a certain type of reason, is the God who invites men to live a different life.

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[1] Further details on the bibliography that Karl Barth had available can be seen on pp. 35 and 36 of the Brazilian edition of the work, that is, in the list of abbreviations. Even more accurate information can be gathered from Lee Barrett's article, also quoted in our final bibliography.

This same reflection present in Barth's reading of *Practice of Christianity* is taken up again in the third chapter to emphasize two unique aspects of Christianity. The first is that it constitutes a scandal, that is, a breaking of the law and of that which was expected by a traditional religion. The second is that it cannot be communicated directly since it is not an objective knowledge or belongs to a scientific sphere. In this way, Barthian Christianity asserts itself here as very Pauline and Kierkegaardian. In fact, it overcomes the scandal – since it surpasses the law – and is a kind of madness – since it shocks the logical mentality of the Greeks.

Interestingly, in this same chapter, also inspired by a reflection of *The Concept of Anxiety*, Barth touches on such a dear subject to Kierkegaard, making this absolutely explicit in a footnote: the theme of the instant, where Christianity asserts itself in time and where eternity and time touch each other, forming the instant.

In the fourth chapter, Barth refers to a Kierkegaardian work that seems fundamental to every theologian, namely, *The Sickness unto Death*. Another important Kierkegaardian theme is recovered there through a reflection at the heart of Christianity: the theme of the individual, so dear to the Christian tradition from the earliest days and masterfully developed in the context of the treatment of consciousness in *The Sickness unto Death*. Following the sequence of the Pauline text, the thinker is faced with the paradigmatic figure of Abraham, but in a very instigating way, although the Kierkegaardian reflection is clearly present here, there is no mention, at least in that moment, of the work *Fear and Trembling*, where the figure of the patriarch is central. One hypothesis for this is that perhaps the Swiss thinker opted for a more emphatic exegesis of the biblical text and did not, at least at that time, become interested in the psychological discussion developed in *Fear and Trembling*.

However, in this same chapter, Barth shows a good knowledge not only of Kierkegaard's texts, but of the context in which he was inserted. He even quotes Martensen, a celebrated Danish professor and bishop of Copenhagen at the time when Kierkegaard strongly criticized the Church and culture in *The Moment*. The theologian goes on to say in a footnote to the text that the funeral sermon for Bishop Mynster, delivered by Martensen, where the late bishop is taken as a "witness of the truth in the apostles' career" will be the Kierkegaardian criticism to be developed in the instant because, in the eyes of the Dane, it would be necessary to clarify what is effectively said when someone is named as a "witness of the truth in the apostles' career."

In discussing about the new human being proposed in the Letter to the Romans, Barth uses Kierkegaard again, this time making use of his *Concluding Unscientific Postcript to Philosophical Fragments*, where the act of believing is taken as a kind of infinite passion, thus providing the tonality of the reflection that will be developed in his fifth chapter of the *Letter to the Romans*.

In dealing with the theme of freedom and the limits of religion in the seventh chapter, Barth again shows himself to be familiar with details of Kierkegaardian interpretation and a broad cultural context. Here, in a footnote, he points out that the play *Brand* by the Norwegian Ibsen would have been openly inspired by Kierkegaard and that his main character is, in essence, a Kierkegaardian figure in clash with his ethical-moral dilemmas. In this same chapter, the thinker discusses Kierkegaard's "dialectical courage" (Barth, 2016, 267), which demonstrates a new familiarity, for example, with the theme so recurrent in the Danish thinker about the figure of the dialectical thinker. Therefore, it also does not seem fortuitous that the Barthian tradition will also be taken by some as "dialectical theology", which seems very significant.

However, in the eighth chapter there is a curious mention. Barth speaks of Kierkegaard's "poisonous superpietism" (Barth, 2016, 289). Such a criticism deserves careful consideration and, strictly speaking, needs to be investigated within the context of Danish Lutheranism. Pietism can be considered as a kind of romanticism applied to Lutheranism. After the establishment of official Protestantism, Lutheranism also lived its scholastic period, that is, a kind of Protestant scholasticism. In this way, Pietism sought a kind of intimate experience and individual piety, going beyond a rational Christian explanation. However, a "superpietism," as Barth attributes to Kierkegaard, can also be a disease and not a medicine, that is, a dose that is no longer beneficial, but which, on the contrary, can poison someone precisely because it is unmeasured.

In that same chapter there is another mention that deserves to be highlighted: the one where Barth refers to Spinoza and understands how the thinker was important to the Kierkegaardian elaboration. He literally cites the expression used in *Ethics*, namely: *sub specie aeterni* (Barth, 2016, 314). In his eyes the whole Pauline discussion that touches on the theme that the Christian should be guided by the Holy Spirit implies truly a way of learning to look at the world from the perspective of eternity, a fact shown by Spinoza and recovered by Kierkegaard.

In chapters 12–15, there is an extremely interesting mention of the idea of neighbor in Kierkegaard, which is certainly of theological interest, but also in a discussion about ethics. Here the Swiss theologian cites directly the main work of the Danish thinker in this respect, namely, *The Works of Love*. Unlike the Greek model of love of predilection, Barth is concerned with the Pauline theme of the multiplicity of the group of Christians, that is, of the variety of people who composed it. The theologian's intention is to recover the subject of the neighbor as the one who places all men in the same condition before God. In other words, we are all close to those around us and this equality is guaranteed by the common love of God to all and by the imperative "thou shalt love" without making any personal differentiation for any reason. The love of this God is therefore our guarantee and must be our practice.

Having concluded this stage, where we seek to separate small portions of the Kierkegaardian influence in Karl Barth, I believe we are now ready to observe it within the context of 20th-century European existentialism.

2. The *Letter to the Romans* in the Context of Existentialism in the Twentieth Century

Karl Barth's Letter to the Romans appears in a time of crisis, right after the context of the First World War. The Italian philosopher Luigi Pareyson, in his classic work *Studi sull'esistenzialismo*, points out how much the work of the Swiss theologian and Karl Jaspers are vital within such context and how both, in their own way, are influenced by Kierkegaardian philosophy:

> In 1919 comes the *Römerbrief* by Karl Barth and the *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* by Karl Jaspers. On the one hand, the theologian Barth, with his commentary on the letter to the Romans by St. Paul, laid the foundations of dialectical theology or crisis theology, which had so much influence in the German Protestant world, but also in the French. On the other hand, Jaspers, who from psychiatrist became a psychologist... But a long section of Jaspers's book is devoted to Kierkegaard, and all of Barth's theology is intimately permeated by the thought of the sharp and tormented Danish theologian of the first half of the past century. This common interest in Kierkegaardian thought is what unites the two works cited more closely than at first glance. In this first stage of the history of existentialism one understands the importance for each existentialist conception of Kierkegaardian philosophy. Kierkegaardian speculation focuses mainly on the concept of *existence,* which signifies the exasperated uniqueness of a naked man before God... Kierkegaardian thought, in fact, is the emblem of the existentialist revaluation of the singular (Pareyson, 2001, p. 11)

In other words, Pareyson situates Kierkegaard as the primordial link in the history of existentialism of the twentieth century. His recovery of the theme of the singular, so dear to him because of its connection both with ancient philosophy and Christianity, undoubtedly has an appeal to the Protestant tradition too, after all the subject of the individual is par excellence a Protestant theme. In this sense, the *Letter to the Romans* by Barth does not fail to flirt with this by placing the singular before God as one of the existential problems of his theology.

There is a singular passage by Hannah Arendt in a text entitled "Søren Kierkegaard", which seems to us exemplary to fully demonstrate such a thesis. Arendt affirms that, in modern times, where secularization and mistrust take hold, it is not only necessary to affirm Christianity, but it must be affirmed when everyone denies it through well-elaborated theses and arguments. Hence, "To be radically religious in such a world means to be alone not only in the sense that one stands alone before God but also in the sense that no one else stands before God" (Arendt, 1994, p. 47). In other words, there is no longer a Christian community, but some individuals who still seek to maintain the integrality of the Christian message. It is, therefore, an existential struggle, which has to do with what Miguel de Unamuno called the *agony of Christianity.*

Also the Italian philosopher Giacomo Marramao keenly perceives what he calls the *Kierkegaard Renaissance*, that is, the influence of the Kierkegaardian work and its themes as central to a whole philosophy that will be made in Europe in this period. This philosophy also holds a debate on the theme of secularization in check, so in addition to the already mentioned Jaspers, the author of *Christentum und Kultur*, the celebrated Overbeck, personal friend of Nietzsche and a thinker who will directly influence the *Letter to the Romans* by Karl Barth:

> However, no less significant – in terms of the evolution of the concept of secularization – is the fact that the posthumous date of publication of *Christentum und Kultur* (1919) coincides precisely with the time of the "Kierkegaard *Renaissance*", represented by works such as *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* [Psychology of World Views] by Karl Jaspers and the *Römerbrief* by Karl Barth: a 'coincidence' which in itself poses the question of the thematic correlation between negative theology and the nineteenth-century theological incubation of 'the rebellion against Hegel'. In fact, it is within this incubation that the question of the individual will be manifested as a paradox of a 'dehumanized' existence in the age of complete worldliness (*Verweltlichung*): faith, understood in Kierkegaard's sense, is that 'paradox' by which the singular is superior to the general (Marramao 1997: 43).

Arendt seems to be right when she says that "Kierkegaard was the first thinker to live in a world constituted much like our own, that is, in a wholly secularized world stemming from the Enlightenment" (Arendt, 1994, p. 46). Thus, it is quite significant to think that Karl Barth, reader of Kierkegaard, inserts itself exactly in this context and, in his own way, tries to articulate an answer to some questions that already existed at the time of the Danish author. In other words, how will the dialectical theology of the twentieth century survive the challenge of secularization and succeed in articulating a discourse valid for the men of its time and faithful to the divine commandment? Such a thing must always be the concern of a theologian.

It should be emphasized that such an exchange between theologians and philosophers was never alien to the German world, although perhaps this requires a better explanation in other contexts, where there is a more radical separation of philosophy and theology, as well as between state and religion. At the same time this does not mean that philosophy and theology are one and the same thing, but, as Leo Strauss rightly points out in his text *The mutual influence between Theology and Philosophy*, it only means that the philosopher can be open to the challenges of theology and the theologian can be open to the challenges of philosophy:

> When we try to return to the roots of Western civilization, we soon note that Western civilization has two roots in conflict with one another, biblical and Greek philosophy, and this to begin with a very disconcerting observation. Even so, this understanding also has something comforting and reassuring. The very life of Western civilization is the life between two codes, a fundamental tension. Hence, there is no intrinsic reason for Western civilization itself, in its fundamental constitution, by which it must abdicate life. But this reassuring thought is only justified if we live this life, that is, if we live this conflict. No one can be both philosopher and theologian, nor, moreover, a third thing that is beyond the conflict between philosophy and theology, or a synthesis of both. But each of us can and must be one of the two, the philosopher open to the challenge of theology or the theologian open to the challenge of philosophy (Strauss, 2017, p. 249).

In this sense, an excellent overview of the intellectual context of the time is also provided by Karl Löwith who, in his work *My Life in Germany before and after 1933,* points out that his generation was deeply influenced by the reading of two masterpieces produced in the period: of the *The Decline of the West* by Spengler (1918) and the *Letter to the Romans* by Karl Barth (1919). Despite putting it a point below Spengler's work, Löwith is deeply flattering about the work of the Swiss theologian:

> Something similar, although its effect was smaller, meant the Letter to the Romans of Karl Barth that appeared at the same time. Also in this work was the denial of progress, drawing theological conclusions from the collapse of culture. The distrust of human solutions fomented by war led Barth from Christian socialism to a radical theology that denied from its root any "development" of Christianity. The writings of Spengler and Barth were the books that aroused most enthusiasm in the period marked by the end of World War I (Löwith, 1992, pp. 46–47)

In Löwith's view, apart from his intellectual tribute, Barth was worthy of political recognition. Especially for him, who had been guided by Heidegger, the political position of the theologian in the European context of the period is something to be deservedly highlighted. For this reason, Löwith points out the crucial difference between the position of Heidegger's discourse allied with Nazism and Barth's speech as his courageous opponent:

> One month after Heidegger had proclaimed his speech, K. Barth wrote his theological manifesto (*Theologische Existenz Heute*), in which he advocated against assimilation to the power of the moment. This writing was the only serious manifestation of an intellectual opposition to that harrowing time and still remains as such (Löwith, 1992, p. 57).

In addition to Barth's political positions, it might be thought-provoking to note the political aspect of Pauline thought, notably that which is set out in the Epistle to the Romans, applied to a kind of contemporary rereading such as Badiou's. Badiou, from a atheistic perspective, seems to be fascinated, especially when he thinks about the theme of love, with the fact that the Pauline proposal stands as revolutionary since it implies a breakdown of the legality of traditional religion and flirts with a new and universalized individual. However, Badiou is cautious, for he does not think that the Christian lives without law, but in a kind of "existence of a *trans-literal* law, a law of the spirit" (Badiou, 2009, 101). Thus, if Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10: 4) and love is the execution of the law (Rom 13:10), Badiou seems to be right: "Under the condition of faith, of declared conviction, love names a non-literal law, which gives the faithful subject its consistency and effectuates in the world the post-happening truth" (Badiou, 2009, 102). Certainly such a track deserved to be followed more thoroughly and in detail, which we will not be able to perform here.

Conclusion

The present article has concentrated, in terms of its delimitation as well as the scope of the theme itself, in three essential aspects. In the introduction, it was sought, without entering into any theological or exegetical minutiae, to present a little of the production context of the *Letter to the Romans* and to point out questions that must be taken into account in an analysis such as the one we undertake here.

The second aspect consisted of an analysis, also within the possible limits and some previously delimited cuts, of the Kierkegaardian influence in the *Letter to the Romans* by Karl Barth. To this effect, we focused on some aspects of Kierkegaardian thought and its effective appropriation by the Swiss theologian. The intention was to place two important authors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in clear and open dialogue, aiming to understand their respective contexts, theses and controversies. To this end, some Kierkegaardian works and concepts were notably listed from Kierkegaard's quotations in Barth's own text. After all, as Barrett rightly remarked:

> Kierkegaard certainly did influence Barth's theological development, particularly during Barth's early period, informing the way that he conceptualized pivotal issues and articulated major themes. However, the extent and exact nature of that influence is a matter of some debate. The basic types of evidence relevant to this issue fall into three categories: Barth's own reports of his reading of Kierkegaard's works, Barth's direct citations of Kierkegaard in his literature, and Barth's own explicit retrospective reflections about Kierkegaard's influence upon him. The first two types of evidence help determine which parts of his *corpus* were familiar to Barth, a critical matter for understanding Barth's construal of Kierkegaard. Before trying to grasp the significance of Barth's appropriations and criticisms of Kierkegaard, we must first determine what Barth actually knew about his writings, and therefore what impression of Kierkegaard Barth was able to formulate". (Barrett, 2012, p. 7)

Finally, the third point of the article is an analysis of the context of the emergence of the so-called European existentialism of the twentieth century, especially that which took place on German soil. Here, through authors such as Pareyson, Arendt, Löwith, Strauss and Marramao, an attempt was made to see a significant picture of this movement and its relation to the theme of secularization. The main aim was to demonstrate that Barth's thought works as a direct inspiration of existentialism from the so-called dialectical theology and that, in recovering the theme of the individual, so dear to Christian and Protestant traditions, the Swiss theologian joins together with Kierkegaard and other important authors of the period at the heart of what we can take as existentialism. Thus, we believe that we have made a contribution to bringing these great authors, in what is a very exciting context, closer to each other; this certainly deserves other, deepening and detailed studies.

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RAMÓN GÓMEZ DE LA SERNA'S DEHUMANIZED AND POSTHUMAN EXPERIMENTS

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Abstract

This paper will deal with the work of the Spanish avant-garde novelist Ramón Gómez de la Serna (1888–1963) considering two main lines of experimentation and dissidence. On the one hand, the volume *Seis falsas novelas (Six False Novellas),* published in 1927, will be our point of departure to discuss the author's stance towards the idea of national literatures. The experimentation with themes and rhetorical devices seems to allow for the composition of narratives that challenge the most obvious processes of identification within a national literature, thus entailing a broader debate on the correspondence between literature and national identity. On the other hand, some of Gómez de la Serna's short-stories published in the 1920s and 1930s, such as "¡Hay que matar el Morse!" [Kill the Morse!] (1925) or "El dueño del átomo" [The Master of the Atom] (1926), are focused on the scientific and technological progress dominant since the 19th century. We shall analyse, in some of these narratives, the complex interplay between a traditional humanist representation of subjectivity, emotions and personal dilemmas and a clearly prominent reference to machines and scientific research as a new realm of nonhuman alterity.

Keywords

Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Avant-Garde, Literary Experimentation, Dehumanization of Art, Posthumanism

This paper will deal with the work of the Spanish avant-garde novelist Ramón Gómez de la Serna (1888–1963) considering two main lines of experimentation and dissidence, that I suggest we may call "dehumanized" and "posthuman" experiments. On the one hand, the volume *Seis falsas novelas* [*Six False Novellas*], published in 1927, is our point of departure to discuss the author's stance towards the idea of realist fiction and national literatures. The experimentation with themes and rhetorical devices seems to allow for the composition of narratives that challenge the most obvious processes of identification within a national literature, thus entailing a broader debate on the correspondence between literature and national identity, and more specifically between literature and human life. José Ortega y Gasset's ideas on the "dehumanization of art" (1925) will then be recalled when examining these "dehumanized" experiments by Gómez de la Serna.

On the other hand, some of Gómez de la Serna's short-stories published in the 1920s, such as "¡Hay que matar el Morse!" [Kill the Morse!] (1925) or "El dueño del átomo" [The Master of the Atom] (1926), are focused on the scientific and technological progress dominant since the 19th century. In these narratives, we will analyse another kind of experimentation that stems from the complex interplay between a traditional humanist representation of subjectivity, emotions and personal dilemmas, and a clearly prominent reference to machines and scientific research. Following recent theories concerning the "posthuman" stance that may be found in Avant-garde literary authors (See Clarke and Rossini, 2017), we will consider Ramón Gómez de la Serna's participation in this artistic shaping of a new realm of nonhuman and post-human alterity.

We should start mentioning Ramón Gómez de la Serna had a key role in the dissemination of avant-garde ideas in Spain (*e.g.*, in 1909, he translated and published Marinetti's Futurist Manifesto, in his journal *Prometeo*) and his "tertulia", or literary gathering, at the Café Pombo, in Madrid, was probably the most influent intellectual reunion in the Spanish capital, around 1920.[1] Moreover, he was also praised in the Parisian artistic milieu, as Valery Larbaud and Jean Cassou translated several of his works in the1920s (See Elwes Aguilar 2010). Another testimony of Gómez de la Serna's worldliness is his portrait by the Mexican painter Diego Rivera, from the time when they met in Madrid, around 1915.[2] Ramón was an extremely prolific writer: his complete works, published by Galaxia Guttenberg between 1996 and 2003, consist of 19 thick volumes.[3] Most of his narrative fiction written in the 1920s and 1930s (mainly composed of short-stories or "novellas", published in journals or low cost literary collections) propose a new literary discourse, playing with the rules of verisimilitude, and undermining the traditional "realism" of nineteenth century novels. We may say his poetics is grounded on "the absolute certainty that art was to occupy a place of central importance", since "similar to Oscar Wilde, Gómez de la Serna re-asserts the importance of art over life itself, abstracting the real through a poetic re-interpretation of the surrounding world, whereby the poetic construction not only competes with Nature but overshadows it." (McCulloch 2007: 177–178). This artistic overshadowing of nature, or reality, is also a deliberate challenge to traditional concepts and images of humanity. In Ramón's narratives the challenge takes place through different means, which might become clearer when we consider them as artistic experiments in dehumanization and posthumanism.

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[1] See the painting *La tertulia del café Pombo,* by José Solana (1920): http://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/tertulia-cafe-pombo-gathering-cafe-pombo

[2] This painting belongs to the collection of MALBA – Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires: http://www.malba.org.ar/coleccion-online/?idobra=2003.39

Dehumanized experiments

In 1925 the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) published an essay called "The Dehumanization of Art", where he discussed the characteristics and aims of the "new art", that is, the contemporary artistic production that seemed to have undergone considerable changes since the end of the nineteenth century. Ortega y Gasset was not particularly enthusiastic about the achievements of this new art, and in the end of the essay he even confesses that he generally agrees with the common idea that "the new art has so far produced nothing worth while" (Ortega y Gasset 1968: 54).[4] However, he was clearly willing not to evaluate the achievements of new artworks, but rather to understand their "intention": he argued that the new rules of the new art deserved close analysis because they signalled an irreversible path in human expression and sensibility, an unmistakably disruptive path whose main tendency was the dehumanization of art (and hence the title of the essay), which was not meant either as a reproach or as a manifesto, but rather as a "diagnosis" of the new art (Salas Fernández 2000: 213).

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[3] For a comprehensive portrait of Ramón Gómez de la Serna's life and work, and an important repository of critical references, I would like to mention the website: http://www.ramongomezdelaserna.net/

[4] All quotations are from the English translation of Ortega y Gasset's essay mentioned in the list of References.

In short, Ortega y Gasset's concept of dehumanization is framed upon the equivalence between "human" and "real" or "natural" as opposed to "dehuman" or "artistic". The tendency to the dehumanization of art means the attempt to have a more "artistic art" moving away from the overwhelming human reference and humanizing mission of nineteenth-century music, literature and painting. According to the philosopher, this tendency to become more "artistic" and less "human" is precisely the right accomplishment of true art, which should never be confused with life or reality. In this sense, the "new" art seems to be more faithful to artistic truth than the traditional "realistic" art, since the latter was always aiming at erasing the distance between art and life. Hence, the difference between the work of nineteenth-century artists and the work of Ortega y Gasset's contemporaries is based on their distinct views concerning both the way human life should be represented and the way art should be experienced. In his description, facing art objects as if they were "samples" of life was a truly "impure" and "un-artistic" stance:

> During the nineteenth century, artists proceeded in all too impure a fashion. They reduced the strictly aesthetic elements to a minimum and let the work consist almost entirely in a fiction of human realities. [...] Seen from the vantage-point of our day Romanticism and Naturalism draw closer together and reveal their common realistic root.
>
> Works of this kind are only partially works of art, or artistic objects. Their enjoyment does not depend upon our power to focus on transparencies and images, a power characteristic of the artistic sensibility; all they require is human sensibility and willingness to sympathize with our neighbor's joys and worries. (Ortega y Gasset 1968: 11)

In contrast, early twentieth-century artists aimed at emphasizing the "aesthetic elements" of their works, asking their public to go beyond mere "human sensibility" and to use, instead, their special "artistic sensibility." Art was not supposed to be "lived" but rather "contemplated," that is, considered at a distance and appreciated for the display of technical devices and stylistic invention. In Ortega y Gasset's words, the new art was therefore following the authentic artistic way, "the royal road of art [...] called "will to style"." In conclusion: "to stylize means to deform reality, to derealize; style involves dehumanization. And vice-versa, there is no other means of stylizing except by dehumanizing." (Ortega y Gasset 1968: 11)

In terms of artistic composition, this "will to style" becomes effective through the use of several devices that reinforce the distance between artistic objects and reality. Among these instruments of de-realism or dehumanization, Ortega y Gasset mentions prominently the use of metaphor (33), the hyperbolic attention to the smallest details of life (35), and the adoption of comic and ironic stances (46). All this might certainly be found in the new literary attempts of the day, and it is no wonder that the best novelists exploring "infra-realism" and depicting unnoticed details were among Ortega y Gasset's contemporaries: "How it is possible to overcome realism by merely putting too fine a point on it and discovering, lens in hand, the micro-structure of life that can be observed in Proust, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Joyce." (Ortega y Gasset 1968: 35–36)

This reference to Ramón Gómez de la Serna is significant enough considering Ortega y Gasset mentions only a few artists throughout the essay. It is very clear that this discussion about the new art, the new literature and the new novel was not focused on the Spanish context, but rather echoed the European contemporary trends in artistic production and criticism. And as mentioned before this was an atmosphere quite familiar to Ramón Gómez de la Serna. By 1925, his literary and critical works were already quite numerous, comprising novels, *novellas*, chronicles and prose poems or aphorisms (the famous "greguerías"), and they had roused in their readers a general sense of novelty. But we may now ask: in what sense are Gómez de la Serna's narratives dehumanized experiments?

I would like to suggest that Ramón Gómez de la Serna's *novellas* constitute an exemplary case of dehumanized narratives due to the interwoven display of artistic procedures and life referents, stating an ambivalence (*i.e.*, a uneven balance between *techne* and reference) that illustrates the typical dilemma we find in the theoretical proposals of aestheticism and artistic dehumanization. Gómez de la Serna was experimenting upon an artistic dissidence from traditional nineteenth century realistic literature, but this does not necessarily entail the refusal of common reality or its ban from the artistic realm. Actually, he seemed to be peculiarly confident in the artistic potential of common life. In an essay about the Spanish novelists of the

1920s, José E. Serrano Asenjo stresses that Gómez de la Serna was sure that "life goes deep into any novel" and believed that "the novelistic stirs in whatever is alive" (Serrano Asenjo 2001: 130–131). Indeed, a close look at some of the short stories he was writing in those days demonstrates more clearly his special trust in the close link between human life and novel writing. The point is that this trust was displayed in new, unconventional ways that, at first sight, from the traditional perspective of literary realism, might simply be considered empty and shallow playfulness.

Some of the short narratives Gómez de la Serna was then publishing in magazines and newspapers were later brought together in a volume under the title *Six False Novellas* (*Seis Falsas Novelas*).[5] The book published in 1927 offered half a dozen stories, all focused on the life of the main characters mentioned in each title, and all depicting a different geographical and cultural environment, as announced in each subtitle. Here is the list of titles and subtitles:

1. *María Yarsilovna. False Russian Novella*
2. *The Two Sailors. False Chinese Novella*
3. *The Funereal Woman. False Tartar Novella*
4. *The Virgin Painted Red. False Black Novella*
5. *The Woman Dressed as a Man. False German Novella*
6. *The Son of the Millionaire. False North-American Novella*

The disturbing element in these titles is undoubtedly the adjective "false." It has never been usual to stress that novels are "false," that is, "not true," "not real," simply because the fictional nature of literature renders such an epithet quite redundant. But here, together with the other adjective that points to the "national" or "cultural" concern of each novella, the word "false" implicates and undermines the concept of geographically-based and culturally-bound literary narrative. Ramón Gómez de la Serna is playing with the idea that literature depicts some specific human reality and ultimately may be grounded on direct life experience.

Being an implicit counter-example to all kinds of documentary or historical literature, these "false" novellas question the true value of any literary account: they are ruled by the same thematic and expressive conventions as the supposedly "true" ones, the only difference resulting from their being presented as forgeries, with no claim on (national) truth or reality either as their source or as their target. In her introduction to the 1989 edition of the book, Ioana Zlotescu rightly stresses this peculiar stance of the false novellas, brought together in the common denial of their own status and in the specific evocation of literary works rather than geographical or cultural reality:

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[5] I translate from the latest Spanish edition of the Complete Works of Ramón Gómez de la Serna: *Seis Falsas Novelas. In Obras Completas XI.* Ed. Ioana Zlotescu. Barcelona: Círculo de Lectores & Galaxia Gutenberg, 1999, 229–371.

> Although the space of each novella is distinct, nature or city, all novellas share a common space, not only the directly textual space, as a printed volume, but also an abstract space, made from the *denial* of their own concrete spaces; they are *false* because they evoke, or [...] "rebound" in some former artistic work. (Zlotescu 1989: 19)[6]

It is important to understand how the "falseness" of the novellas was intended to unveil the artistic basis of all sorts of literary realism. The ironic perspective over the accuracy (or the realism) of literary portraits can be grasped in the meta-fictional commentaries included in some of the novellas, especially "The Funereal Woman. False Tartar Novella," indeed one of the most imaginative. In the first paragraphs of this novella we may read:

> Tartary is a terrible mess. Neither geographers nor historians know what to conform to. But a novelist must know what is Tartar and what is not Tartar, and must be able to make a Tartar novella.
> Tartary is a country for novelists, and I know very well that in Tartary, in any old inn, watching folk women setting the tables, one could write the most novelistic novel ever written ("la novela más novelesca de las novelas"). (Gómez de la Serna 1999a:269)

We thus realize that the novelist is the one who knows how to shape Tartary (and any other land or nation), who knows how to make it suitable to be inhabited, and who actually inhabits that specific novelistic world. This notion of literary art as significant invention beyond the frame of reality or experience constitutes the main key to reading the "false novellas" (as well as other narratives by Gómez de la Serna): these literary works must be considered as "novelistic novels," in the same sense of the "artistic art" referred to by Ortega y Gasset.

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[6] My translation from the Spanish.

Moreover, the theoretical writings published in the 1931 volume *Isms* (*Ismos*) explicitly confirm what was implicit in Gómez de la Serna's literary fictions. In the chapter on "Novelism", the author declares:

> The novel must represent the drama of the conflict between chance, art and life, when stumbling on the habits and the coalitions of each moment. [...] The true secret of art is, in my opinion, to bewilder reality, to have it lost in the unfathomable, to have it collapsed in deliquescence or in cold stratagem. (Gómez de la Serna 2005a: 619–620)

One of the common elements of the six false novellas is precisely the representation of personal dramas animated by some "conflict between chance, art and life". Despite their different geographical and cultural backgrounds, the main characters in the novellas all share some dramatic uneasiness towards their lives and seem to be playing with their own destiny, trying to be the creators of their own fate, somehow mastering chance and considering life as their own artwork. This is mostly evident in the last novella, where we find the story of the perverse crimes performed by David, "the son of the millionaire", who has chosen evil to fulfil his rich and lazy life.

The narrative sequence leads the reader through the growing wickedness of David's crimes, following his amoral thoughts and his most immoral deeds, until the final murder of two thousand workmen trapped in the windowless factory he built purposely to have it set on fire. The initial reference to David's milieu indicates that chance had given him the possibility of acting daily as a true Creator, and this sense of being "like God" functions as a leitmotif in the character's description throughout the narrative:

> The day presented itself, before their great power as millionaires, clear, extended, with countless possibilities, as a vast creation, as a possible world. (347) [David] felt he was living fast, without the long hindrance of rehearsals, the drama he had just written. He enjoyed the absence of accusative consequence in life. (351) He felt like the god of the insensible that sends the thunders at his whim, overflowing with his noise more skies than the ones invented by God himself. (Gómez de la Serna 1999a: 358)

In the end, David is sentenced to death and this outcome makes him face the ultimate border that, eventually, proves the limits of his power. Even those who succeed in mastering most aspects of their lives and believe to have overcome chance and destiny may come to be caught by the unavoidable surprise of death. The very last paragraph of the novella brings the explanation: it is impossible to effectively control death because it remains "spontaneous and true", that is, outside the inventive and creative power of humans, regardless of their god-like status. In other words, humans may control life and death, but only when they are shaped within the artistic realm.

By recalling the *6 false novellas*, it was possible to notice the metaphorical and ironical dimension of Gómez de la Serna's narratives, especially in what concerns the hints at the specificities of artistic creation. Being narratives that do not depict human portraits according to realistic conventions, the false novellas cannot be read in direct connection with common human life, and in this sense they are somehow "dehumanized" in Ortega y Gasset's terms. However, they are ruled by the principle of human creativity implicit in the assertion that the novelist will know better and will be able to create and inhabit a new reality, and this grants these literary experiments another dimension of humanness: they are the best evidence of the human capacity to create (and then to understand) new worlds. In the last analysis, literature (and art, in general) is human not so much because it refers to human life as it may be commonly experienced, but rather because it exists as a consequence of human creativity. The humanness of art is not in its referent, but in the very process of invention and composition, which springs from the creative ability of the human artist and then meets the human skills of understanding and enjoyment.

This confidence in creativity and in the writer as human creator leads us back to Ortega y Gasset's essay. Having in mind the novelist as depicted by Gómez de la Serna, we may now recall Ortega y Gasset's definition of the poet as a creator, above the common circumstances of human life:

> The poet begins where the man ends. The man's lot is to live his human life, the poet's is to invent what is nonexistent. Herein lies the justification of the poetic profession. The poet aggrandizes the world by adding to reality, which is there by itself, the continents of his imagination. (Ortega y Gasset 1968: 31)

So, the poet fulfils this creative mission because he manages to be other than a common person, and he thus succeeds in the dehumanization process. But we can rightly presume, then, that the poetic mission is grounded on the very human capacity of invention and necessarily interacts with human reality, which means dehumanized art also entails a certain kind of rehumanization: both the artist and the artistic receptor are asked to use their human inventive capacities to provide for the artistic world widening.

2. Posthuman experiments

In a second move, I would like to suggest Ramón Goméz de la Serna's literary experiments may also be read from a posthuman perspective, since in his narrative works we come across the non-anthropocentric stance that, as some recent criticism emphasizes, may also be found in modernist and avant-garde authors. As explained by Bruce Clarke and Manuela Rossini in their Preface to the volume *Literature and the Posthuman,* the term "posthuman" refers to "images and figurations in literary and cultural productions, in various genres and periods, of states that lie before, beyond, or after the human, or into which the human blurs when viewed in its essential hybridity." (Clarke & Rossini 2017: xiii–xiv). This kind of experimentation with the traditional images of humankind, together with playfulness with the conceptual limits of humanness, is what we find in stories published by Gómez de la Serna in the 1920s, such as "¡Hay que matar el Morse!" [Kill the Morse!] (1925) and "El dueño del átomo" [The Master of the Atom] (1926).[7] Both narratives deal with the stories of men fascinated by science and technology, but uncapable of having a healthy or peaceful relation with the new concepts and the new devices that by then were being introduced in "modern life". The stories highlight the way the lives and bodies of early twentieth-century people seemed to become affected by the most recent technological progress, thus providing the opportunity to experiment, in literary fiction, new scenarios of personal and social development.

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[7] All quotations from these "novellas" refer to the 2005 English translation mentioned in the final list of references. We should note "¡Hay que matar el morse!" was published in *La novela semanal,* n.º 202, May 23rd, 1925, and "El dueño del átomo" was published in *Revista de Occidente*, XII, January–March 1926, and later included in the volume *El dueño del átomo* (Madrid, 1928).

Gómez de la Serna's narratives may be read as cautionary tales concerning the dangers of scientific research and technological apparatus (indeed, both stories have an apocalyptic ending), but I would rather propose a nuanced interpretation of these dangers. I would like to argue that the non-human alterity represented in these tales by the "atom" or by the "morse" becomes a prominent way of changing the focus from introspection and human self-indulgence to an implicit alternative of communication and altruism.

In "The master of the atom", we find the parodic description of an obscure scientist, Don Alfredo, who devotes his life to the research on the split of the atom. We must remember that in 1926, atomic fission was not yet possible (only in 1939 was this procedure achieved), and that is why Ramon Gómez de la Serna's novella is especially praised as a forecast of the developments of atomic theory. Juli Highfill explains that after Albert Einstein's visit to Spain, in 1923, Spanish newspapers often mentioned contemporary discoveries in Physics and Chemistry, and most intellectuals and artists were fascinated by these topics – even if they did not fully understand them, as seems to be the case of Gómez de la Serna:

> Although there is little evidence that Ramón comprehended in any depth either relativity theory or atomic physics, the theories exerted a powerful imaginative attraction that dovetailed with his ongoing aims and concerns. As the new physics progressively dissolved the solidity of matter, or so it appeared, Ramón seized on its imaginative energies to extend and support his life-long aim to decompose not just literary matter but all reified systems of thought and all established relations between people and things. (Highfill 2005, 234–235)

The protagonist of "The Master of the Atom" spends his life trying to "find the core of the atom and split it" (Gómez de la Serna 2005b: 241), following an obsession that his wife, his friends and his assistant understand, but in a rather condescending way. He is depicted as a fool, and all around treat him as one. As explained by Roslynn Haynes, the figure of the intelligent fool, or the "stupid virtuoso, out of touch with the real world of social intercourse" is one of the "recurrent stereotypes", a common way of portraying the scientist in Western literature. And she adds: "This figure at first appears more comic than sinister, but he too comes with sinister implications. Preoccupied with the trivialities of his private world of science, he ignores his social responsibilities." (Haynes 1994: 3) In Ramón's novella, the scientist's unbalanced relation between scientific obsession and social skills clearly entails a fundamental loss of control of the experiment and of its implications in any broader context. Eventually, Don Alfredo manages to split the atom, but he is uncapable of controlling the procedure and this causes the dissolution of all things around – just like an atomic bomb, we may now say. The apocalyptic "dénouement" of this story anticipates in a couple of decades the actual consequences of atomic fission, as they were witnessed worldwide after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

But the outcome of Don Alfredo's research is not the only remarkable aspect in Gómez de la Serna's novella. We should notice how the "atom" becomes a true character in the story, and this is quite clear if we pay close attention to the description of the scientist's hopes concerning his research procedure, namely as exposed during Don Alfredo's dialogue with his assistant:

> What are you looking for then?
> To find the core of the atom and split it... I'll be able to get a tremendous power from that split... I don't know yet what kind it will be, but I do know it will be impressive. (...) But what a day when we can reach that essence! It will be the greatest day in the world because the heart of that basic electron will speak to us... It will speak a synthetic language, a kind of simple and perfect Morse code, and we'll have to find the key. But since it will be the perfect language, that should be an easy task. The split atom will be like the verb of creation and will tell us the history of the worlds...
> (Gómez de la Serna 2005b: 241)

This idea that the heart of the atom "will speak to us" is a crucial point. The possibility of a non-human voice and perspective seems to be the greatest innovation, and it opens a completely new path for human knowledge and communication. Even if we should stress the rather evident comic perspective, it is also arguable that Ramón Gómez de la Serna's narrative is thus proposing a posthuman scenario, where nonhuman elements, such as the atom, are endowed with skills that are traditionally typical of human beings;

moreover, these elements seem capable of overcoming human skills and achieve perfection. In a way, this suggests (or foresees) that the openness to include nonhuman elements in human life will probably be necessary.

Curiously enough, the Morse code is presented in "The master of the atom" as an "imperfect" code, half-way between common human languages and the perfection of the atomic "synthetic language". The Morse is precisely the nonhuman protagonist of another novella by Gómez de la Serna. In "Kill the Morse!", the human protagonist, Don Rafael, is exiled in the south of France, after a broken heart, and develops an overwhelming "enthusiasm for radio telephony" (Gómez de la Serna 2005b: 195), hoping to listen to the distant sounds of Spain. Don Rafael becomes totally devoted to the listening, with a true obsession, and his new wife and friends end up treating him like a fool. He is not an obsessed researcher, but rather an addicted user of technology, and in this sense he is as implicated with a nonhuman world as Don Alfredo was.

Moreover, the narrative tells, in detail, how radio waves became progressively part of Don Rafael, and eventually changed his body, which must then be considered a true posthuman body:

> He was full of mysterious waves, and electricity passed through him. Instead of red corpuscles he now had electrons and amperes. And in his ganglia, volts. His watch was the voltmeter that he carried tied through a buttonhole of his vest, with a flexible chain that hung down like a tail. At times, he would pull it up to see what time it was – the electric time.
> (...)
> As a result of listening so intently, Don Rafael's ears swelled to the point that the cochlea seemed to be protruding, the little sensitive snails stimulated and drawn out by music, tickled by the violins. (Gómez de la Serna 2005b: 201 and 211).

Only one thing disturbed Don Rafael's listening life: when hearing the radiotelephony, he often had to endure communications in Morse code, which unexpectedly interrupted the common transmission of voices and music. In the protagonist's obsession or enchantment with radio listening, Morse appears as an alternative system of communication that breaks the spell, and thus becomes a true character, animated just like the Atom in the previous story: "the Morse didn't go away; it came even closer as if wanting to wipe out his soul and his search for finer things in space. [...] The Morse kept following him, bothering and snapping at him, embittering his voyage through the world." (Gómez de la Serna 2005b: 203 and 2007) We should notice the Morse code is human-made, but in this story it is also nonhuman in the sense it overcomes common human language and even the artistic sounds of music. Don Rafael's final madness may be read as the tragic outcome of his incapacity to balance different kinds of communication and social life.

We thus understand that scientific concepts and devices, when representing new possibilities of getting to know or grasping the world, become complex metaphors that hint at the most challenging human affairs. Ramón Gómez was experimenting and playing with the "novelties" of his time, and also with some clichés of modern life. The need for a new critical perspective on these social topics is thus affirmed through literary imagination. To conclude, I just would like to argue that Ramon Gómez de la Serna's narratives, being dehumanized and posthuman artistic experiments, propose a truly ironic stance – a dissidence – on both the serious praises and the criticisms addressed to the new images and discourses that, by the 1920s, were emerging to shape human life.

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LEVINAS AND THE QUESTION OF TIME

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Abstract
This paper will focus on Levinas' work *Le Temps et l'Autre* (1948). Our purpose is to show the importance of an 'ontological temptation' in Levinas' thought when he tries to understand the nature of time. Time, understood as the non-presence of the subject to itself, breaks with the metaphysical solitude of the I, creating the conditions for the manifestation of the multiple modalities of the openness to the Other.

Keywords
Time, Face, Ontology, Ethics, Subject, Other

The point of reference for the present communication on the thought of Levinas is his work *Time and the Other* (*Le Temps et l'Autre*). Published in 1948, the book is the result of four lectures, delivered between 1946 and 1947 at the newly created "Collège philosophique". This Centre, founded by Jean Wahl right after the end of the Second World War, aimed at becoming a place for philosophical experimentation and dissidence, unburdening its discourse from the authoritative weight of the Sorbonne and academic philosophy in general.

The work I propose to examine here rendered to a wider audience the insights gathered in the 1947 book *Existence and Existents* (*De l'existence à l'existant*) – a text written in captivity, during the five-year period when Levinas was a prisoner of war at Stalag XI-B, in Fallingbostel, near Hannover. Although many of the author's insights go back to the 1930s, particularly to his essay *On Escape* (*De l'Évasion*), where he criticized the Western obsession with ontological thought, it is in *Existence and Existents*, published shortly after the war, that we can fully grasp the thinking of the philosopher in its maturity.

The thesis I will now put before you is controversial: it argues that there is an "ontological temptation" in Levinas' thought – one that is rendered in the way he understands the experience of time. As I interpret it, time, in Levinas, is the nonpresence of the subject to himself, breaking with the solitude constitutive of the "I", and, in doing so, creating the conditions for the manifestation of multiple modalities of openness to the Other.

In order to understand my claim of an "ontological temptation" in Levinas, it is useful to clarify some of the fundamental concepts therein involved. In the canon of Western philosophy, ontology stands for the science of being *qua* being, a definition that shapes what used to be categorized as *methaphysica generalis* (general metaphysics) in the traditional thought. Aristotle presented it as "first science" – the branch of knowledge tasked with examining the entity *qua* entity, as well as the logical principles that pertain to it essentially (among others, the logical principles of identity and contradiction). Ontology thus represents the most abstract knowledge of that which is most concrete and real, namely, what exists. Other branches of philosophy, like Ethics or Poetics, were presented as areas of inquiry in line with those universal metaphysical principles. An example: when Spinoza writes his *Ethics*, the starting point for his inquiry is a reflection on the primary substance, i.e. that which exists in and by itself. Then, and only then, were the conditions set to address the diversity of human actions.

That ontological paradigm of metaphysics met with several shattering blows. The best known is, undoubtedly, the one wielded by Kant, who denounced the illusion (said transcendental) of knowledge that attempts to *intellectually* grasp the nature of things-in-themselves, while at the same time preserving the radically distinct space of ethical questions, centered on the autonomy of the will. A second severe blow to the ontological paradigm of metaphysics is that of Heidegger's, when he introduces the notion of an ontology (now said "fundamental") the purpose of which was to transcend metaphysics; his argument was that metaphysics amounted to no more than to transform a single entity (*e.g.*, God) into the ultimate principle of everything that exists. In a sense, the entire history of philosophy could be seen as the rational effort aimed at endowing a specific entity with the supreme status of 'foundation of all reality'. Other than God, other candidates include: Plato's notion that Ideas are the ultimate reality; Leibniz's intuition that Monads, or substances, are the building blocks of everything that exists; Nietzsche's concept that Will to Power is present in all modalities of being. It is common knowledge that Heidegger, faced with such hypostatization of an entity, argues, in *Being and Time*, that there is a fundamental ontological difference between Being and entities, denouncing thus that metaphysical aspiration of forsaking pure existence in favour of a particular entity, whichever it may be.

Levinas breaks with the Heideggerian model. He shows that, far from pertaining to metaphysics, the problem lies, in fact, in the totalitarian concept of privileging existence without existents, whose crowning achievement would be the very notion of a 'fundamental ontology'. Jean-Luc Marion is thus quite right when he points out that Levinas is the first thinker to upend the whole structure of ontological and metaphysical thought, for he claims that Ethics matches that concept of "first philosophy" and refuses the primacy of any ontological worldview. In Marion's words: before Levinas "philosophy had always considered Ethics to be a consequence and a by-product of first philosophy".[1]

One should make absolutely clear what Levinas understood by Ethics. If we were to take Ethics as expression of the autonomy of the will, in Kantian fashion, or if we were to analyse it as an estimation of the greatest happiness of the greater number (Utilitarianism), or if we were to approach it as Virtue Ethics, meant as development of our human faculties (courage, temperance, prudence, etc.), then Levinas would have nothing of particular significance to say to us. What interests the Lithuanian philosopher, however, is the signification that intersubjective relation assumes in human life, and in the experience that follows from the encounter with another person. Levinas would go so far as to admit to Marion that "I am not interested in Ethics, but on what makes Ethics possible". In contemporary parlance, one could say that the Levinasian project falls more fittingly within the scope of meta-ethics, than within that of ethics proper, understanding meta-ethics to mean the study of the conditions of possibility of ethical discourse and action.

Hilary Putnam, in his essay on Levinas ("Levinas on what is demanded of us"), stresses that the intention of the Lithuanian philosopher was not to challenge, say, Kant's categorical imperative; Levinas' point was to show

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[1] Marion 2009.

how disastrous it really was to establish that ethical principle on the basis of a "because" – of a supplementary reason. What crucial reasons are there for Levinas' caution? First, that such conceptual structure appears to necessitate an *additional* justification for treating someone as a person rather than as a thing. Second, that although the typical response to that "because" would be that we are all basically identical, it only takes one person believing otherwise, i.e. believing that we are not all the same, for the foundations to crack, making all manner of horrors possible. The ideological driver for the genocide of the Jewish people was the notion that Jews were infra-human, worms under human guise; slavery, in turn, was legitimized within the Christian civilization because the enslaved were not really considered "normal" human beings.

According to Levinas, the basis for ethical action assumes that, in one's intersubjective relation, one is always in face of an Other, regardless of how physically or psychologically similar that Other may appear to one's eyes. In Levinas' view, the starting point of an ethical relation is not so much reciprocity between equals, but indeed the Other, in her/his infinite transcendence in relation to me.

Following Putnam, who borrows Stanley Cavell's terminology, a distinction should be made between two ethical systems. On the one hand, we have a group of ethical thinkers, the "legislators", who seek to reflect on the set of rules and principles of human action (Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* provides a fine example of this system). On the other hand, says Cavell, we have the "perfectionists", who do not deny the work developed by the "legislators", but believe that we should think *first* on what lies before any rules or principles. Levinas falls quite clearly in this latter group of thinkers, his model is driven by what Putnam calls "the fundamental obligation". To illustrate the concept, Putnam suggests the following question: "Imagine you were in a situation in which your obligations to others did not conflict with focusing entirely on one other human being. What sort of attitude, what sort of relation, should you strive for towards that other?".[2] According to Levinas, this is the question one should address before one moves on to considerations on the presence of the "third party" (essentially, the question of justice), or even before one asks oneself whether one is an "other" to others.

[2] Putnam 2008: 72.

It should be stressed that, for Levinas, that is the stance where the ethical game is played in all its essence. The Other presents itself as a face that compels us to act. More than an object of my perception, the irruption of a face in the Other is a strictly ethical moment. Why is it that the face is not given to us as perception, susceptible of phenomenological description? Is it not evident that I see the face of the Other? Levinas says:

> I think rather that access to the face is straightaway ethical. You turn yourself toward the Other as toward an object when you see a nose, eyes, a forehead, a chin, and you can describe them. The best way of encountering the Other is not even to notice the colour of his eyes! When one observes the colour of the eyes one is not in social relationship with the Other. The relation with the face can surely be dominated by perception, but what is specifically the face is what cannot be reduced to that. There is first the very uprightness of the face, its upright exposure, without defence. (...) The face is signification, and signification without context. I mean that the Other, in the rectitude of his face, is not a character within a context. Ordinarily one is a "character": a professor at the Sorbonne, a Supreme Court justice, son of so-and-so, everything that is in one's passport, the manner of dressing, of presenting oneself. And all signification in the usual sense of the term is relative to such a context: the meaning of something is in its relation to another thing. Here, to the contrary, the face is meaning all by itself. You are you. In this sense one can say that the face is not 'seen'. (...) But the relation to the face is straightaway ethical. The face is what one cannot kill, or at least it is that whose *meaning* consists in saying: 'thou shalt not kill.' Murder, it is true, is a banal fact: one can kill the Other; the ethical exigency is not an ontological necessity.[3]

The privileged moment of ethical relation is given in that demand that breaks with the perceptive aspect (still ontological in character) and allows us to truly be before an Other. As Cristina Beckert would put it in one of her last public interventions, commenting on Cristoph Korn's movie *Gesicht* [Face]: "a face can't be the totality of the eyes, the nose, the mouth, the hair; that is only what a face is – *what* it is, not *who* it is. I can say the face is of a young person, of an old person, an ugly face, a beautiful face, a female face, a male face, but that just describes what the face is. It can never provide us with *who* the face is."[4] The face with which we confront ourselves is vulnerable, in that it is within our power to kill it, even if just by sheer indifference. Hence one's responsibility towards the Other, for one is not given the possibility of not responding to the expression of a face that transcends everything that it can say.

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[3] Levinas 1982b: 89–91.

How are we, then, to understand the ontological universe opposite to the ethical stance? In *Time and the Other*, Levinas begins by describing the experience of existence without existent. The above-mentioned fundamental philosophical distinction between Being and entities is, in a way, resumed by the Lithuanian philosopher in his distinction between 'existence' and 'existent'. Except that in Levinas, existence or Being is in no way a source of givingness. On the contrary, it expresses the experience of an undifferentiated reality – pure there is (*il y a*). As he says, "It is impersonal like [when we say] 'It is raining' or 'It is hot' ".[5] It is, essentially, a world of nightmare, or, more aptly put, of insomnia; an indifferent, neutral, world that envelops and surrounds us, a malignant world, not because it bears any cruel intentions, but because it is a world viewed from nowhere. "Being is evil not because it is finite, but because it is without limits."[6] Playing with Sartre's terminology, Levinas will say that "[t]his existing is not an *in-itself* (*en-soi*), which is already peace; it is precisely the absence of all self (*soi*), a without-self *(sans-soi*)".[7] We are aware of it during the blank nights of insomnia, when we find ourselves in the strange condition of being neutral vigilance, eternity with no beginning or end, so much so that Levinas will equate the notions of 'eternal' and 'pure existence'. To be I, to have a conscience, to have a first-person perspective, is to break with existence's indifferent neutrality – is to be able to be an existent within the realm of existence. "The appearance of a 'something that is' constitutes a veritable inversion at the heart of anonymous being. 'Something that is' bears existing as an attribute, is master (*maître*) of this existing as a subject is master of an attribute".[8] How does the transition occur from such a pure 'to exist' (anonymous, pure being, *il y a*) into an existent, i.e. to, ultimately, someone who is? In *Time and the Other*, that transition is called “hypostasis”, a concept that Levinas would later redefine as ‘separation’. In fact, rather than resuming the complex neo-platonic terminology, Levinas’ interest lies, instead, in stressing the separation, the splitting, the cutting off, that conveys the irruption of a subject, or existent, in the midst of a unified, eternal and undifferentiated existence. That separation is given by the present. “The present rips apart and joins together again; it begins; it is beginning itself. It has a past, but in the form of remembrance. It has a history, but it is not history”.[9] Such present, however, is not yet genuine temporal experience, rather pure event of separation or hypostasis. It is introduced enigmatically as a function; the presential function that, within undifferentiated existence, introduces what we could call the “I” (*je*) and, in so doing, introduces the “freedom of beginning”.

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[4] Korn, C./Beckert, C./Madeira, M. J. 2017: 224.

[5] Levinas 1979: 26.

[6] Levinas 1979: 29.

[7] Levinas 1979: 27.

[8] Levinas 1979: 31.

It is at this stage that Levinas will show us a new aspect of ontology, one that is no longer linked to Being, but to the existent *qua* presence of an “I”. That will allow him to build what we could call a phenomenology of solitude.

> I am all alone. It is thus the being in me, the fact that I exist, my *existing*, that constitutes the absolutely intransitive element, something without intentionality or relationship. One can exchange everything between beings except existing. In this sense, to be is to be isolated by existing. Inasmuch as I am, I am a monad. It is by existing that I am without windows and doors, and not by some content in me that is incommunicable. If it is incommunicable, it is because it is rooted in my being. (...) In fact, my existing is what is most private in me.[10]

As Clarice Lispector will say: “And no one is I. And no one is you. That is what solitude is.”[11] What we have here is not psychological solitude, brought on by absence of human contact, but in fact ontological solitude.

Levinas will then introduce a new rupture, one that stems from his understanding of time *qua* diachrony – not *qua* duration (like Bergson had proposed) or *qua* continuous flux (like Husserl had theorized). What we have here is the irruption of the instant that precludes the subject from staying within himself, pulling him out of his solitude and allowing him openness to the other. While for Vladimir Jankélévitch time equates irreversibility, for Levinas temporality denotes the subject's non presence to himself and, as such, it opens doors and windows (to borrow the Leibnizian metaphor). But, in that case, how can I sustain my claim that temporality is the "ontological temptation" of Levinas' thought? As follows: 'openness to the other' appears to be no longer an exclusively ethical issue, no longer a question of one feeling hostage to the vulnerability of an Other's face. Instead, 'openness to the other' appears to depend on, or at least overlap with, an existing structure that pulls each of us out of our respective solitudes and turns us into responsible beings. I will end the present communication with a quotation from *Time and the Other* that expresses that notion fittingly: "I do not exist as a spirit, or as a smile or a breath of air; I *am not* without responsibility".[12]

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[9] Levinas 1979: 32.

[10] Levinas 1979: 21.

[11] Lispector 1973: 41.

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SEXUAL DESIRE AND ANIMALITY: A RE-THINK

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Abstract
One matter about which many of those who have written on the subject of sexual desire are agreed is that sexual desire and sexual arousal for humans are both distinct from instinct. Thus Roger Scruton, who wrote on this subject in 1986, writes: "sexual arousal is an interpersonal response, founded in an epistemic intentionality. Hence only people can experience arousal and only people – or imaginary people – can be the object of arousal." (Roger Scruton, *Sexual Desire: A Philosophical Investigation*, Phoenix, London, 1986, p. 36)
I would like, in this paper, to critique this claim. For Scruton and others, the word "instinct" is reserved for the "desire" (non-existent according to him) of animals. I will suggest that one need not remove the intentional element of human desire to see it as continuous with the rest of the animal world. I will argue (i) that there are other ways of viewing what counts as "science" than that of Scruton; (ii) there are reasons for seeing a continuity between the biological and the human, between animals and humans, because by so doing, we can gain a better view of freedom and specifically freedom to do evil and therefore explain certain aberrant cases; (iii) the continuity allows the continuation of the intentional element whilst removing the offending "transcendental self" that critics see as still present in Scruton's work; and finally (iv) that Scruton's reading of Freud is misleading and one can read him, drawing on Lacan and Althusser, as offering a very different view of sexuality.

Keywords
Freud, Animal, Sexual Desire, Lacan, Althusser

One matter about which many philosophers who have written on the subject of sexual desire are agreed is that sexual desire and sexual arousal for humans are both distinct from instinct. Thus Roger Scruton, who wrote on this subject in 1986, writes: "sexual arousal is an interpersonal response, founded in an epistemic intentionality. Hence only people can experience arousal and only people – or imaginary people – can be the object of arousal" (Scruton, p. 36). He continues: "Animals are never sexually aroused; they do not feel sexual desire, nor do they have sexual fulfilment" (ibid. p. 36). He suggests that the particular capacity to "entertain thoughts which refer beyond immediate experience, to the past and future, to generalities, particularities, possibilities and necessities – is the prerogative of the language user..." (ibid. p. 42). Rationality is not a mere addition to the mental life of the animal; rather it is something entirely distinct, something that informs the entire content of a human subject's mentality. Humans, he argues, have a concept of a self which animals lack. Scruton is careful to note the difficulties involved in conceptualizing this "self" – one is led, in postulating it, he suggests, inevitably to the idea of a Kantian transcendental self. However, he sometimes suggests that this self is an illusion. While, he writes, "This image may have no metaphysical grounding." "Yet it is resurgent in our consciousness, and is never more dominant than in the transports of sexual desire" (ibid. p. 58).

For Scruton, it is the inter-personal element in sexual desire which is crucially significant. Although sexual desire cannot be expressed as a propositional attitude of the form "A wants B" cashed out as "A wants that p" as you can, for example, with "A wants a glass of wine", nonetheless, it is a person who is wanted in sexual desire and arousal, and it is, indeed, a particular person. Scruton takes from a broadly phenomenological perspective the view that this element of human desire is not only distinct from animal instinct but it is also different from any scientific outlook on the world. The *Lebenswelt* may not, in one sense, be different from that described by science, indeed Scruton accepts that it is probably the same one, however, the world described by science underplays the significance of the very qualities that make us human. Many of the concepts that are core to our humanity "waver" under the impact of scientific thinking. Science can cope with the animal world and the animal in us, but desire, which is part of our *Lebenswelt*, cannot be handled by science. As he puts it: "In the world of non-human nature, events and processes rarely present problems to our understanding that are not solved by scientific explanation – an explanation in terms of causes. But the human world abounds in phenomena that cannot be wholly understood merely by explaining them, because they are themselves forms of understanding" (Scruton, pp. 186–7).

There are two issues on which some of his detractors have sought to challenge him. Fiona Ellis has argued that Scruton seems either to be committed to the view that it is an illusion to think of ourselves as having a self – a transcendental self – in which case, on his view, we don't actually have self-consciousness, or, less strongly, that such a self cannot be known so that we become mysterious to ourselves and to each other (Ellis, 2016). On a radically different issue, Seiriol Morgan has challenged Scrutons assumption (made elsewhere in his book) that mutual consent is sufficient for morally good sexual relations. Morgan argues, in his bold paper *Dark Desires,* that humans might mutually consent to abusive sexual practices, but, he notes, these practices are quintessentially human and not animal. He quotes the case of Vicomte de Valmont in *Les Liasons Dangereuses,* who wants to seduce and ruin Madame Tourval. There is a complex intentionality involved in the case – the Vicomte wants her to give in to him; he wants her to agree to an act that morally would appal her. It is not a purely physical appetite that he has; rather he wants her to want him in spite of herself (Morgan, p. 381). Morgan notes that whereas many people feel pleasure from the reciprocal arousal of their partners and their emotional connection with them, the Vicomte is a "thoroughly evil man" who "takes pleasure from thoroughly unwholesome things." (Ibid. p. 383) Morgan suggests, therefore, that consent may be necessary for good sexual practices but it is not sufficient.

I would like, in this paper, to critique the claim that is shared by all three writers, that human sexual desire is radically distinct from animal instinct. Indeed, the word "instinct" is reserved, by them, for the "desire" (non-existent according to Scruton) of animals. I will suggest that one need not remove the intentional element from human desire to see it as continuous with the "arousal" of animals. Indeed, I will argue that seeing arousal and desire as lying on a continuum allows one to make sense of Morgan's cases. There is a link, I will suggest, between Scruton's view that the reciprocal intentionality in human desire is morally good and Kant's claim that freedom and the moral law are causally linked.

One obvious way to defend an alternative approach to that outlined here is to embrace the animal in the human in the sense of recognizing that there is an element of instinct in human sexual desire that is not different from the animal. This is the position defended by recent writers that is characterized as the "plain sex" (see Goldman, 1977) view and it claims that human sexual desire is simply equivalent to instinct. Two radically different thinkers who might be read this way on the subject are Lucretius, on the one hand, and Freud on the other. Lucretius was probably a first century Roman poet.[1] He wrote only one work, *De Rerum Natura,* or *On the Nature of Things* and he was an Epicurean and also an atomist. He writes: "Love... is pernicious because even when your loved one is absent, images of her continue to invade your thoughts, and her name rings incessantly in your ears. These relentless stimulus plague the mind with emotional turbulence and rob it of its peace." (Epicurus, 2015, p. 235)

Lucretius offers various solutions for someone "suffering" the "infliction" of love. A primary solution, he says, is to "... cast the gathered liquid into any bodies whatsoever, not to hold back, having once been turned by the love of one, and store up care for oneself..." Beneath his contentious suggestion, Lucretius claims that in love, sexual desire, which should have been easily biologically satisfied, is transformed into an unnatural, painful, and insatiable desire for a metaphysical union with another being. The poem runs:

> As when the thirsty man in slumber seeks
> To drink and water ne'er is granted him
> Wherewith to quench the heat within his members
> But after idols of the liquids strives (Lucretius, Book V, Line 1073).

On this view, then, sexual desire in the sense of an intentional notion that is specifically human, ought to be avoided, for it "snares" us and causes us torment and worry. Instead, if we focus on simple sexual pleasure, we will be freed from such concerns. Human sexuality, then, even if it is not actually this way, ought to be seen purely as animal instinct.

I would like to mention one other factor which is important to what follows and this is that although Lucretius was an inspiration for Bergson, in the latter's *Creative Evolution,* and although there may be evidence of his believing in some kind of life force analogous to that in Bergson's work, he was mainly a strong believer in atomism and he was a materialist.

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[1] See Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, https://plto.stanford.edu/entries/lucretius/

Another thinker who is read by Scruton as celebrating a view of sexuality as purely animal instinct is Freud. According to Scruton's reading of him, Freud denies the intentional aspect of human sexuality and he offers a view of sexuality and human desire that is biologically based. According to his reading of Freud, sexual experiences are rooted in instinct and "the sexual instinct is in the first instance independent of its object" (Freud, 1977, p. 60, quoted in Scruton p. 199). The instinct is a force that gradually "acquires" its objects, by attachment, to excitation of the body and then to circumstances which arouse them. The normal "sexual aim" which results from the development of the libido is "union of the genitals in the act known as copulation which leads to a release of the sexual tension and a satisfaction... analogous to the satisfaction of hunger" (Freud, 1977, p. 61, quoted in Scruton p. 199).

I will argue (i) that there are other ways of viewing what counts as "science" than that of Scruton; (ii) there are reasons for seeing a continuity between the biological and the human, between animals and humans, because by so doing, we can gain a better view of freedom and specifically freedom to do evil and therefore explain Morgan's cases; (iii) the continuity allows the continuation of the intentional element whilst removing the offending "transcendental self" that Ellis sees as still present in Scruton's work; and finally (iv) that the reading of Freud is misleading and one can read him, drawing on Lacan and Althusser, as offering a very different view of sexuality.

Another view of "science"

The first challenge I would like to make, then, is to the view of "science" outlined by Scruton. His view of science is intimately connected to his view that the "self" is "more than" her body and more than her biological nature. By science, he seems to mean a view that sees explanation in terms of causes that precede their effects and where causes and effects are distinct from one another. He sees science as attempting to "explain" the world and "intentional understanding", contrasting with science, as being focused on understanding, describing and criticizing our *Lebenswelt*.

Immediately this gives rise to a question pertaining to the subject of sexual arousal and desire. Does Scruton wish to claim that science cannot describe a first person point of view and this is its limitation or is it rather that non-human animals do not have a first person point of view? The latter, crucially, comprises free agents, operating rationally and with complex forms of intentions. "Questions about the nature of mental items" are to be answered, he writes, "not by scientific investigation but by philosophical analysis" (Scruton, p. 330). Scientifically speaking, he writes, I am identical with my body. Yet, from the point of view of intentional understanding, "this identity seems to elude our grasp. I constantly identify myself without reference to my body, and in ways which seem to exclude the body. Moreover, I constantly react to you as though you were not identical with your body, but in some sense operating *through* your body, which is an *instrument* of your suffering and will. There arises, in our mutual transactions, the inescapable impression that each of us has a centre of existence which is not his body but his self" (Scruton, p. 69). Moreover, "individualizing thoughts" are "the necessary salve" to "the pain that is forced on us by our dual nature, as we see the self and its projects constantly swept away by the body and its needs. I look for the other *in* his body, for no other attitude can appease the fear of his otherness, the fear that he flits away from my grasp and that if I clasp him he is no more held by my arms than was the shade of Dido by the arms of Aeneas" (ibid. p. 137). There is a reciprocal intentionality involved – "it is he who is alertly touching me, intending my recognition of his act or who is alertly kissing me with a similar intention" (ibid. p. 21).

Either, then, science cannot fully describe the arousal of an amoeba any more than it can give an explanatory account of the above or the amoeba doesn't have a first person point of view. If Scruton wants to separate human arousal from animal instinct then he needs to assert the latter. So the biological is defined as in some sense akin to electricity running along a wire or to a magnet that can attract iron filings. But he also claims the former. Science cannot explain intentional phenomena.

There are, then, three elements that seem to be inter-connected: (i) a view that human desire is radically distinct from that of animals; (ii) that there is a self that (despite his wish not to be a dualist) is separate from the biological body; and (iii) none of this can be described by science. I would like, in what follows, to argue that one can provide an account that retains a view of the richness of sexual desire without accepting any one of the three claims.

First part of the argument

One question one might ask is what is meant by causal explanation and why is it seen to be distinct from the philosophical analysis of intentions? Can an intention not also be a cause? In my book *Kierkegaard, Eve and Metaphors of Birth* (Assiter, 2015) I noted that there are biological sciences that operate in a very different manner from the view of science outlined above. There are contemporary biologists who see nature as a living system. According, for example, to Maturana and Varela, "life" extends all the way down to the bacterium, and life can be characterized in the kinds of terms outlined by Kant in his *Third Critique*, as a "system" that is cause and effect of itself. Such "systems" are self-organizing and self-controlling and they do not require external in-puts. A thing, in Kant's terms, appears to be self-organizing if it is "cause and effect of itself." So a tree, to take one of his examples, is self-reproducing – it reproduces itself and it also reproduces its own species over time. The ultimate exemplification of this "purposiveness" is "man" acting as a moral agent (Kant, 1987, p. 400).

A minimal notion of what these scientists call an "autopoetic" system is a living cell. The brain is such a system and so is a bacterium. Indeed, James Lovelock has extended this idea to the whole of nature. Organisms, on the theory, don't merely adapt to a "dead" world but rather they "lie with a world that is the breath and bones of their ancestors and that they are now sustaining." Living systems, furthermore, must be understood partially in terms of norms. A living cell, for example, modifies its behaviour according to internal norms of its activity. Hans Jonas, as one philosopher who is very interested in this form of biology and who has suggested that we need to extend our conception of the ethical to include elements of the natural world, suggests that the bacterium exhibits a rudimentary notion of freedom. The cells make a choice to swim in the direction of the sugar. The cells form simple intentions which are also causes.

Bacteria, indeed, are present in large numbers in our guts. They are living organisms that function together in a complex network: they are responsible for producing hormones, enzymes and serotonin: the latter, according to biologists, affects the arousal of humans. Moreover, according to Varela, bacteria have sex as well as the capacity to escape from things that are harmful (Varela, 2001). One might ask hypothetically: if it is possible for a bat to have consciousness in the sense of a point of view on the world that is not reducible to any intentional or material property, then why not also a bacterium?

Varela and others, then, are operating on the assumption that it is possible to give a third-person account of the living world, but it is an assumption that challenges the denial that other organisms than the human have a first "person" point of view on the world. This first "bacterial" outlook involves the bacterium in forming simple intentions.

Now this view is only an outlook of a small number of biologists and may not be thought to be typical of the "scientific" world-view. Moreover, it may be thought to be absurd, by Scruton and others, to attribute "freedom", in however rudimentary a manner, to a bacterium. On what grounds might we accept such a view? I shall not enter into a major discussion here, in an article on a different topic, of what we might mean by freedom. However, there is one element that all agree is characteristic of freedom, and that is having the ability to make choices. As I have suggested here, it makes sense to suppose that the bacterium does indeed have this. Perhaps it is doubtful, to take another element seen to be crucial by Scruton, and that is the ability to be self-conscious and to be aware of oneself as having these abilities, that a bacterium possesses these characteristics. But this raises the question: what is meant by a "first person" perspective on the world? Does a human also have to have consciousness of having a first person outlook for it so to count? Isn't this, however, necessarily to have a self in the sense of a "soul substance"? If I am conscious that I have a point of view on the world, then am I not conscious of something, not my body, having that point of view? If a first person outlook is merely an awareness of a point of view then why should the animal not have it too? Scruton is sympathetic to Kant's critique of Descartes' notion of the soul, in his *Paralogisms*, and to Kant's view that Descartes is not entitled to conclude from the claim that he is thinking, that he exists as a "thing" that thinks. However, it is an assumption that only other humans can have thoughts. It does not follow, of course, that animals and other living things have all the elements that are present in humans.

Reason why Humans are continuous with animals

There is one important reason that I will elaborate upon now, why I will suggest that it is plausible and necessary to adopt the point of view that humans lie on a continuum with animals rather than being radically distinct from them. Adopting the continuum point of view allows one to present a solution to a problem which I will outline here and which is solved with difficulty on the alternative view.

If freedom and human responsibility are seen as radically distinct from the instincts of the rest of the animal and natural world, it is difficult to provide a solution to a problem that first appears in Kant and that is reproduced in the work of Scruton. Scruton presents what one might describe as an idealized picture of human sexual desire and arousal. His is a fascinating attempt to circumvent, for example, the problem of unrequited desire, where one person desires another and this desire is such that it can never be requited since it is always a desire for more than the sexual union with the other. For Scruton, by contrast to this picture, this desire is encapsulated in the reciprocal intentional desires of at least two human beings, desires that are non-transferable to others. These intentional desires are reflexive – in desiring my loved one, I have the intention that my intention be recognized by the other. In some way, through the sexual union, I seek also to unite "you" with your body. I seek to engage in a union of first person perspectives.[2] Leaving aside the difficulties posed so admirably by Ellis about the nature of this "you", there is a further connected issue.

Scruton, in presenting what might be labelled an "ideal" view of human sexual desire is failing to consider an element of sexual desire and arousal that is drawn out by Morgan. As Morgan's case shows, far from human sexual desire being invariably directed in the fashion outlined by Scruton, in fact it can be consensual and concerned with matters that are far from the interests of at least one of the consenting parties.

It is this aspect of the human personality, of our humanity, if you like, that can be explained, ironically, if one sees the human as continuous with the rest of the animal world.

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[2] In describing Scruton's view this way I don't mean to include his views on the significance of heterosexuality nor do I mean to refer to his views on gender.

The argument runs as follows: Kant saw freedom as being equivalent to following the Categorical Imperative (CI).[3] He suggested an entailment between being free and following the CI. In other words, for him, being free is equated with acting well. Being free involves following one kind of causality – that of the CI. When one is free one acts as though one were a particular kind of self – a self that is noumenal. One acts as though one possesses a transcendental self – the self that Scruton appears to presuppose at the same time as he recognizes its non-existence. As such one is unaffected by one's bodily nature which is subject to the law of causation. As a bodily and phenomenal being I am not free. Freedom, then, is not only separated from the self as an embodied being but it is also equated with the freedom to act well. This argument has a long and respected pedigree. It fits with Plato's view that the world of forms is the ultimate world and the most perfect form is the form of the Good. For Kant, although he considers the story of Adam and Eve as offering a possible account of the origin of freedom in humans, he argues that this story does not work.

Of course there is no necessary connection between the notion that the free self is separate in some fashion from the determined bodily self and the idea that the former is necessarily good. But the link is a necessary one for Kant, since the bodily self is determined by its instincts while the self that is free is shaped by the moral law. The free self is caused to act by the moral law. Scruton, whilst he doesn't elaborate the argument in this form, follows the same pattern. Humans are shaped by their intentions, which are intentions to act well, while animals are shaped by their instincts. So he is implicitly also committed to a different aspect of Kant's "moral person" – namely the idea that this self is intrinsically good.

However, it is uniquely human beings who are capable of extreme evil. It is humans as embodied beings, also capable of rational thinking, who are uniquely capable of acting in such ways. It is the unique combination, then, of the capacity for intentional action and the presence of bodily instincts, that leads the person into wrong-doing. The Vicomte uses his intentional capacities to enhance and extend his bodily instinct. This bodily instinct is always there in humans but it is intertwined with beliefs and intentions that can be directed towards mutually good and beneficial ends for at least two people. The instinct might, alternatively, have no effect at all on any other person, as with masturbatory desires, or, most worryingly, it can be directed towards the destruction of another.

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[3] Kant speaks of this in a number of places. In the third *Antinomy* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he refers to freedom as an "absolute spontaneity" that is distinct from any cause in the phenomenal world. He notes the entailment between freedom and the moral law in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and in the *Critique of Practical Reason.*

The Kantian picture of freedom identifies freedom – specifically human freedom – with the freedom to do good or to act well. Scruton, in equating sexual desire with desire to act well towards another, is continuing this association. But just as Kant finds it difficult to explain the freedom to do wrong, so does Scruton fail to consider the kinds of evil desire outlined by Morgan.[4]

One could gain a more plausible perspective on the nature of freedom if freedom is seen to be both continuous with the rest of the natural world and to emerge from the natural world. I have argued elsewhere that Schelling and Kierkegaard, together, offer such an argument. Freedom, I have suggested, drawing on their accounts, emerged in Eve and Adam, who already existed as natural beings, at the point when Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. Instead, on this view, then, of the free self, capable of intentional, being radically separate from the embodied self, rather the self is a natural being who becomes free in the specifically human sense. Freedom "came into" Adam who already existed as a natural being. This, then, is Kierkegaard's account, I have argued elsewhere, of the origin of a sense of self in humans. This account has freedom emerging from a pre-existing natural being and freedom, and a sense of self, therefore being continuous with the self as a natural being. The natural being already had the rudimentary capacity, shared with other animals, to make a choice. Freedom, then, is experienced by other natural beings, but it takes a different form in humans from that it takes in other natural beings. The human being, then, is an animal with intentions that might be directed towards acting well or they might not be. So this alternative account does not identify freedom with the capacity to follow some idealized moral law. Rather, it has freedom existing, in some rudimentary form, in the whole of nature. Nature is also, I have suggested, itself grounded in something like the fashion suggested by Schelling, in a Being that contains within itself the ground of both good and evil. This metaphysical picture allows for a view of human sexuality that might be evil. It recognizes that humans can have intentional desires directed on someone else which are reciprocated but not wanted in Scruton's fashion.

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[4] It is useful to mention Sartre's discussion of the possibility of freely choosing evil, in *Saint Genet*, although Sartre comes to view this notion, in isolation, in quasi Kantian terms, as an impossibility. I am grateful to Paulo Lima for drawing my attention to this.

Second argument

I would like to extend the above argument by drawing on Louis Althusser's reading of Lacan. In his article *Freud and Lacan* (Althusser, 1971*),* written, he claims, to urge people in the French Communist Party to recognize the "science" of psychoanalysis, he invites us to re-read Freud, Freud purged of biologism and psychologism. Freud, he argues, was forced to present his discoveries in disguised form. He was forced, according to Althusser, to think his discoveries in the terms of thermodynamic physics, political economy and biology. In other words, the Freud as he is represented by Scruton, is not the real Freud, but rather it is a Freud forced to write using a language he would have preferred not to use, in order to persuade anyone at all to take him seriously. Lacan, according to Althusser, by contrast, reads Freud as presenting a new science, the science of the unconscious.

Althusser writes: "What is the effect of psycho-analysis? It is what psychoanalysis technique deals with in the analytical practice of the cure, i.e. not the cure itself... but the effects, prolonged into the surviving adult, of the extraordinary adventure which from birth to the liquidation of the Oedipal phase, transforms a small animal conceived by a man and a woman into a small human child." (Althusser, op. cit., p. 189) Althusser sees this process, following Lacan and Freud, as being predominantly about the acquisition of a gender. However, it is also, for all three, a process whereby the small child becomes human; she acquires a sense of self; she recognizes, in rudimentary form, her freedom.

Lacan writes: "As a result of (Freud's) discovery the very centre of the human being was no longer to be found at the place assigned to it by a whole humanist tradition" (Lacan, p. 114). Althusser, following Lacan, suggests that it is the "symbolic system" that determines or shapes individual subjectivity. There is, for him, no full subjectivity outside language and there are no thoughts occurring independently of their linguistic expression. The ego of the subject is formed through the desire of the other. Self-consciousness, which is, in part, an alienating imaginary process, emerges out of the cycle of desire and its attempts (that can never be wholly fulfilled) at their satisfaction.

There is an element of Freud's writings, however, that is underplayed by Althusser and Lacan. Freud, in his paper *On Narcissism,* suggests that the Ego is partially a focus of libidinal drives. Personal identity is not fixed but it continually develops. The Ego, he argues, is "first and foremost a bodily ego, it is derived from bodily sensations chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body" (Freud, 1923, p. 26).

This latter aspect of Freud's work need not be incompatible with accepting something of Althusser's and Lacan's accounts as well. There is an instinctual element in the formation of the Ego that is underplayed by Lacan and Althusser, but this is not necessarily incompatible with their views. The Ego might begin to be formed as a bodily process, but a very significant stage in its development is that outlined by Lacan and Althusser. Relating this to adult sexual desire, we can say that while the desire that is expressed in human sexual arousal is never, in humans, purely instinctual, there is nonetheless an instinctual element to it, which shapes the form taken by the intentions of the individual towards others and towards whatever it is that they may desire. It is the combination of biological or bodily processes together with the intentions that go along with these that is the crucial characteristic of sexual desire. These drives, as Freud noted, are present in the young child before it is able to express itself in language and they continue to shape and mould the individual throughout her life.

Society, Althusser argues, "interpollates" individuals as subjects but it does this, partially, in illusory form. We become subjects partly through the reflection of others – views or institutions, or society as a whole. We become subjects, Althusser suggests, partially as a reflection of what he calls the "Absolute Subject" – which is ultimately God, but which he also deploys as a metaphor for other aspects of society that we internalize. This process, for Althusser, following Lacan, is fraught with conflict but it nonetheless explains aspects of, for example, the child's internalization of the norms of a school, or of their family.

Freud, then, sees the Ego or the self-conscious self as beginning to be formed in bodily and biological form. Extending this, Althusser draws on Freud and Lacan to suggest that it is the Oedipus Complex that is key in the subject's acquisition of a sense of itself as a self. The child learns, in part through its family, how to see itself. What, in the child, is most likely to bring about this awareness – the frustration of desires. Because some desires are not satisfied, the child must come to see itself as separate from the means of satisfaction of its desires – its mother or other primary carers. The Oedipus complex explains the deep-rooted sense we all have of gender identity. For those who don't have this clear sense, it can be deeply problematic for them, as the case studies of Stoller and others have shown. But it also offers a partial explanation of the way in which differing individuals develop sexual desires in adulthood that are partially formed in the child. For the child who receives lots of love and care and whose frustrated desires are challenged into loving relationships, he or she might express their adult desires in the fashion outlined by Scruton. But others may experience frustration and anger as a child and this may lead them to develop desires as an adult that are radically different from the idealized form. There is no necessity, of course, for there to be a simple connection of this form. There are many other factors, perhaps some genetic, that enter into the way in which desire is expressed.

What is important, however, is that it is this combination of biology or bodily instinct and intention, working sometimes in harmony with those of others and sometimes not, that accounts for the peculiarity of human sexual desire. The account, then, offers a view that sees a continuity between biological instinct, studied perhaps in a third-person manner but also experienced in a first, animal way and the intentional and desiring elements of human sexuality that are partially formed, as outlined above, through the frustration as well as the satisfaction of the child's various desires.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have outlined Roger Scruton's complex account of sexual desire and sexual arousal. I suggested that while his account fits certain sexual practices, it does not fit all. I have argued, against his account, in three interlinked ways: firstly, I have suggested an alternative view of science from the one he offers. Secondly, I have suggested that Scruton shares with Kant on morality and freedom, an idealized view of this which shapes a similarly idealized view of human sexual desire. I have suggested that the accounts fail to allow for the kinds of sexual desire outlined by Morgan.

I have argued that the above two points are linked, and that if, instead, one adopts a different view of freedom, one can recognize and allow for the existence of sexual desires that are radically different in kind from those outlined by Scruton. Finally, in the last section of the paper, I have used a reading of Althusser and Freud, to suggest an account of the formation of the self that allows for radically different types of sexual desire.

It might be argued that this alternative perspective commits one to an implausible metaphysic. However the view I have outlined is, at least, committed to a consistent and clear metaphysic. Scruton, by contrast, seems to uphold a metaphysic that either commits him to a "transcendental self" that he does not want or, as outlined by Ellis, it is grounded in a belief in God. The latter is equally unacceptable to those of a scientistic bent who want to get rid of all conceptions that cannot be simply verified. So the sceptical scientist who dislikes powers in the non-human world and also dislikes transcendental selves and God, is left with a choice between a rock and a hard place.

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THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT, ICH MUSS DICH TRAGEN. DISSEMINATION AS DISSIDENCE[1]

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Abstract
In this paper I will analyze the Derridean concept of time embedded in Hamlet's thought. The Derridean thought of "trace" and spectrality is an invitation to let down our chronological conception of time and to articulate a new materialism without substance. It allows us to experience different ways of relation between the human and the world.

Keywords
Queer Theory, Law of Gender, Derrida, Blanchot, Nietzsche

The reason why there are no quotation marks in this title is because we would be unsure as to where to place them. "The time is out of joint" is Hamlet's cry (Act 1, scene 5) when his father's specter appears. What comes after that desperate verification is not, of course, the second part of the suggested title, but the complaint at the task believed by the prince of Denmark to have been forced unto him. "O cursèd spite, that ever I was born to set it right". The second part of the title in German, "*Ich muss dich tragen*", corresponds to a line in a poem by Paul Celan and follows the verification of a world that seems to be gone for good: "*Die Welt ist fort*". Both formulas have been besieging Derrida's thought,[2] reappearing here and there often in an enigmatic way and sometimes under the appearance of explicit lines of argument. The matter of time, of the duty that accompanies it, of that which, out of convention, we insist on calling "world" as if we knew what we were talking about, constitutes one of the threads of deconstruction we would like to pursue. Deconstruction, dissemination—taken as "a different thinking of the world", as a thinking that calls into question and dissents from ontology, mondialization, currentness or our world today, and, fundamentally, the Kantian triad of soul-God-world—could maybe be understood through this disseminating assemblage, through this little collage that recomposes Shakespeare and Celan in an impossible line. If this is still possible, if what is possible is this impossibility that is childish and sacrilegious in the face of great tradition, it is because Derrida himself allows it. Disseminal reading-writing, as established by the exercise of deconstruction, opposes all totalizing interpretations. Where wise and bright interpretation deploys its hermeneutics, saturates the context, returns the work to the world and its time, trying to determine what the author meant—that is where deconstruction addresses a rest, the non-significant surplus of the work, the irreducible remnant. The dates, for instance, in Celan's poetry, the *shibboleth*, the unpronounceable password, the encrypted elements that could never be reduced to interpretation because they are witnesses to that which cannot be subject to interpretation in the poem. Even if we could make the whole context explicit, return the poem to the world and to the author who gave birth to it, we still would know nothing about that rest, that trace which testifies to what is poematic about the poem, its constitutive illegibility that is also referred to in the poem, about its necessary mutism before any inquisition. Derrida will never offer a totalizing interpretation of either *Hamlet* or Celan. To deconstruction corresponds a politics of inheritance, a way of reading tradition that is both respectful and irreverent. From the texts, from the traces that we are still receiving, we inherit questions to which we must go back, which we must answer: *faut le faire*. But to answer is not to explain the work or to make it intelligible to the world and to the current moment, but "to be fair" to it, to exert a responsibility, to meet its demand beyond the here and now and, as Nietzsche would say, maybe in favor of a time to come. What would it be like, then, for us to be fair to Derrida, to be fair to his way

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[2] Derrida, J., *Spectres de Marx*. Paris, Galilée, 1993, p. 43; Derrida, J., *Béliers. Le dialogue ininterrompu: entre deux infinis, le poème.* Paris, Galilée, 2003; Derrida, J., *Séminaire La bête et le souverain. Volume II (2002–2003),* Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet et Ginette Michaud (éds). Paris,

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Galilée, 2010, pp. 359–360; *Schibboleth – pour Paul Celan*, Paris, Galilée, 1986–2003, p. 82.

of doing Shakespeare and Celan justice? Maybe it would entail picking up their traces, recomposing them, reassembling them in order to keep dissenting from all fatuous thinking about the world and its present existence.

1. The time is out of joint

Before Derrida, it was Deleuze who, in *Difference and Repetition* and later in his *Lectures on Kant,* noticed the Hamletian assertion.[3] The formula—for that is how Deleuze refers to this line—speaks of a radical change in the conception of temporality. In fact, it inaugurates the modern concept of time—philosophically articulated by Kant—as opposed to its ancient conception. For Deleuze, "The time is out of joint" means that time has ceased to be cyclical, that it is no longer conceived as the measure of movement, and that it has ceased to limit the world. Time has ceased to be subordinated to movement, it has become a straight line without becoming consequently simpler. Time is out of joint, out of the parameters that linked it to the world and its circular movement, and it now goes right through it. In his *Lectures on Kant,* Deleuze exemplifies such a change of paradigm using as reference the distinction established by Hölderlin between Aeschylus' and Sophocles' tragedies. In Aeschylus, time organizes tragedy. First, there is a fair order, followed by a moment of transgression (Clytemnestra's act of murder, for instance), but then the loop is closed by redress. Even though at one point in the tragedy the established order and justice are transgressed, the limit is restored by means of a temporal loop. With *Oedipus*, however, Sophocles opens up a new temporality: that of errancy. What Oedipus experiences when his truth is revealed to him by Tiresias is precisely the subtraction of every limit, an instant of caesura that is lived as "pure present" and as estrangement from the divine order. That is why Oedipus is described as *atheos*, which does not mean "he who does not believe in God", but "he who has been separated from the divine and its circular order, who has been torn by an irreparable gap". This is the modern conception of time that Hamlet will also incarnate. Like Oedipus, Hamlet goes through an experience of infinite breakdown: from then on, past and future "do not rhyme any more"—like Hölderlin says—and

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[3] See Deleuze, G., *Différence et répétition*, Paris, PUF, 1968, pp. 119 and ff.

"before" and "after" no longer close and never will fit. Deleuze pins this time of caesura on Hamlet's sailing trip. The act of avenging his father in order to restore the cycle, as classical tragedy would do, is postponed indefinitely. Hamlet is unable to act, he hesitates; the action he has been destined to fulfill is too much for him ("that ever I was born to set it right"). Only after the trip, after the concentrated time of endless errancy, will Hamlet be able to kill his father's murderer. By then, however, according to Deleuze, he is not himself any more. It is a different self who does the killing. Modern time, which follows the straight line of errancy, requires a fractured "I" (*je fêlé*) and a vanished God; the time out of joint will consist in the experience of impossible identity with oneself, in the eradication of an orderly world and of a God who guarantees it.

If we are resorting to Deleuze here it is because in *Specters of Marx* Derrida provides a structural nature to that time which "does not rhyme any more" and prevents the identification of time with itself, and also that of the soul, of the world, and of God. "Out of joint" will no longer refer to the "pure present" of caesura pointed out by Deleuze, but to the structurally anachronistic condition of all temporality. According to Hamlet's sentence, the present is dislocated, it is never present to itself, because there is a "disjunction in the very presence of the present, this sort of non-contemporaneity of present time with itself (this radical untimeliness or anachrony on the basis of which we are trying here to *think the ghost*)".[4] Past and future coexist in the present; nobody lives only in the present, nobody is our contemporary and contemporary cultures do not share the same time. What we call mondialization is the intention of cancelling the density of this disjointed temporality. To adjust and regulate times required enormous effort. As Simmel says, the invention of the pocket watch in 1869 was proposed as a system to uniformly regulate the time zones and therefore to coordinate the bodies with train timetables to make them more efficient. Subjecting local time to a global administration (as shown in the colorful ending of Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1872)) shows the will to adjust the rhythms of the bodies to a world governed by the tempos of factories and capital. Clearly, the invention of the imaginary line we call meridian, which Celan will disrupt in his poem about the poem, only seeks to standardize the time of work and of global exploitation: "When a workman in Madrid is getting ready for lunch, another one in Moscow has already started his afternoon work, and the one in Beijing has finished his working day. At the same time, crowds in New York head for the office or the factory, while in San Francisco people are still sleeping".[5] But this global time that regulates the world of workmen and white-collar workers is actually always disjointed. Disjunction is its opportunity. Since "Ousia and Gramme" (1968), Derrida has never stopped criticizing such a metaphysical conception of time as reappears both in its linear and its cyclical representation. When Derrida is critical of the possibility of a *presence* of the *present*, in the wake of Heidegger, his intention, however, is neither to denounce a vulgar conception of time (that of the white-collar worker and that of the workman) in favor of something more primal nor to see in Kant a revolution in this regard. It will be after Hamlet, and neither after Kant nor Heidegger, that it will be possible to think temporality beyond its anchorage to the present (that "now" which is not, the instant, temporality as a series of "nows"). Hamlet alone announces, like Benjamin will do later, in a different way, in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, the structural dislocation of temporality, the fact that the past always coexists in the present and cries out to the future (hence its essential connection with spectrality). Thus, the appearance of the father's specter brings forward something that is not the *ghost* that psychoanalysis would ascribe to the self and its constitutive narcissism, but rather the relationship with an otherness found at the very heart of the present, the self and the world. The specter announces what Hölderlin thought of as "caesura", which does not refer to a pure present, but to a time punctuated by otherness. Here the self is also fractured (*fêlé*), but not because it has had to face a decision "that is too much for him", but because constitutively, at the precise moment of its most intimate feeling, it is always inhabited by otherness, besieged by ghosts, by disjointed temporalities that also make it what it is. The fact that there are specters, the fact that we are not constantly immersed in the present of calculation in which we rush to the office, the fact that the other's word (not a present and contemporary other, but an absolute other who will never become present but is always reappearing, who does not exist but insists) comes to interrupt the smooth order under which we think we are somebody—all this represents the only chance for time to break through the barrier that subjects it to the movement of capital. If Derrida is going to replace ontology with *hauntology* it is because what needs to be considered is neither the self nor the world in its modern configuration, but disjointed time, the time haunted by specters. But what is that other's voice announcing in its remoteness and its disturbing proximity? What else is the father's ghost doing, but calling for justice—*faut le faire*? However, what is it exactly that needs to be done? *What to do*?—a question we inherit from Kant and Lenin and to which the prince of Denmark responds very, very wrongly: "to set it right". As if one could redress what had gone wrong, as if murder was enough to render unto the king what belongs to the king, as if order had ever existed, as if the circle of revenge could compensate for the grievance and time could thus set the world right again. A deranged Hamlet would like to live a classical tragedy in which injustice could actually be redressed, but his is already a modern time in which nothing rhymes and everything is postponed. And yet, *faut le faire*.

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[4] Derrida, *Spectres de Marx*, op. cit., p. 52.

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[5] José Manuel Casas Torres and Antonio Higueras Arnal, *Compendio de geografía general*. Madrid: Rialp, 1977, p. 7.

2. *How goes the World? It wears, Sir, as it grows*

Derrida reminds us that one of the possible translations of the Hamletian assertion is "*le monde est à l'envers*" (J. Derocquigny), "*el mundo está fuera de quicio*" (in the Spanish translation by Astrana), which comes close to a most recurrent and trivial statement: "the world is going badly". In connection with that world that goes badly, Marx, in *The German Ideology*, brings our attention to another of Shakespeare's plays, *Timon of Athens*, in which the poet asks: "How goes the World?" and the painter answers: "It wears, Sir, as it grows". This passage of *Timon* will be used by Marx to begin his critique of money. Money would be the fetish, the abstraction, the ghost of religious roots that corrupts the world, for it "neutralizes, disincarnates, deprives of its difference all personal property".[6] Like Timon of Athens, Marx denounces the generalized prostitution generated by money, but conjures up its ghost in the name of an effective reality that is supposedly original, previous, darkened and hidden by its fetishization: "... Marx does not like ghosts any more than his adversaries do. He does not want to believe in them. But he thinks of nothing else".[7] It so happens, however, that generalized phantasmagorization is, today more than ever, the structural condition of what we call "world". It is not as if there was a world upon which money would be superimposed to generate what we experience as the globalization of capital. The term "world" itself has a history—pursued by Heidegger in *On the Essence of Ground*—and its appearance is, in fact, contemporaneous with that of modern ontology. The determination of the factual world is inseparable from its spectralization and its spectacularization. In the second seminar of *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Derrida reminds us that even the Greek term *cosmos* (which does not mean the same as the Christian concept of *mundus*) means the universal order and also "cosmetic", ornament, dressing.[8] We have no access to a world that is not spectralized in advance, made up under countless cosmetics, by tele-techno-discursivity, by all the technological means that state in a precise and well-coordinated way what the world is. The world is nothing but (self)affirmation. Matter—to which a naïve kind of materialism would appeal to—is always already spiritualized. It has been like that at least since writing exists—and it will always have existed—but today writing multiplies all over, taking on gigantic and global shapes, generating a dominant discourse of global proportions. Such a world is neither present nor absent: it belongs to its interpretation down to its roots. Therefore, the eleventh *Thesis on Feuerbach* is, in a way, neutralized. "Philosophers have hitherto only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point ("*es Kommt drauf an*", "*haría falta*", "*faut le faire*") is to change it". What the two sentences that make up this thesis presuppose is that there is something called "world", bound to be either interpreted or transformed. Furthermore, the thesis also comprises the possibility of distinguishing between interpretation and transformation, as if they were not the same thing, as if they were not contaminating each other from the start. Interpretation is always performative, "it transforms what it interprets"[9]—which is something that speech-act theory would not permit. As Butler would say, every constative is already performative, every descriptive claim implies an imperative: "You *must* look at it this way", "*Believe me*, things are like this". This is why Derrida—as well as Rancière—refuses to separate theory from praxis, to allow professional decision-makers, politicians and intellectuals to assume the right to establish any kind of diagnosis about the world situation and to prescribe, based on their alleged knowledge, what must be done. And it is also the origin of the Heideggerian criticism to Althusser's claim to build a "theory of praxis", which Derrida attempts to articulate, however shyly, in his 1975–1976 seminar.[10] Every constative is already an interpretation—according to Nietzsche, "There are no facts, but interpretations"—and every interpretation transforms what it interprets—that is: it is performative, for it does what is says just at the time of its elocution. The mere fact of calling the world "world" interprets and turns the Earth in which we live into a sort of writing about what there is and about what man tries to face with what he does, but, in this "doing", theory cannot be distinguished from practice at all. Nevertheless, *must be done*.

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[6] Derrida, *Spectres de Marx*, op. cit., p. 75.

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[7] Ibid., p. 83.

[8] Derrida, J., *Séminaire La bête et le souverain. Volume II (2002–2003)*, Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet et Ginette Michaud (éds). Paris, Galilée, 2010, p. 31.

[9] Derrida, J., *Spectres*, op. cit., p. 84.

The generalization of writing proposed by deconstruction, the fact that there is neither an objective world nor a world "out of the text", however, does not prevent action, does not depoliticize, in spite of the criticism that "Marx's legitimate children" would like to put forward in *Ghostly Demarcations*. No depoliticization, no spiritualization. Among *Specters of Marx* Marxist critics, only Montag accurately points out that, as Althusser soon realized, deconstruction, understood as the thinking of the trace, is also a materialism which might be close to the "random materialism" proposed by Althusser himself.[11] The world being forever spectralized implies an ideal nature of matter as well as a material nature of the ideal, which mingle and contaminate each other in the magma of codes we call "world". From this point of view, what *must be done* can no longer be prescribed by an ontology that ignores either the idealization inscribed in all matter or the disjointed temporality that allows us to conceive whatever besieges as a demand. "The ontology lexicon is inadequate to speak about the specter".[12] Therefore, Derrida will attempt a different thinking of the world and of time: a *hauntology*. What grows, Sir, is the idea itself of the world and its temporality, either linear or cyclical, and the critical thinking that intended to separate the material from the ideal, the constative from the performative, interpretation from transformation, theory from praxis, the world from its criticism. However, *faut le faire* remains intact: it is the demand.

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[10] Derrida, J., *Théorie et pratique. Cours de l'ENS-Ulm 1975–76*. Paris, Galilée, 2017.

[11] Althusser, L., "Le courant souterrain du matérialisme de la rencontre", Écrits philosophiques et politiques, Tome I (Textes réunis par François Matheron), Paris: Éditions STOCK/IMEC, 1994. 539–79.

To the time off its hinges corresponds a haunted world, besieged by ghosts—but there lies the possibility of justice. Hamlet's father's specter, like Marx's, proclaims the need to *do* justice. Nevertheless, Hamlet, who has understood the disjunction of temporality announced by his father's spectral presence, insists on going back to the classic tragedy pattern and he seeks justice as a redress that should put the world in order again: "to set it right". Hamlet does not go out—although he puts it off—from the economy of repression, from the circle of revenge, reward, atonement, compensation for damages and restitution, that is, from a certain notion of retributive justice that submits it to calculation and rightfulness (to set the world "right"). For Derrida, it should be a matter of conceiving a different concept of justice, one that would not be settled in the presence and restitution of "to each his/her own". The *diké*, as conceived by Heidegger, in an economy of gift beyond the due, the debt, the crime and the fault, or justice as "relation to the other", as presented by Lévinas,[13] might be, according to Derrida, the undeconstructible that is announced by specters in this disjointed temporality. We all share Hamlet's situation, we are all trapped in this tragic horizon, with a crime preceding us for which we must take responsibility. We come to a world in which our affairs (which are not "ours") will have been dealt with, decided, wrecked, even before we can answer for them. By birth, as Hamlet says, by a pre-originary and spectral anteriority of the crime that can never present itself—we shall never know by whom, how or why the injustice was perpetrated—, we inherit a fault, a birth wound and an endless responsibility towards it. Like the prince of Denmark, we carry the mark of crime tattooed on our skin and, even if we know that it cannot be erased, we are forced by it to respond. A disadjusted time and a spectralized world do not depoliticize anything—quite the opposite. However, they require a new conception of ethical and political action that takes into account the impossibility of going on sticking to facts and to the chronological temporality that capital prints on our bodies.

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[12] Montag, W., "Spirits armed and unarmed. Derrida's *Specters of Marx*", *Ghostly Demarcations*, Sprinker (Ed)., Verso, London, 1999, p. 71.

[13] Derrida, *Spectres de Marx*, op. cit., p. 48.

3. *Ich muss dich tragen*

What to do? *I must carry you.* In *Béliers*, and also in the seminar *La bête et le souverain*, Derrida comments on this beautiful line of poetry by Paul Celan: "*Die Welt ist fort, ich muss dich tragen*". The lack of a world—of a common, sensible world in which a "we" could be constituted—radically transforms all relationship with the other. If there is a world (to be interpreted or transformed), constituting a "we" is always guaranteed. Perhaps we share philosophy, intellectual interests, projects, but also domination, exploitation, femininity, one language or another, nation or colonization, a well-administered life or the lack of a life worthy of such a name. But if the world is gone, then only you and I remain, and it will be my duty to carry you. To illustrate such a relationship, Derrida resorts to experiences such as mourning and motherhood. When one of ours dies, the links that tied us to the world are abruptly severed. One is left on one's own, the world has ceased to have a meaning, one inhabits it but is only welcome by the relationship with the deceased, his or her ghost. Time is dislocated to such an extent that one wonders how it is possible that it has not stopped for everybody else, that clocks still strike the hours and white-collar workers still head for their offices. To carry the specter of a departed is just the opposite of putting an end to mourning and melancholy as proposed by Freud. It is not a matter of ontologizing the remains, burying and forgetting, but of carrying the other in oneself, even if he or she is no longer present, and knowing that he or she never was. With the other's departure, the world dies—not just "the other's" world or "the other's" view of the world, but the world as a whole. We lose our footing. The experience is similar to a mother who carries a child in her womb. There is no world between them, nothing to share, no mutual recognition, neither hatred nor admiration for what they are, buy only a "couple of solitary beings" centered on each other. This experience of Levinasian roots that favors the "you" over the "we" is what Derrida will acknowledge in the poet, who will no longer be a national figure who enriches the language and causes it to increase in value (“we”) but a witness who carries the memory of the wound, someone traversed by the national crime, attentive to its victims’ specters, and who must pierce the language, hurt it, to free it of its murderous condition. With his awl, the poet disowns the language so that we can go on talking; a language that, from then on, will forever be engraved with shame. “*Stehen* (sustain) by nothing and by nobody / Incognito / on your own. With everything that fits inside / also without / language.” Both *stehen* and *tragen* point to the task of responsibility and justice that is presented as a demand to the survivor, which we all are to a certain extent. To be fair to those who no longer are or to those who have not been born yet is, in Celan’s words, to learn to “carry them”, to let their otherness invade and pierce the alleged plenitude of the presence. To do justice to the other thus involves giving up the sovereignty of an “I” who believes that it can act and that it can control the consequences of its action: “I am alone with the other, alone to him and for him, only for you, that is, yours: without world. I am left with the immediacy of the abyss that engages me on behalf of the other wherever the “I must”—“I must carry you”—forever prevails over the “I am”, over the *sum* and over the *cogito*. Before *I am*, I *carry*. Before *being me, I carry the other*. I carry *you* and must do so, I owe it to you”.[14]

The temporality which this thinking of spectrality opens up replaces the theory of action (which is always sovereign; it believes it knows what is done and by whom; it aims to differentiate itself from mere interpretation and is disposed along a continuous time, whether cyclical or linear) with the thinking of the event and of decision. Unlike the prevailing interpretations of Celan’s line of poetry, Derrida—as pointed out by Michaud[15]—reverses its meaning. Celan’s line does not say “given that”, “if”, “since” (the world has gone), “therefore”, “it follows”, “it is necessary that” (I must carry you). Instead of seeing it as a constative followed by an ethical-political performative which would derive from the former, Derrida wonders what would happen if we paid attention to the comma between the two phrases; if, instead of restructuring the line to provide a meaning to it (“After Auschwitz, I have an ethical duty towards you"), we paid attention to this gap in the poem, that comma which is like a wound, an untranslatable rest that turns it into an anacoluthon. Perhaps then the poem could be reversed, as Derrida seems to do in *Béliers,* and it could be read against the grain: "If (there where) *I* must carry you, well, then, the world must disappear, it is no longer here nor there, *die Welt ist fort*".[16] Thus, what requires responsibility and justice is neither the diagnosis about the world (which goes wrong) nor the lack of one, but the relation to the other as other—the other that goes through us in its various temporalities and spectral appearances—which requires that nothing should mediate between us. No common ground, no world, project, foundation or community can sustain any longer the duty towards the other. As regards justice and meeting the other's demands, the world does not precede us.

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[14] Derrida, *Béliers*, op. cit., p. 77.

[15] Michaud, Ginette, “Juste le poème, peut-être (Derrida/Celan)”, *Les Lettres romanes,* vol. 64, n. 1–2 (2010), p. 36.

This is why deconstruction entails the politicization of existence. In its disseminating interpretation of Hamlet's and Celan's line, it no longer deals with the world that goes wrong, with time being out of joint because an injustice has been committed that will require something to be done to restore order: *faut le faire*. On the contrary, *faut le faire*, opening to the other, justice, are a demand here and now, precisely because there is no longer a continuous time or a world to be transformed. The decision—a decision that will always be insane and irrational, even if we have rational reasons for it—can only be to welcome the event, to welcome the other, its endless demand, what Derrida will call "messianicity without messiahship". A decision like this would politicize everything if we were able to get rid of the linear and teleological image of time and the world and of the conception of sovereign action. We must do, we must be fair, because we must carry the other's demand and cannot do otherwise, unless we still believe in the plenitude of the "I", of the world and of God. When all this disappears, there is no longer any subterfuge to postpone the answer—hence the reason justice in Derrida is neither a utopia nor a regulating ideal. It is possible that, in these times of more than one time, our beloved ones die, we have children and we read poetry, only to understand that justice does not wait.

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[16] Derrida, *Béliers,* op. cit., p. 68.

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GILLES DELEUZE: FROM INTERPRETATION TO EXPERIMENTATION

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Abstract
Deleuze believed that Friedrich Nietzsche had revolutionized the whole theory of interpretation when he argued that to interpret was to compose a relation of forces from a vital evaluation. Following this line of reasoning, no transcendent meaning or value would command an act of interpretation, everything would happen amidst a vital encounter, which Deleuze often called a "combat." This formulation, dating back to the 1960s, would evolve through more radical versions in the following years. Our goal here is to foreground the links that lead from interpretation to experimentation in Deleuze's thought, by focusing on his rhizomatic thinking. We aim to attempt an experimentation based on invention, action and the insoluble. We will focus on how things work, rather than on producing truths, by following a sequence of thought in which we will try to differentiate ideas rather than repeat them, in order to try and open up the debate on this issue, rather than bring it to some form of closure.

Keywords
Deleuze, Interpretation, Experimentation, Rhizome, Representation

> An image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically
> and it effectively stops people from thinking.
> Gilles Deleuze/Claire Parnet

A large part of Gilles Deleuze's work was written to interpret the thought of other philosophers: Duns Scotus, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, Bergson, Foucault, among others. But Deleuze's monographic studies are more than simple commentaries which seek to expose the intention or truth of the text; they produce, or experiment with, new meanings, which may be unexpected at first sight. For this reason, Deleuze is a key thinker of French post-modernism, as he never contributed to a kind of hermeneutic fundamentalism (an almost voluntary subjection of readers to the *intentio operis*). Furthermore, he always accepted the *outsiders* of philosophy – Raymond Roussel, Lewis Carroll, Sacher-Masoch, Alfred Jarry, Kafka, Proust, Melville, Michel Tournier, Pierre Boulez, Félix Guattari, Hélène Cixous, Samuel Beckett, Francis Bacon, Paul Klee, Gérard Fromanger, to name but a few – widening and "smoothing" (the smooth space of nomads, as opposed to the striated space of the sedentary), deconstructing and renewing the field of thought, where certain schools of philosophy had, in self-satisfaction, become dogmatized, and reproducing in a rather scholastic fashion, the innovations of the past. He never stopped experimenting with different paths in philosophical thought, creating philosophical concepts and characters, scrutinizing planes of immanence, shifting and chipping away at blocks of codified meaning.

1. Towards a new image of thought

Deleuze begins outlining a critique of thought as recognition, representational thought (where formulations represent common sense, imitating and representing that which is already given) at least as early as *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (1962). Before the important chapter "The Image of Thought" in *Différence et répétition* (1968) and *Proust et les signes* (1964/70),[1] he exposes the Nietzschean "new image of thought", preamble to what he goes on to discuss. First of all, he criticizes the "dogmatic image of thought", defined by three theses: a) the thinker, as such, wants and loves truth; b) it is the forces that are foreign to thought ("body, passions, sensuous interests") which divert us from, or prevent access to truth; c) as the desire for truth is innate, all that is necessary is a good method in order to think well.[2] Among all of this, the greatest perplexity for Deleuze is "the way in which it conceives of truth as an abstract universal" (Deleuze 1999: 118. Translation: p. 103).[3] According to the author, the old philosophy does not take into account real, historical forces which form thought:

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[1] In addition to these two texts, see the important interview with Jean-Noël Vuarnaet for *Les Lettres françaises* 1223 (28 February – 5 March 1968), pp. 5–9 – republished in *L'île déserte et autres textes. Textes et entretiens 1953–1974,* "Sur Nietzsche et l'image de la pensée", pp. 187–197. Deleuze would later return to the subject in *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*.

> Clearly thought cannot think by itself, any more than it can find truth by itself. The truth of a thought must be interpreted and evaluated according to the forces or power that determine it to think and to think this rather than that. When we speak of "plain truth", or truth "in itself", "for itself" or even "for us", we must ask what forces are hiding themselves in the thought of this truth, and therefore what its sense and value is. (Deleuze 1999: 118. Translation: p. 144).

This does not only have epistemological and anthropological implications, the author insists, following Nietzsche in his politico-moral standpoint. Truth conceived of as universal and abstract preserves the order of dominant values. It is this that the "dogmatic image of thought" hides and, for this reason, from Kant to Hegel, philosophy contributed to maintaining the *status quo*. The forces which Nietzsche already saw as emerging from culture and not only from unconscious impulses, train (*dressent*) thought. In contrast to method – guide of the thinker's good will –, culture regulates thinking. It is for this reason that the Greeks did not speak of method, but of *paideia*.

Two years after *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, an important chapter in *Proust et les signes*, "L'image de la pensée" appeared. Deleuze's return to the problem of thought is all the more significant as, while repeating some of the theses of *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, he now approaches the issue using a novel as his base: Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Bringing together Proust and Nietzsche, Deleuze broadens the scope of his critique of the image of representational thought, old model of the *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, while also better supporting its substitution. The central idea of the theory is that thought does not function completely without something which forces it to think.[4] "More important than thought is 'what leads to thought'".[5] It is true that a "pure intelligence" could form ideas through a certain auto-productive soliloquy, but these ideas will only have "a logical truth, a possible truth, their choice is arbitrary" (Deleuze 2006: 118. Translation: p. 96).

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[2] See Deleuze 1999: 118. Here we find similarities with the Nietzschean idea of a "History of the genesis of thought" (*Entstehungsgeschichte des Denkens – Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* I, §§ 16 and 18), demonstrating that the great metaphysical identities (God, Man, World) were constructed upon a series of errors and fantasies. Deleuze puts the thought into this history, influenced by a *dehors*, with no metaphysical apparatus.

[3] All translated citations from works by Deleuze are taken from the English editions indicated in "References". Throughout this text, references are provided for citations in the original French and their respective English translation. Unless otherwise stated, all other translations are the author's.

In *Différence et* r*épétition* – for many, Deleuze's *magnum opus*, which picks up on and surpasses the entirety of his previous monographic oeuvre: Hume (1953), Nietzsche (1962), Kant (1963), Bergson (1966), Spinoza (1968); Proust (64/70) and Sacher-Masoch (1967) –, he returns to the problem of images of thought. Thinking, as we have already stated, does not arise from a "*cogitatio natura universalis*", only a shock, or violence permits it. In this way, thought is involuntary, random, and not sovereign. It is for this reason that for Artaud, the difficulty is not to orient oneself in thought, to express what one thinks, to apply a method or a perfect style, "but simply to manage to think something" (Deleuze 2008: 191. Translation: p. 147). Artaud shows how, in thought, there is always an acephaly: memory contains amnesia, language aphasia. For this reason:

> To think is to create – there is no other creation – but to create is first of all to engender 'thinking' in thought. For this reason Artaud opposes *genitality* to innateness in thought, but equally to reminiscence, and thereby proposes the principle of a transcendental empiricism (Deleuze 2008: 192. Translation: p. 147).

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[4] "La pensée n'est rien sans quelque chose qui force à penser, qui fait violence à la pensée. Plus important que la pensée, il y a ce qui 'donne à penser' ; plus important que le philosophe, le poète [...] Mais le poète apprend que l'essentiel est hors de la pensée, dans ce qui force à penser." (Deleuze 2006: 117) In *Différence et répétition*: "Ce qui est premier dans la pensée, c'est l'effraction, la violence, c'est l'ennemi, et rien ne suppose la philosophie, tout part d'une misosophie." (pp. 181–182) Before this, in *Nietzsche et la philosophie*: "Une philosophie qui n'attriste personne et ne contrarie personne n'est pas une philosophie. Elle sert à nuire à la bêtise, elle fait de la bêtise quelque chose de honteux." (1999: 120)

[5] Deleuze 2006: 117. Translation: p. 95. Proust's discussion of what "leads to thought" appears above all in *Sodome et Gomorrhe 2* and *Le Côté des Guermantes 2.*

Deleuze repeats a Heideggerian formula, although with an important part amputated, "we are not yet thinking",[6] because thinking concerns a possibility rather than a definite capacity, all the more because thoughts are the result of intensities which are external (*dehors*).[7] In this way, thought does not have an image of its own, it constitutes itself in the process of its execution. Therefore, it can only be a "thought without image", more hermeneutical than ontological: "The thought which is born in thought, the act of thinking which is neither given by innateness nor presupposed by reminiscence but engendered in its genitality, is a thought without image." (Deleuze 2008: 217. Translation: p. 167)

The end point of the chapter dedicated to criticism in *Nietzsche et la philosophie* ("La nouvelle image de la pensée"), the conclusion of *Proust et les signes* ("L'image de la pensée"), the article "Sur Nietzsche et l'image de la pensée" and chapter III of *Différence et répétition* ("L'image de la pensée") outline a critique of representational thought (which is also, lest we forget, a criticism of the habitual, academic manner of approaching philosophy, speculating and moralising), replacing it with a form of thinking which is subject to the outside world and lacks a strong ontology. One of the principal objectives, and a rather Nietzschean one let it be said, is to combat the obsession with the One and the identical, an obsession fed by common sense, which subjectively desires harmony between its faculties and objectively, tangible identity in objects (objectivation). But there is also a desire (which in Deleuze is always productive) to answer differently to the real forces which traverse and weave imminent reality. José Gil uses the Nietzchean/Deleuzian image of the "dice throw", the economy of the chaosmos, to justify irreversibly abandoning representational thought founded on a thinking subject. In reality, how can a subject create a world? It cannot, at least not demiurgically. It is but a single cog in a complex machine made up of forces that constrain it to think this rather than that, to think what it has not yet thought, the *unthinkable*. In contrast to Kant and the idea of a sovereign thinking subject (even though the universality of the transcendental cancels out singularity), it is always a combination of external forces that lead the faculties to transcend themselves in a discordant accord.[8]

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[6] A recurring syntagma in Deleuze, e.g.: *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, p. 123; *Différence et répétition*, pp. 188, 198, 353; *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, p. 56, *L'Île déserte et autres textes*, p. 218. In Heidegger, the complete statement is "Das Bedenklichste in unserer bedenklichen Zeit ist, dass wir noch nicht denken." (*Was heisst Denken*, 1954, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag) The same author upholds, in "Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist tot'", for example, that reason, normally so venerated, is ultimately the "most obstinate opponent of thought". "Das Denken beginnt erst dann, wenn wir erfahren haben, daß die seit Jahrhunderten verherrlichte Vernunft die hartnäckigste Widersacherin des Denkens ist." (*Holzwege*, in *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 5, 1950, Frankfurt am Main)

[7] As shown by François Zourabichvili, the Deleuzian "*dehors*" refers, in a first instance, to an encounter with that which forces to think (*Le vocabulaire de Deleuze*, Paris: Éditions Ellipses, 2003, p. 69). It is, therefore, far from being a simple "outside of the consciousness", which would suppose a substantial consciousness. The "outside" is rather that which has not been thought, but must be thought, and which, for this reason, forces us to think it without any predefined scheme of recognition. Later, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* will show, within the plane of immanence, that the *"dehors"* is more distant than all of the outside world, being simultaneously outside and inside, making it more outside and more inside: "Un dehors plus lointain que tout monde extérieure, parce qu'il est un dedans plus profond que tout monde intérieure" (Deleuze/Guattari 1991: 59; see also *L'Île déserte et autres textes*, pp. 268–271; *Foucault*, pp. 92, 126; and *Pourparlers*, p. 133).
On this subject, Deleuze cites Slavoj Žižek whose perspective coincides with his: "Thought never comes to light spontaneously, *per se*, in the immanence of its principles; that which incites us to think is always a traumatic or violent encounter with a real exterior which imposes itself upon us brutally, putting our usual ways of thinking into question. A real thought, as such, is always decentred: we do not think spontaneously, we are forced to think." (2006: 11)

In this way, this new manner of understanding thought goes hand in hand with the dissolution of the sovereign subject, indeed, it is necessary for it. Before *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*, Deleuze wrote abundantly about the collapse of the substantial subject. Afterwards, with Félix Guattari,[9] the subject of enunciation is replaced with collective forms of assemblage, and even art is "independent of the creator" (Deleuze/Guattari 1991: 154. Translation: p. 164).[10] In *L'Anti*-Œdipe and *Mille Plateaux*, he explores new impersonal and pre-individual entities, such as "desiring machines", "collective assemblages of enunciation"[11] and "haecceities". [12] He never, however, stopped upholding that impersonal and collective subjectivities produce singular individuals. At the end of the 80s, due to his conception of the history of philosophy, Deleuze returns to the notion of the subject, but it had already "lost much of its interest *in favor of pre-individual singularities and non-personal individuations*." (Deleuze 2003: 328. Translation: p. 351)

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[8] See Gil 2008: 54–55.

[9] Deleuze always praised the effervescence of Guattarian thought, claiming that the two of them working together, or better, "between the two of them", was extremely fruitful: they would meet to *steal* from each other, mutually expanding each other's horizons.

[10] Deleuze and Guattari write in the same book that the artist creates percepts and affects, "mais la seule loi de la création, c'est que le composé doit tenir tout seul." (155)

2. From Interpretation to Experimentation

Anne Sauvagnargues argues that Deleuze only freed himself from all "signifying hermeneutics" [13] from *Mille plateaux* and *Spinoza. Philosophie pratique* onwards. Instead of searching for the intelligible, it would now be a question of ethics, or better still, of ethology (behaviours adopted for real life, rather than values for the spirit). This allowed him to come up with the notions of sense and interpretation, abundant in his works on Nietzsche and Proust. Without interpretation, the sign always functions in an experimental fashion, in real encounters and in relations of force. Bearing in mind what Sauvagnargues says, let us add that "Pensée nomade",[14] in *Kafka. Pour une*

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[11] See Deleuze/Guattari 1975: cap. 9, "Qu'est-ce qu'un agencement?", 145–157. In *Dialogues avec Claire Parnet*: "Tout agencement est collectif, puisqu'il est fait de plusieurs flux qui emportent les personnes et les choses, et ne se divisent ou ne se rassemblent qu'en multiplicités." (Deleuze 2004: 144) Furthermore, in the same book: "Dans l'énonciation dans la production des énoncés, il n'y a pas de sujet, mais toujours des agents collectifs." (86)

[12] The fecundity of this concept shows how Deleuze was able to travel through the history of philosophy, renewing old notions and bringing them up to date. In this case, he returns to Duns Scotus, the medieval scholastic, in order to show, as he puts it in *Mille plateaux,* "un mode d'individuation très différent de celui d'une personne, d'un sujet, d'une chose ou d'une substance." (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 318) It is worth noting here that haecceity does not derive, as some thought, from the word "*ecce"* (behold). Duns Scotus coined the term from the word "*Haec*" (this thing). It was, however, a fortuitous mistake, suggesting modes of individuation which are not isomorph to subjects.

[13] In a footnote, Sauvagnargues removes Deleuze from any interpretative position inspired in the manner of Ricœur and Gadamer, by a hermeneutics where the "text itself makes itself a world, but functions like a verb", an interpretation of a transcendent sense, that of the "verb", rather than a "minor interpretation, a becoming of sense". (Sauvagnargues 2006: 57, footnote 1. Translation [see "references"]: p. 196)

[14] Text from *Nietzsche aujourd'hui?* conference, 1972, Cerisy-la-Salle; where the new wave of Nietzcheans finally took to the stage (Sarah Kofman, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Pierre Klossowski, Jean-François Lyotard, Jean-Luc Nancy).

littérature mineur, and *Rhizome* already contain the general outline of this movement from interpretation to experimentation. *L'Anti-Œdipe* can even be seen, in large part, as a project in schizoanalytical experimentation (despite the genealogy of the State and the post-Oedipean analysis of the unconscious). The transition from the linguistic to the semiotic – most evident in Deleuze's 1980 studies concerning painting, cinema and theatre – signals this move away from interpretation.

For this reason, Deleuze experiments with different forms of entering artistic works, Kafka's, for example, which "Is a rhizome, a burrow. The castle has multiple entrances whose rules of usage and whose locations aren't very well known" (Deleuze/Guattari 1975: 7. Translation: p. 3). The intention here is not to confuse readers, either in an arbitrary or in a calculated fashion, but to "preven[t] the introduction of the enemy, the Signifier and those attempts to interpret a work that is actually only open to experimentation." (*Ibidem*. Translation: *Ibidem*) Deleuze upholds, as of the second edition of *Proust et les signes*, that literary works contain a multiplicity of meanings, especially *À la recherche du temps perdu*. From *Kafka* onwards, he accompanies Guattari in radicalizing this condition of reception. In both cases, the only prerequisite is that the reading works: À la *recherche du temps perdu*, can be many things ("prophecy about the sexes", "political warning", etc.) and have various aesthetic strategies – it can be "anything we like provided we make the whole thing work" (Deleuze 2006: 176. Translation: p. 146). What authorizes this functionalism? The replacement, in Modernity, of meaning with use: "The modern work of art has no problem of meaning, it has only a problem of use" (*Ibidem*. Translation: *Ibidem*)

It will fall to *Kafka* to consolidate this rupture with "interpretation" and "meaning", developing and clarifying the scope of the notion of the "machine" (asubjective function), elevating "experimentation" to the principal *hermeneutical* device of the 1970s (continuing into the 80s). The following citation can, therefore, be generalized:

> We won't try to find archetypes that would represent Kafka's imaginary, his dynamic, or his bestiary [...] We aren't even trying to interpret, to say that this means that. And we are looking least of all for a structure with formal oppositions and a fully constructed Signifier [...] We believe only in a Kafka that is neither imaginary nor symbolic. We believe only in one or more Kafka

> machines that are neither structure nor phantasm. We believe only in a Kafka experimentation that is without interpretation or significance and rests only on tests of experience. (Deleuze/Guattari 1975: 13–14. Translation: p. 7)

The concepts of "politics", "machine" and "experimentation" stand out: producing enunciations impersonally through experimentation, experiment-enunciations to be conceded to the field of politics – this is Deleuze and Guattari's hermeneutico-political programme. We can understand this as a kind of nomadic hermeneutics. This approach does not arise from a secret nihilistic desire, a fatalistic negation of meaning, rather it is adopted in order to dismantle the belief in truth, in a hidden but recoverable Verb or *Logos* inside the texts. As Deleuze wrote: "In every respect, truth is a matter of production, not of adequation" (Deleuze 2008: 200. Translation: p. 154). For this reason, his watchword is: "Experiment, never interpret. Make programmes, never make phantasms" (Deleuze 2004: 60. Translation: p. 48). The example here is set by Henry James, who was capable of constructing a living experimentation and do away with interpretation, seeing as there is no longer "perception or knowledge", "secret or divination". In general, "English or American literature is a process of experimentation. They have killed interpretation." (*Ibidem.* Translation: *Ibidem*) The same thing happened with English empiricism, as "empiricists are not theoreticians, they are experimenters: they never interpret, they have no principles" (*Idem*: 69. Translation: p. 55). David Hume abandoned the metaphysical philosophical performances of transcendence and truth.

Experiment everything and always experiment; in order to do so, one must concede a "minority" to philosophy and literature which prevents them from being masters, dominant and eternal. One must experiment to change thought, alter the relationship with signs (now they welcome experiments that make them stop working), situate oneself in the history of philosophy as an empiricist, use books as engines of war – and attend to the present. There is no pure thought among the old (if it is an old problem it must be updated to be experimented):

> To think is to experiment, but experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about – the new, remarkable, and interesting that replace the appearance of truth and are more demanding than it is. What is in the

> process of coming about is no more what ends than what begins. History is not experimentation, it is only the set of almost negative conditions that make possible the experimentation of something that escapes history. Without history experimentation would remain indeterminate and unconditioned, but experimentation is not historical. It is philosophical. (Deleuze 2004: 69. Translation: p. 111)

Experimentation stands in opposition to philosophy conceived of as reflection, contemplation and interpretation, operations that Deleuze relates to the identity of the object, the search for essences and universal meanings, the belief in a sovereign subjectivity. In opposition to this, experimentation affirms three things: a) tests (*testing*) or attempts, open lines of investigation which work in the margins of common thought and perception, habits and opinions; b) active action, involving thought in that which it thinks (a fold which is not reflexive, but pragmatic), combatting at a social level, at the level of life; c) the absence of any universal knowledge which resolves, once and for all, all that is problematic. Even so, there are different types and qualities of experimentation: in a short text about drug addiction (1978) – Deleuze is known to have been alcoholic, or almost alcoholic – he distinguishes between "vital" and "deadly experimentation". The latter can even support almost "self-destructive" behaviours (tobacco, drugs and alcohol), from the moment when its destructive flow, instead of falling back on itself, develops new flows, independently of the risks that this generates. Indeed, an experiment in which drugs only serve their flow is a suicide "à la con". [15]

3. The rhizomatic device

was published in 1976 by Les Éditions de Minuit (and was incorporated afterwards as the first part of *Milles plateaux*, from which our citations are taken). It presents new ideas of connection and dedicates a profound attention to heterogeneity and heterogenesis.[16] It also clarifies and foregrounds the concepts of multiplicity and asignifcance: a rhizome can be cut, broken, fragmented, torn... it always finds new lines of flight.[17] In this way, it continues the battle against representational thought. The concept of the rhizome, as pointed out by François Dosse, is in itself a "manifesto of their [Deleuze and Guattari's] new thought. It takes on a polemical aspect as a war machine against the Western tradition of verticality, an alternative to the famous tree of knowledge." (Dosse 2007: 428) The central matrixes of this arborescent model have disappeared: "roots" and "trunk", guiding their domesticated variations to the periphery – "branches".[18] The thought structured by the One and the Identity is replaced by a rhizomatic system in permanent composition.[19]

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[15] Cf, Deleuze 2003: 140.

[16] Deleuze and Guattari import this concept from biology, where it can be found, for example in the common grass *Holcus mollis* or in the rice plant. In contrast to roots and tubers, the rhizome develops largely horizontally. Its internal structure is that of a food reserve organ, separate from the original plant. Through its various nodes, it can potentially become a new plant. However, Deleuze and Guattari do not establish a simple isomorphism between this

The concept of the rhizome constitutes a kind of great propaedeutic for a new thought (in contrast to the arboreal model), while also revoking ideas concerning the signifying unconscious, desire as lack, and politics as perpetuation of State devices. At the same time, it thinks of writing and books, products of the exterior, as having infinite entries, malleable for those who create and read them, never closed off by a definitive meaning. The rhizome is a machine of fragmentation, but not of atomization (faulty economy of trivial little sovereignties), rather of interlinked fragments, individual and communal (processes of individuation and communalization).

> Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it

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biological definition and the philosophical viewpoint: "Un rhizome comme tige souterraine se distingue absolument des racines et radicelles. Les bulbes, les tubercules sont des rhizomes. Des plantes à racine ou radicelle peuvent être rhizomorphes à de tout autres égards : c'est une question de savoir si la botanique, dans sa spécificité, n'est pas toute entière rhizomorphique. Des animaux même le sont, sous leur forme de meute, les rats sont des rhizomes." (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 13)

[17] In *Critique et clinique*, "Whitman", there is an interesting discussion about fragmented American writing vs. totalizing European compositions. Deleuze affirms that Americans have a natural feeling for fragments, and Europeans for totality. (Deleuze 1993: 75)

[18] "Il n'y a pas de points ou de positions dans un rhizome, comme on en trouve dans une structure, un arbre, une Racine. Il n'y a que des lignes." (Deleuze/Guattari 1980*:* 15)

[19] In *Critique et clinique*, "Whitman", Deleuze goes even further and claims that selecting singular cases and minor scenes is more important than any consideration of the whole. Only in the fragment can the hidden pattern be found, whether it be celestial or demoniacal, he adds. (See Deleuze 1993: 77)

> brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple. It is not the One that becomes Two or even directly three, four, five, etc. It is not a multiple derived from the One, or to which One is added (n + 1). It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills. (Deleuze/Guattari 1980*:* 30–31. Translation: p. 21)

It is a connective force of signs and nonsigns, multiplicity, between beginning and perpetual end, "asubjective" and "aobjective", polymorphic, with nongeometric lines, prone to deterritorialization. A "semiotic whirlwind", as Deleuze puts it in "Pensée nomade", [20] which, instead of interpreting based on any hermeneutical protocol, incessantly adds new lines of connection, a limitless hermeneutical spider's web. For this reason, the rhizome has "a short-term memory or a non-memory", and "operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots" (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 32. Translation: p. 21). It refers to maps yet to come, and is a constant process, with "multiple entries", as well as full of lines of flight.

> In contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and preestablished paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states. (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 36. Translation: p. 21)

Contrary to structures, it can be broken in any place without losing its vitality. The lines which "stratify, territorialize, organize, signify..." join with "lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees." (*Idem*: 16. Translation: p. 9) Contrasted with old linguistic models, the rhizome operates as an "abstract machine", articulating loose semantics with pragmatic strategies, based on collective assemblages of enunciation, coming together for a minor politics. On the other hand, the arborescent model – which dominated reality and thought in biology, theology and philosophy, among other fields[21] – always takes place within a “logic of tracing and reproduction.”

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[20] Where, expanding on what he said at the Congress in Royaumont (1964), he explicitly upholds that the possible interpretations of Nietzsche are infinite, as he never allowed his work to be codified.

> The tree and root inspire a sad image of thought that is forever imitating the multiple on the basis of a centered or segmented higher unity [...] Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems with centers of significance and subjectification, central automata like organized memories. (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 25. Translation: p. 16)

Furthermore, in the much-commented example of the wasp and orchid, Deleuze and Guattari show how movements of territorialization and deterritorialization are (a)parallels. “Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome”.[22] Some say that the orchid imitates the wasp, but that is not the case: “a capture of code, surplus value of code, an increase in valence, a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp.” (*Idem*: 17) Nor is it a case of conjunction, a biological approximation which develops isomorphisms:

> There is neither imitation nor resemblance, only an exploding of two heterogeneous series on the line of flight composed by a common rhizome that can no longer be attributed to or subjugated by anything signifying. Remy Chauvin expresses it well: “the aparallel evolution of two beings that have absolutely nothing to do with each other.” (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 17. Translation: p. 10)

The concept of the rhizome draws the outlines of a new field of philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari wanted to be the antipodes of Descartes: in opposition to the ego, the consciousness, the hierarchy of knowledge, evidences etc., they set up collective assemblages, rhizomatic flows, cognitive plateaus, the distinct-obscure. All of this fits into the rhizomatic, of which the plan of immanence would be transcendental empiricism,[23] where representation and truth would be short-circuited, in an attempt to better conjure chaos and opinion (the two conditions of reality that art, science and philosophy must fight against), overcoming the speculative and moral dimensions of knowledge. For this reason, it is not a sovereign subject that experiments – even if the texts have signatures, experimentation is an assemblage, a multiplicity, a rhizome. Take, for example, a specific case: in 1986, Deleuze wrote a new essay on Kant, "Sur quatre formules poétiques qui pourraient résumer la philosophie kantienne",[24] moving away from the rather academic monography written in the 60s (*La philosophie critique de Kant*). It is no longer a question of articulating a commentary on Kantian doctrine, but of experimenting what Criticism could have been in the history of thought, had it been put to work outside of the sedentary fields of the academic world and representational thought. The four poetic formulae that Deleuze uses – one from Shakespeare, two from Rimbaud and another from Kafka – articulate Kantian concepts, introducing the power of the *false*[25] into philosophy, salvaging, without saying so, a Nietzschean line of thought summarized in a note from 1888: "we have art in order not to die of the truth." Deleuze shows how, had it been submitted to a poetic transformation, Kantian philosophy would have made other rhizomes, created other multiplicities, experimenting with other assemblages. This short essay condenses Deleuzian experimentalism, showing how classical concepts of philosophy, established authors and recognized theoretical determinations are deterritorialized. Deleuze deterritorializes and reterritorializes: Nietzsche, Spinoza, Bergson for example, are all altered when they come under his scrutiny. The same occurs in relation to literature, cinema, painting and theatre. Deleuze decodifies everything that he touches, and the new ways of functioning that result

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[21] “C’est curieux, comme l’arbre a dominé la réalité occidentale et toute la pensée occidentale, de la botanique à la biologie, l’anatomie, mais aussi la gnoséologie, la théologie, l’ontologie, toute la philosophie...: le fondement-racine, *Grund*, *roots* et *fundations*. L’Occident a un rapport privilégié avec la forêt, et avec le déboisement.” (Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 27–28)

[22] Deleuze/Guattari 1980: 17. For identical ideas expressed in slightly different terms, see *e.g.*, *Idem*: 360.

[23] Let us take the concept of “transcendental empiricism” as described by José Gil: Deleuze’s philosophy “is a transcendental philosophy, but which uses the empirical – the empirical of

experimentation, as well as the empirical which traditionally defines tangible experience – as the requisites to determine its transcendental field." (2008: 15)

[24] Published for the first time in the magazine *Philosophie* 9 (Winter 1986), then in *Critique et clinique*, pp. 40–49. The four formulae are taken from *Hamlet* ("The time is out of joint", I, 5); Rimbaud ("Je est un autre..."); from Kafka's *The Great Wall of China* (the torment of being governed by unknown laws...); and again from Rimbaud (reaching the unknown through the excessive indulgence of all the senses...).

[25] Error is not necessarily the negative of thought, degradation (moral more than epistemological) of the desire for truth, as the old image of representational thought used to think. There are imbecilic thoughts, imbecilic speeches constituted entirely of truths; a hackneyed thinking, appropriate to spirits dominated by nihilistic forces.

from his experimentation are sufficiently open for us not to perceive them as recodified. At the same time, it is not simply a case of creating novelty through experimentation, it is philosophy's role to diagnose, read the symptoms, remember the clues, learn the signs, attend to living forces... diagnose, in the lineage of Nietzsche, who thought of the philosopher-doctor of civilization (Deleuze evokes this figure in *Nietzsche et la philosophie* and *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*),[26] diagnose the signs by making critical genealogies of the State, schizo-analysis of capitalism, micropolitics of combat; testing transcendencies pragmatically, avoiding agreements with common sense. Philosophy must experiment and diagnose to extract thought from morality and speculation, from the possibility and value of truth, while also avoiding its opposite: the nonsense of a personal axiology and pure relativism. And as Deleuze said when he was still writing monographies on Nietzsche:

> Finally, turning thought into something aggressive, active and affirmative. Creating free men, that is to say men who do not confuse the aims of culture with the benefit of the State, morality or religion. (Deleuze 1999: 121. Translation: p. 106)

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[26] *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* summarizes this philosophical manifesto well: "*Diagnostiquer* les devenirs dans chaque présent qui passe, c'est ce que Nietzsche assignait au philosophe comme médecin, 'médecin de la civilisation' ou inventeur de nouveaux modes d'existence immanents." (Deleuze/Guattari 1991: 108)

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PHILOSOPHY AND NON-PHILOSOPHY IN GILLES DELEUZE

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Abstract
Properly speaking, non-philosophy is not a mere complement of philosophy. It is, above all, the heterogeneous and infinite field where the concepts of philosophy find the reason and the motives for their movement. In this paper, I will begin by developing three Deleuzian themes: (1) the fact that concepts move not only among other concepts, but also inside things and in us; (2) the fact that there is a non-philosophical understanding of philosophy; and (3) the fact that non-philosophers may have a direct understanding of philosophy. The last part of the paper is especially dedicated to the artistic kinds of non-concepts (percepts and affects) in their modes of existing and acting, but also in their infinity.

Keywords
Deleuze, Non-Philosophy, Concepts, Heterogeneity

1.

I would like to begin with an advisory remark: what I have to present today is, in some respects, a heterodox approach to a central topic in Deleuzian studies, the one of philosophy and non-philosophy. From my point of view, Deleuze is an unconventional thinker, and his texts do not deserve the kind of merely repetitive reading we may not always find, but seem to encounter quite often enough.

I will start *ex abrupto* with a Deleuzian passage that places us directly in the middle of the topic that I wish to address here. In one of the *entretiens* gathered in *Pourparlers*, Deleuze says:

> Now concepts don't move only among other concepts (in philosophical understanding), they also move among things within us: they bring us new *percepts* and new *affects* that amount to philosophy's own nonphilosophical understanding. And philosophy requires nonphilosophical understanding just as much as it requires philosophical understanding. That's why philosophy has an essential relation to nonphilosophers, and addresses them too. They may even sometimes have a direct understanding of philosophy that doesn't depend on philosophical understanding.[1]

It is important to notice that this passage occurs in a context where Deleuze refers to style in philosophy. Besides being a question of vocabulary and new words, "style is always a matter of syntax", and "[s]tyle, in philosophy, *strains toward the movement* of concepts", that is, toward "something outside language".[2] This is to say that the question of philosophy and non-philosophy depends on the *movement* of concepts. It is because the concepts of philosophy are necessarily in a need to move that philosophy has to establish relations with non-philosophy. But concepts are something outside of language, which means that, far from being mere linguistic entities, they have their own independent life, their own logic of movement. It is a logic, however, that would not exist if concepts remained closed in themselves, not open to other ways of being, to other movements, namely the movements of *percepts* and *affects*.

We locate at least three significant topics in the quoted passage:

> (1) The concept moves also inside things and in us ("dans les choses et en nous").[3]
>
> (2) There is a non-philosophical understanding of philosophy.

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[1] Gilles Deleuze, "Lettre a Réda Bensmaïa, Sur Spinoza" (Lendemains, n.º 53, 1989), in *Pourparlers 1972–1990*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1990, pp. 223–224. I quote from the American translation: "Letter to Réda Bensmaïa, on Spinoza", in G. D., *Negotiations 1972–1990*, translated by Martin Joughin, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 164.

[2] Ibid. Transl., ibid. Italics are mine.

[3] The American translation somewhat deflects the sense of the French original. From here on I shall avoid such remarks in footnotes and will only mention the French original in brackets when needed.

> (3) Non-philosophers may sometimes have a direct – non-philosophical – understanding of philosophy.

Let us begin by examining the very conception of *concept* in Deleuze, in order to understand the meaning of the movement of concepts. "Philosophy," says Deleuze, "is not a simple art of forming, inventing or fabricating concepts, because concepts are not necessarily forms, discoveries, or products. More rigorously, philosophy is the discipline that involves *creating* concepts. [...] The object of philosophy is to create concepts that are always new."[4] Deleuze underlines the word "creating" precisely because the central point here is the *newness* of concepts, their decisive existence and intervention as outbursts of difference in opposition to the already-thought. In this context, I would like to put forward the notion of a *heterogeneity* of concepts, that is, of a mode of being of concepts that not only represents a radical openness to the real world, but also involves a multifariousness of directions of action that occupies a level superior to the one of diversity or multiplicity.

With respect to the question of the openness to the real world, it is in fact, in a relatively subterranean form, the main topic of this paper and it will deserve a treatment that involves the relations between the philosophical and the non-philosophical, which I will explore more specifically later on. Let it be said for the moment that Deleuze decidedly criticizes all forms of thought that adopt the point of view of the main trends of philosophy and establish abstraction as their own privileged terrain. As early as 1962, Deleuze points out the opposition between Hegel's dialectic and Nietzsche's philosophy in the following terms:

> Nietzsche's work is directed against the dialectic for three reasons: it misinterprets sense because it does not know the nature of the forces which concretely appropriate phenomena; it misinterprets essence because it does not know the real element from which forces, their qualities and their relations derive; it misinterprets change and transformation because it is content to work with permutations of abstract and unreal terms.[5]

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[4] Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991, p. 10. I quote from the American translation: G. D., F. G., *What is Philosophy*?, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 5.

[5] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962, p.

All of the three reasons Deleuze pointed out in this particular context directly have to do with the concrete character of experience, and they indicate clearly enough the sense in which philosophy and its concepts have to be thought of and move: away from abstraction, that is, away from the traditional positioning and endeavors directed at the creation of a realm of thought in itself, more or less coordinated by an old prejudice of logic. In fact, we already can see here a strong Deleuzian tendency to think of philosophy as a field where the connections between thought and life have to be addressed in all their efficiency, and such connections are already aimed at as a wide – and potentially infinite – range of possibilities of philosophy itself for the cooperative relations with other fields of thought, experience and action, such as science and the arts.

With respect to the multifariousness of directions involved in concepts, I would like to begin by characterizing my point of view on the very category of heterogeneity. As I said, heterogeneity is not to be confused with diversity and multiplicity. All of them are modalities of difference, but heterogeneity involves what I have called an outburst that is not characteristic of diversity or multiplicity. Diversity can be characterized as a variation along one line on one and the same plane. Multiplicity exists on different planes, but the relations between them, being in fact relations of movement, do not surpass a finite number of directions. Now, the situation with heterogeneity is completely different: the expansion of the heterogenic cannot be reduced to an Euclidian model; on the contrary, the heterogeneous explosion implies an infinite range of levels, and each of which will have its own elements and rules. When we say that concepts are heterogeneous, we are referring to their potential infinity and qualitative otherness. Concepts open to a plurality of dimensions that has a negative property: a total non-unity. And this is, in my view, the point where the Deleuzian conception can attain one of its utmost dissident expressions in relation to the philosophical tradition. The heterogeneity of concepts allows us to think about the question of universals in completely new terms. Universals are no longer anything similar to what they were in the abstract sense; they are, instead, an *experience* that results

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182. English translation, G. D., *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson, London, New York: Continuum, 1986, p. 158.

from a jump out of a previous, more or less straight, line of thought into the largest plurality of dimensions imaginable. This philosophical jump has its antecedents, for instance, in Kierkegaard, but for reasons of brevity I will have to leave that genealogy to the side at the present moment.[6]

Concepts, being heterogeneous, are necessarily not confined to philosophy. They represent the innermost aspect of philosophy in its creativity, and in this sense they are specific to philosophy; but they are open to other realities. From here on, my interest will be to characterize this openness in its modes of existence and action. What we will have to address is not exactly the applicability of concepts in the most divergent domains – which would be a rather passive way of looking at concepts and their counterparts –, but more specifically the productive relation between non-concepts and concepts, the instigation of the concepts by means of non-conceptual realities. How does this happen? In order to answer this question we will have to first address Deleuze's "*plan d'immanence*". I quote:

> Philosophy is a constructivism, and constructivism has two qualitatively different complementary aspects: the creation of concepts and the laying out of a plane. Concepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them. The plane envelops infinite movements that pass back and forth through it, but concepts are the infinite speeds of finite movements that, in each case, pass only through their own components. [...] Concepts are events, but the plane is the horizon of events, the reservoir or reserve of purely conceptual events; not the relative horizon that functions as a limit, which changes with an observer and encloses observable states of affairs, but the absolute horizon, independent of any observer [...].[7]

Besides the introduction of the notion of "plane of immanence", let us maintain for our current purposes that there are two types of infinity to be distinguished here: the infinity of the movements found in the plane of immanence and the infinity of speed of concepts. The first is eminently spatial

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[6] For more on this topic, see my article on the Deleuzian reception of Kierkegaard: José Miranda Justo, "Gilles Deleuze: Kierkegaard's Presence in his Writings", in Jon Stewart (ed.), *Kierkegaard's Influence on Philosophy*, Tome II: Francophone Philosophy, Farnham / Burlington: Ashgate, 2012, pp. 83–110.

[7] G. Deleuze, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, pp. 38–39. G. D., *What is Philosophy?*, pp. 35–36.

(and to be treated using visual metaphors), the second is non-spatial, if we admit that an infinity of speed contradicts space. These two infinities will have their own consequences when we arrive at the relations between the concepts of philosophy, on the one hand, and the non-philosophic entities, namely percepts and affects, on the other.

A few pages later, Deleuze introduces the topic of non-philosophy:

> If philosophy begins with the creation of concepts, then the plane of immanence must be regarded as prephilosophical. It is presupposed not in the way that one concept may refer to others but in the way that concepts themselves refer to a nonconceptual understanding. Once again, this intuitive understanding varies according to the way in which the plane is laid out. [...] In any event, philosophy posits as prephilosophical, or even as nonphilosophical, the power of a One-All like a moving desert that concepts populate. Prephilosophical does not mean something preexistent but rather something *that does not exist outside philosophy*, although philosophy presupposes it. These are its internal conditions. The nonphilosophical is perhaps closer to the heart of philosophy than philosophy itself, and this means that philosophy cannot be content to be understood only philosophically or conceptually, but is addresses essentially to nonphilosophers as well.[8]

It seems obvious that the pre-philosophical character of the plane of immanence and the topic of non-philosophy (and non-philosophers) are closely related here. In order to understand this relation, it is necessary to observe how "the plane of immanence is like a section of chaos,"[9] and "chaos is characterized [...] [by] the impossibility of a connection between [two determinations]."[10] If chaos is this impossibility, instead of being a mere absence of determinations, then we can understand that the plane of immanence is populated by all sorts of determined entities that – considering they are non-conceptual – offer themselves up to the creation of concepts. This calls our attention to another type of heterogeneity, the one of non-concepts. Non-concepts are heterogeneous in the sense that their determinations appear without any connection whatsoever. But each non-concept has its determination; non-concepts are the non-philosophers' forms of understanding.

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[8] Id., p. 43. Transl., pp. 40–41.

[9] Id., p. 44. Transl., p. 42.

[10] Id., pp. 44–45. Transl., p. 42.

Now, in the same context, Deleuze says that the plane of immanence implies a “groping experimentation” (“*expérimentation tâtonnante*”). The passage is worth quoting:

> Precisely because the plane of immanence is prephilosophical and does not immediately take effect with concepts, it implies a sort of groping experimentation and its layout resorts to measures that are not very respectable, rational, or reasonable. These measures belong to the order of dreams, of pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness, and excess.[11]

The plane of immanence, being pre-philosophical, nonetheless carries the potentiality of philosophy in its womb; this is to say that it is detected from the point of view of a philosophy-to-be, which is not yet philosophy but prepares the terrain for philosophy. But this preparation is far from systematical. It implies a “groping experimentation”, which means that the mode of existence of the non-philosophical, in its inability to connect determinations, is precisely a territory of non-directed experiments, of “unreasonable” essays that, in their disorientation, grope for possible ways to create concepts. But this kind of disorientation is not of non-philosophers’ responsibility; non-philosophers do their jobs, in the sense that they develop their multifarious types of understanding, and create the type of entities they deal with. These entities are namely those of science and the arts. And philosophy will have to find a way out of the pre-philosophical disorientation in order to develop its own type of understanding, and its specificity in the domains of thought.

Here we can recall the topic of the movement of concepts. Since non-concepts are chaotic from the point of view of what I have called the philosophy-to-be, then, from this very same perspective, they are in constant movement. The absence of any connection between the determinations means that the plane of immanence is absolutely not inert. It moves all the time and in all possible directions. (It moves infinitely, as we have seen.) And this absence of inertia is inchoative in relation to the creation of concepts that will follow the pre-philosophical state of the plane of immanence. The creation of concepts will have to be engaged in movement out of the plane of immanence. The expression “out of the plane of immanence” conveys here the very movement of the creation, of the emergence of the concepts. Concepts are born in the movement that the philosopher-to-be inaugurates in the direction of philosophy. As we have seen, this movement is, at first, *groping for*, but this groping for cannot remain unchanged in its unfathomable, and formless, native state. Sooner or later, out of the very movement of non-concepts, the seed of a concept emerges, a seed that has its own movement; in fact, it is initially propelled by the force of non-concepts, but then is maintained and developed by the being-concept of the very concept. Concepts are constantly moving because they are born out of non-concepts; but each of them is a force in itself, a monad, and in this sense concepts actively perpetuate and enhance the movement that they have acquired at the time of their birth.

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[11] Id., p. 44. Transl., p. 41.

The idea that concepts are constantly moving also means that they are in mutation. It is not only the fact that they are in contact with other concepts that is responsible for their transformation. The relation of concepts to the pre-philosophical plane of immanence does not cease to be effective after the eruption of a concept. On the contrary, concepts are permanently affected by non-concepts; they are always submitted to the proliferating effect of their antecedents that actively populate the plane of immanence. In this sense, concepts inevitably change throughout time; they are effective at the level of philosophical understanding precisely because they constantly take up new non-concepts in order to develop new relations and to give birth to other concepts. In consideration of this, we can better understand why Deleuze says “the concept moves also inside things and in us”. On the one hand, the movement “inside things” means that the concept always goes back to the plane of immanence in order to, so to say, revitalize its own strength. A concept that does not move inside things is a frozen entity, incapable of providing any new understanding – that is, any understanding that goes further than the already-thought. On the other hand, the fact that the concept moves “in us” means that the philosopher – as well as the non-philosopher – constitutes a terrain where concepts and non-concepts are in constant communication, which prevents the stagnation of the concept.

At this point we are finally ready to address the topic of the “non-philosophical understanding of philosophy.” This is a crucial aspect of the relation between philosophy and non-philosophy. Philosophy does not exist in a confined territory. Non-philosophy permanently surrounds the activity of philosophy, and this means that non-philosophy constantly enters the domains of philosophy and exerts an action over concepts. This action, to a certain extent, can be classified as predatory, since it comes from outside of philosophy and takes the concepts needed for other activities, transforming concepts into surrogates of concepts. From my point of view, however, this is not the most important aspect of the non-philosophical understanding of philosophy. What seems crucial in this particular case is the fact that the action exerted by non-philosophy is, before anything else, an *understanding*, an appropriation of thought, which signifies that it takes the concepts at a certain moment of their movement and moves along with them by setting its non-concepts in an interactive relation with the concepts. The result is that this action of non-philosophy stimulates the very movement of the conceptual activity of philosophy. Philosophy does not stay immune to non-philosophical understanding; on the contrary, it is constantly being permeated by the action of non-philosophy. And, once again, we can see that the movement of concepts has its inchoative substratum in the non-concepts populating the plane of immanence of a philosophy-to-be that is always in its displacement towards philosophy, always in a becoming philosophy.

In the direct sequence of non-philosophical understanding, we have the topic of the direct understanding of philosophy by non-philosophers. This topic does not exactly coincide with the previous one only because we find two supplementary aspects here that deserve to be treated in their own right: the question of directness, on the one hand, and the fact that we are dealing with the subjects of non-philosophy and philosophy, on the other. To begin with, it should be noticed that non-philosophers have their own fields of understanding; in these fields they develop the non-conceptual entities they deal with. These entities have their own properties and their own movement. This movement has its own heterogeneity in each field of understanding, and the consequence of this is that one of the multifarious directions that non-philosophers can take enters the territory of philosophers and grasps concepts in their conceptuality. Non-philosophers are – or at least they can be – constantly open to new ways of understanding, and one of these ways is the conceptual one. In such cases, the understanding of philosophy is direct in the sense that non-philosophers do not cease to be what they are, they do not transform themselves into philosophical apprentices, but they establish a dialogue with philosophy and philosophers that is characterized by the co-presence of differences and specificities – and these are not effaced in spite of the directness of the relation. This directness is, in fact, nothing more than the very counterpart of the way conceptual work deals with non-concepts. The dialogue can be said to be a double movement from philosophers to non-philosophers, and vice-versa.

Deleuze is perhaps not very explicit with respect to what concerns such a dialogue. In some occasions he even seems to refuse this idea. For instance, when he deals with the status of science and its relation to philosophy he writes: "Science does not need philosophy for these tasks."[12] The tasks in question are "to reflect and communicate." But, nevertheless, Deleuze immediately adds the following:

> On the other hand, when an object [...] is scientifically constructed by functions, its philosophical concept, which is by no means given in the function, must still be discovered. Furthermore, a concept may take as its components the functives of any possible function without thereby having the least scientific value, but with the aim of marking the differences in kind between concepts and functions.[13]

There is one aspect that deserves our attention here: on the one hand, Deleuze expressly speaks about the "philosophical concept" *of* a "scientifically constructed" object. The communication that goes from the work of the non-philosopher – in this case the scientist – to the task of the philosopher is not interrupted at all. On the other hand, the fact that the concept has no "scientific value" is far from meaning that concepts are of no use for scientists in a general way; it only means that the very conceptuality of the concept in its specificity is not appropriate for any use other than a philosophical one, in the sense that scientists – who have the possibility of a direct understanding of concepts, as we have seen – do not however transform that understanding into a direct manipulation of concepts inside their disciplines. This is to say that a direct understanding is not equivalent to a direct use. We are then confronted with the possibility of an indirect manipulation of concepts on behalf of non-philosophers. In the case of science, this indirect use has to be understood on the basis of the common, but nevertheless divergent, "multiplicities or varieties" that Deleuze discovers between philosophy and science. Deleuze writes:

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[12] Id., p. 111. Transl., p. 117.

[13] Ibid. Transl., p. 117.

> *Concepts and functions thus appear as two types of multiplicities or varieties whose natures are different*. [...] It is true that this very opposition, between scientific and philosophical, discursive and intuitive, and extensional and intensive multiplicities, is also appropriate for judging the correspondence between science and philosophy, their possible collaboration, and the inspiration of one by the other.[14]

"Collaboration" and mutual "inspiration" are the consequence of a divergence that, nevertheless, contains a common element. And this element resides in two types of heterogeneity that can communicate precisely because they are both heterogeneous: the heterogeneity inherent to the scientific plane of reference, and the heterogeneity of the pre-philosophical plane of immanence.

2.

I will dedicate the last part of this paper to the different kinds of non-concepts: functions, on the side of science; and percepts and affects, on the side of the arts. I would like to begin by quoting a passage that appears at the end of the chapter "Functifs and concepts" from *What is Philosophy?*:

> [T]he fact that there are specifically philosophical perceptions and affections and specifically scientific ones – in short, sensibilia of the concept and sensibilia of the function – already indicates the basis of a relationship between science and philosophy, science and art, and philosophy and art, such that we can say that a function is beautiful and a concept is beautiful. The special perceptions and affections of science or philosophy necessarily connect up with the percepts and affects of art, those of science just as much as those of philosophy.[15]

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[14] Id., p. 121. Transl., p. 127. The italics are Deleuze's.

[15] Id., p. 126. Transl., p. 132.

This passage addresses all of the relations that are at stake when we deal with philosophy and non-philosophy at one fell swoop. The percepts and affects of art, due to their intrinsic openness, can establish connections with the "sensibilia" of the concept and those of the function. To elucidate these "sensibilia", Deleuze speaks of "partial observers" on the side of science, and of "conceptual personae" on the side of philosophy. *"[I]deal partial observers are the perceptions or sensory affections of functives themselves*. [...] Partial observers are *sensibilia* that are doubles of the functives."[16] At this point it is worthwhile to remember that functives are "the elements of functions",[17] that the first functives are "the limit and the variable",[18] and that "functives are not concepts but figures defined by a spiritual tension rather than by a spatial intuition."[19] This means that the so-called partial observers are the perceptivity and sensorial affectivity of scientific figures moving inside a spiritual tension inherent to the scientific praxis and theoretical mode of existence. These figures are themselves subjects of perceptions and sensory affections, and in this sense they are exposed to what I have called the openness of the affects and percepts, that is to say, the kind of newness typical of art.

On the other hand, "conceptual personae are philosophical sensibilia, the perceptions and affections of fragmentary concepts themselves: through them concepts are not only thought but perceived and felt."[20] We draw attention here to the idea that *concepts can be perceived and felt*. This means that, besides the active relation concepts must have with reality from the point of view of their constitution, they also have a passive relation with surrounding realities, namely with non-philosophical realities that are able to perceive and feel concepts and extract the possibility of their percepts and affects from them; these non-philosophical realities, once again, are those that belong to the territory of the arts. The fact that Deleuze speaks of "conceptual personae" as "the perceptions and affections of fragmentary concepts themselves" only stresses that concepts are the subjects of perception and affection at the same time as they are perceived and felt by the subjectivity of non-philosophy, namely the subjectivity of the arts. And this is the embryonic form of an extremely significant criticism of a traditional way of envisaging the relation *subject-object*; the duplication of the subject that we can detect here carries a reformulation of the object with it, precisely as an active/passive subject.

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[16] Id., pp. 124–125. Transl., p. 131.

[17] Id., p. 111. Transl., p. 117.

[18] Id., p. 112. Transl., p. 118.

[19] Id., p. 119. Transl., p. 125.

[20] Id., p. 125. Transl., p. 131.

In this context, I must dedicate a word to the affects and percepts that are typical of the arts. Percepts are not perceptions, and affects are not affections. Deleuze writes: "Sensations, [that is] percepts and affects are *beings* whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived."[21] The fact that the validity of these beings "exceeds any lived" is crucial from the point of view I adopt here. This means that, on the one hand, percepts are not to be mistaken for the perceptions of any living creature, and, on the other hand, affects are not to be confused with the affections or sentiments of any human being. In my opinion, what Deleuze calls the "lived" is to be understood as the crystallized already-experienced, i.e. that part of experience that is totally unproductive because it corresponds to the non-communicative instance of particulars. In the text mentioned above, found in *Pourparlers*, we read: "Style in philosophy strains toward three different poles: concepts, or new ways of thinking; percepts, or new ways of seeing and hearing; and affects, or new ways of feeling. [...] you need all three to *get things moving* [pour *faire le mouvement*]."[22] What Deleuze stresses here is the "new", the inventiveness not only of concepts, but also of percepts and affects. As I have written elsewhere, "percepts are, at the level of seeing and hearing, what escapes to the receptive repetition of the 'same'. [...] [A]ffects are, at the level of experiencing or sensing, what escapes the reiteration of the subject as a constituted sentimental life, as [definitely] acquired and organic sentimentality."[23] All of Deleuze's interests go toward the topic of *becoming*: the becoming sensation, the becoming subject of those entities that, by being highly functional and creative in themselves, like percepts and affects in the arts, cannot be reduced to the mere objects of a vulgar subject (who is traditionally assumed to be man). And such a becoming has to be considered as the first and last spring of the *movement* inherent in concepts, percepts and affects.

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[21] Id., pp. 154–155. Transl., p. 164. Deleuze's italic.

[22] G. Deleuze, *Pourparlers*, op. cit., p. 224. Transl., pp. 164–165.

[23] José Miranda Justo, "O fundo comum do pintar e das palavras" [The common background of painting and words], in G. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon – Lógica da Sensação*, translation and preface J. M. Justo, Lisboa: Orfeu Negro, 2011, pp. 7–28, in particular p. 16.

One question, however, remains: what is the relation between affections and affects, on the one hand, and between perceptions and percepts, on the other? And, in the aftermath of this question, there is still a problem to be treated: what is, from the point of view of affects and percepts, the horizon of the two types of infinity that we detected when dealing with concepts? Both questions are intimately connected with one another, as we shall see.

I quote a passage from *What is Philosophy?*:

> By means of the material, the aim of art is to wrest the percept from perceptions of objects and the states of a perceiving subject, to wrest the affect from affections as the transition from one state to another: to extract a block of sensations, a pure being of sensations. [...] In each case the style is needed – the writer's syntax, the musician's modes and rhythms, the painter's lines and colors – to raise lived perceptions to the percept and lived affections to the affect.[24]

Deleuze's terms are elucidative: "to wrest" (*arracher*), "to extract", "to raise". There is, in fact, a relation between perceptions and percepts, and between affections and affects. But this relation is not pacific, as if perceptions and affections could naturally give birth to percepts and affects. On the contrary, an action is needed for this transition, and such an action is aggressive; it is a matter of the artist's forcible attack on perceptions and affections. And such a movement is not triggered by the artist in her quality as a human being, who has a memory of the lived perceptions or affections behind her, but rather by the very stylistic activities in which artists are, so to say, embedded; once again, the subjects here are no longer the human beings but the actions themselves. Now, the aggressive character of the action triggers a radical transformation of the lived into those forms of the un-lived, which are percepts and affects. In this sense, the non-philosophical entities, i.e. percepts and affects, become ready to act in their own artistic fields, and they become ready to establish their interplay with the concepts of philosophy. At this level, the level of the interplay between concepts and non-concepts (affects and percepts, but also functions), our attention is inevitably called back to the types of infinity that have a role here.

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[24] *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., pp. 158, 160. Transl., pp. 167, 170.

When I treated the plane of immanence of philosophy above, I distinguished two types of infinity: the infinity of speed of concepts and the infinity of the movements found in the plane of immanence. Now, something similar occurs at the level of the arts, but not in science. Deleuze writes:

> What defines thought in its three great forms – art, science, and philosophy – is always confronting chaos, laying out a plane, throwing a plane over chaos. But philosophy wants to save the infinite by giving it consistency: it lays out a plane of immanence that, through the action of conceptual personae, takes events or consistent concepts to infinity. Science, on the other hand, relinquishes the infinite [*renonce à l'infini*] in order to gain reference: it lays out a plane of simply undefined coordinates that each time, through the action of partial observers, defines states of affairs, functions, or referential propositions. Art wants to create the finite that restores the infinite [*L'art veut créer du fini qui redonne l'infini*]: it lays out a plane of composition that, in turn, through the action of aesthetic figures, bears monuments or composite sensations.[25]

If philosophy saves the infinite in its two forms, and science renounces the infinite because reference and infinitude are antagonists, art, in turn, works with a very special form of finitude, one that reinstates infinity anew. What does it mean to reinstate infinity anew? In the same context, Deleuze also uses other expressions: "opening out or splitting open, *equaling* infinity [*ouvrir ou fendre,* égaler *l'infini*]."[26] What seems important here is the fact that, in the arts, infinity – contrary to what happens in philosophy where it is a given fact at the two levels that we have distinguished – is obtained by means of a process that, starting with a wish for finitude and constructing the finite, tears apart (*fendre*) this very same finitude in order to radically conquer an infinitude that largely surpasses the terrain of the lived, of homogeneity and the slow movements of science. This is the destination of the plane of composition where sensations (affects and percepts) dwell, instantaneously moving and interfering with the concepts of philosophy. This means that the infinity at stake here can be envisaged from the same two angles that we have found in philosophy: in this case, the infinity of the velocity of sensations and the infinity of the movements found in the plane of composition.

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[25] Id., p. 186. Transl., p. 197.

[26] Ibid. Transl., p. 197.

One last word should be dedicated to the concreteness of Deleuze's understanding not only of philosophy, but also of the relations between philosophy and the arts. The significant characteristic of Deleuzian philosophy that I have mentioned at the beginning of this paper – i.e. the need to escape the level of mere abstraction, and to establish a permanent connection between philosophy and life – has two meanings in the present context. On the one hand, the cooperation between the conceptual and the non-conceptual, in particular the arts, is already an important level of what I call the concreteness of theoretical endeavors. But, on the other hand, Deleuze's view of philosophy, entering – as it does – the territories of non-philosophy, also opens the question of the relations between the fields of non-philosophy (science and the arts) and the concreteness of experience. If these relations are perhaps more discernible in the case of science, they are often problematic from the point of view of the arts. Deleuze completely avoids a utilitarian perspective that would put the arts in the service of non-artistic instances, but the way he treats the topic of sensations is very transparent with respect to his conception of artistic experience. *Artistic experience is life*. And, if sensations are unavoidable, as they seem to be, then the opposite is also true: *life is artistic experience*. And this means that, at the end of all the effort Deleuze spent on his fundamental problem, there is a synthetic answer to the question "What is philosophy?" In the largest sense of the word, philosophy is, in the order of thought, the counterpart of every experience and every life, including philosophy itself and non-philosophy.

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MICHEL FOUCAULT: FROM EXISTENTIAL PSYCHIATRY TO HISTORICAL EPISTEMOLOGY *

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Abstract
In this paper I focus on the emergence of the concept of the "historical a priori" at the origin of Foucault's archeology. I emphasize the methodological function of this concept within Foucault's archaeology, and I maintain that despite the different thesis it entails as compared to its philosophical sources, it pertains to one of the main issues of phenomenology, that is, the problematization of the relation between reality as it appears in its historicity, and transcendentality. I start from the interest of the young Foucault in existential psychiatry, and I focus on the French philosophical context in which Foucault's Introduction to Ludwig Binswanger's "Dream and Existence" (1954) was conceived. My aim is to show that the first "phenomenological" phase of Foucault's work is coherent, from a methodological point of view, with the development of archaeology intended as "historical epistemology." I conclude by arguing that Foucault's archaeology is methodologically linked to Canguilhem's epistemology, in that the latter presents itself as an important attempt at linking together historicity and transcendentality.

Keywords
Michel Foucault, Phenomenology, Historical A Priori, Ludwig Binswanger, Existential Psychiatry, Historical Epistemology

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Critical and Pseudo-Critical Appropriations

At present, we are witnessing a growing interest in the question of Foucault's involvement with phenomenology. It is an interpretative and philosophical debate in which one can distinguish three different positions. While some scholars seek to interpret or evaluate Foucault's work in light of the conceptual and historiographical categories of the philosophical tradition—gnoseology and ontology[1]—others make a case for simply "taking up Foucault in light of Foucault." Yet, even some of these authors ultimately identify philosophical influences for this Foucault; to give a recent example, the Kantian one.[2] Thus, these two positions only appear to be different, since they share not only the same interpretative point of view, but also the idea that philosophy is always trying to answer the same questions (e.g. how do we know?) using the same theoretical alternatives (e.g. empiricism, idealism, criticism etc.).

By contrast, other scholars have recently tried to emphasize the *methodological* role that categories of the philosophical tradition play within Foucault's work. Regarding phenomenology, for instance, these scholars seek to examine the *use* that Foucault makes of some of the concepts and the problems outlined by what one can provisionally call the "phenomenological tradition." In particular, I refer here to some works that I consider among the most meaningful and fruitful of the most recent Foucault studies: Kevin Thompson's "Historicity and Transcendentality: Foucault, Cavaillès, and the Phenomenology of the Concept," (2008)[3] and the collected papers in French edited by Pierre Cassou-Noguès and Pascale Gillot: *Le concept, le sujet et la science. Cavaillès, Canguilhem,*

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[1] I consider the works of respectively Hubert Dreyfus (*Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 1983), and Béatrice Han (*L'ontologie manquée de Michel Foucault. Entre l'historique et le transcendantal*, Grenoble: J. Millon, 1998. English transl. by Edward Pile, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002) as the most representative of this line of interpretation. More recently, Paule Veyne has tried to deduce from Foucault's work the principles of an empiricist theory of knowledge (*Foucault: sa pensée, sa personne*, Paris: Albin Michel, 2008. English transl. by Janet Lloyd, *Foucault: His Thought, His Character*, Cambridge: Polity, 2010).

[2] Colin Koopman, "Historical Critique or Transcendental Critique in Foucault: Two Kantian Lineages," *Foucault Studies*, 8 (2010): 100–121.

[3] In *History and Theory*, 47, 1 (2008): 1–18.

Foucault (2009).[4] Also, Johanna Oksala's *Foucault on Freedom* (2005)[5] corresponds in part to such a methodological perspective, insofar as it investigates Foucault's relation to phenomenology without looking for a philosophical ground, but instead analyzing it in terms of "critical appropriation," even though this inquiry is confined mainly to Foucault's reading of Husserl.

This methodological approach goes hand in hand with the need to reassess and specify the different meanings, resources and aims that have belonged to phenomenology throughout the course of its various readings.[6] Most importantly, the strength of such an approach lies in that it neither takes Foucault's claims textually, nor confines itself to a scholastic pursuit of influences and lineages, but is rather able to look beyond them, in order to account for Foucault's "immanent critical appropriation"[7] of some of the concepts belonging to the philosophical tradition. In this way, such a perspective does not insist on criticizing Foucault's lack of philosophical accuracy, and does not judge him in terms of his success or failure in building a coherent and viable philosophical project, according to the traditional philosophical categories. Rather, it problematizes Foucault's work from within, by questioning its own reasons and aims. Furthermore, it is an approach that considers philosophical thought as inseparable from the context of its different readings and developments, and shows that such readings—rather than preserving or betraying the purity of their sources—reflect nothing but the richness of these sources themselves.

Besides, it is Foucault himself that seems to suggest that we take up this methodological direction, insofar as he presents German phenomenology as the object of different readings in France from the end of the 1920s.[8] In this way, he not only contextualizes phenomenology—thereby differentiating the French reception from its Husserlian source —but he also situates his own work within one of the possible appropriations of this source. It is this that allows us to speculate on Foucault's relation to something like the "phenomenological tradition," and to analyze it in terms of an immanent critical appropriation. All this, however, on the condition that we do not insist that if Foucault aligns himself with one of the two lineages he identifies in French phenomenology—the "philosophy of knowledge, of rationality, and of the concept" led by Cavaillès, Bachelard, Koyré, and Canguilhem—he therefore has absolutely nothing to do with the other one, the "philosophy of experience, of meaning, and of the subject"[9] led by Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. In proposing this, I agree entirely with Jean-Michel Salanskis, whose recent paper "Les deux triades de Canguilhem-Foucault"[10] examines critically the viability of the separation outlined by Foucault between a "philosophy of knowledge" and a "philosophy of experience," and—instead of establishing or strengthening any divisions and lineages—considers what is at stake for the two sides, as well as their actual and possible mutual relations. I think this is the most appropriate way to deal with the ambivalences and outward inconsistencies of the thought of Foucault, a philosopher who claimed to have "learned more from Cuvier, Bopp, and Ricardo than from Kant or Hegel."[11] Furthermore, it is also the best way to contribute fruitfully to the thorny debate about Foucault's relation to phenomenology.

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[4] Vrin: Paris, 2009.

[5] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

[6] In his response to Koopman, Kevin Thompson rightly points out that in Foucault's work, one should distinguish between almost two different ways of accounting for phenomenology: on the one hand, Foucault refers to constitutive phenomenology, and on the other one, he refers to what Thompson calls a "phenomenology of the concept" ("Response to Colin Koopman's 'Historical Critique or Transcendental Critique in Foucault: Two Kantian Lineages'," *Foucault Studies*, 8, 2010, 122–128). Similarly, Colin McQuillan claims a greater precision in accounting for the terms "critique" and "transcendentality" respectively in Kant and Foucault ("Transcendental Philosophy and Critical Philosophy in Kant and Foucault: Response to Colin Koopman", *Foucault Studies*, 9, 2010, 145–155).

[7] Kevin Thompson, "Historicity and Transcendentality," 11.

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[8] Michel Foucault, "Introduction by Michel Foucault," in Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological*, transl. by Caroline R. Fawcett and Robert S. Cohen, Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978, IX–XX), repr. New York: Zone Books, 1991, 7–24; "Introduction par Michel Foucault," in his *Dits et écrits, 1954–1988*, ed. by Daniel Defert and François Ewald, Paris: Gallimard 1994, vol. 3, 429–442; this text was revised by Foucault in 1984 and published as "La vie: l'expérience et la science," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 90–1 (1985): 3–14; reprinted in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 4, 763–776; "Life: Experience and Science," transl. by Robert Hurley, in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984,* vol. 2: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. by James D. Faubion, New York: The New Press, 1998, vol. 2, 465–478.

[9] Ibid. (1978), IX–X.

[10] Jean-Michel Salanskis, "Les deux triades de Canguilhem-Foucault," in Pierre Cassou-Noguès and Pascale Gillot, Ed., *Le concept, le sujet, la science*, 237–270.

[11] Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Paris: Gallimard, 1966, 171. (English transl. *The Order of Things*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1970, 155). All further references to this work are designated in the text as "MC" followed by the page references to the French edition and then

For this reason, in what follows I suggest approaching this debate by considering the phenomenological research beyond the more or less orthodox adherence to a singular philosophical program. In particular, I suggest considering two general methodological principles of phenomenology which are common to its various lineages: the complementary "principles of experience"[12] and of "immanence".[13] The first emphasizes the priority of the phenomena and entails the conviction that philosophical research should take root in experience in the way in which it appears, beginning by describing it. It is a position that refuses the idea that the reason or the "essence" of phenomena lies anywhere but in phenomena themselves, for example, in what founds, determines or causes them. This means—and this is the second principle—that the essence or "a priori" of experience is immanent to the experience itself. That is to say, that the conditions of possibility of the phenomena should be found in the phenomena themselves, in the way they give themselves.

From this methodological point of view, Foucault's archaeology, in that it probes the phenomena (the forms of knowledge as well as the forms of experience) by focusing on "the specific form of their mode of being,"[14] seems to correspond to such a phenomenological attitude. It is probably no accident that Foucault still conserves the term "a priori" for naming such a "form," that is the internal explanatory principle of the phenomena. Now, phenomena change historically and Foucault's archaeology is concerned with how to account philosophically for the historicity of experience in a way that should keep to the givenness of experience itself. Foucault emphasizes this position often throughout his archeological works, as we can see already in the programmatic manifesto of archaeology, the Preface to *The Birth of the Clinic*, where he presents the archaeological inquiry as a "study that sets out to disentangle the conditions of history" not from some material causes,

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to the English translation.

[12] Jean-Michel Salanskis, "Les deux triades de Canguilhem-Foucault," 247.

[13] See Jocelyn Benoist, *L'idée de phénoménologie*, Paris: Beauchesne, 2001.

[14] Michel Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir*, Paris: Gallimard, 1979, 167. (English transl. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London: Routledge, 1972, 2002, 143). All further references to this work are designated in the text as "AS" followed by the page reference to the French edition and then to the English transl.

nor from a purely-transcendental point of view, but "from the density of discourse."[15] Or in *The Order of Things*, where he claims that "the history of knowledge can be written only on the basis of what was contemporaneous with it [...] in terms of conditions and a prioris established in time" (MC 221/207). But one could mention also the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, where Foucault states that the "specific history" of the phenomena for which he aims to account for "does not refer [them] back to the laws of an alien development" (AS 167/143). That is to say, that the laws that govern the forms of experience's phenomena are immanent to the phenomena, and they can be grasped only by describing these forms themselves. This is why Foucault calls "historical" the a priori in which he recognizes the internal reason or condition of possibility of the phenomena, and he makes it the pivot of his historical-epistemological research.

In this way, Foucault's archaeology pertains to one of the main issues of phenomenology, that is, the problematization of the relation between reality as it appears in its historicity, and transcendentality. Nonetheless, it is exactly on this point that one should recognize the main distance between the Foucaldian archaeological project and Husserl's phenomenological research. I refer to Husserl here, since, although Husserl is not mentioned by name in Foucault's *Archaeology*, the term "historical a priory" immediately reminds us of the *Crisis of European Sciences*, whose aim was precisely to determine the "concrete, historical a priori which encompasses everything that exists as historical becoming."[16] Despite the source of the expression, it would be wrong to recognize a direct Husserlian lineage in Foucault's "historical a priori." It is perhaps no accident that Foucault, by the deep irony that often characterizes his style, adopts Husserl's expression precisely in order to emphasize the distance between his own archaeology and Husserl's philosophical historiography. Indeed, the "historical a priori" in Foucault does not aim, like Husserl, at making explicit the "a priori structure contained in historicity"[17] in order to trace a "universal teleology of reason."[18] According to Foucault, the historical a priori is not the a priori of history, but just a methodological tool whose historicity consists in its concurrence with the form of the phenomena that it aims at explaining, while simultaneously describing them. That is why Foucault, in his archaeological works, does not look for the gnoseological foundation and the scientificity of knowledge,[19] since nothing *before* the historical actuality of knowledge itself can lead to its formation and assess its value. According to this view, the "a priori of the historical knowledge" (*savoir*) and the "a priori knowledge" (*connaissance*) sought by Husserl's phenomenology are both subordinated to the frame of a "concrete a priori"[20] that is simply the "configuration" that sets out and justifies their historical possibility. That is to say, in Foucault's words, that archaeology is not concerned with the "condition of validity" of knowledge, but rather its "condition of reality" (AS 167/143).

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[15] Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la clinique. Une archéologie du regard médical*, Paris: PUF, 1963, 2nd ed. 1972, XV. English transl. by Alan M. Sheridan, *The Birth of the Clinic. An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1973), XIX. All further references to this work are designated in the text as "NC" followed by the appropriate page reference to the French edition and then to the English transl.

[16] Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie: eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, Belgrad 1936; "Husserliana," vol. VI, Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954, 2nd ed. 1962, Beilage III, zu § 9a, 380. (English transl. by David Carr, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970, 372).

In what follows I inquire into the historicity of such a concept of "a priori" from a purely methodological perspective. By emphasizing its function within Foucault's archaeology, I maintain that—despite the different thesis that it entails as compared to its philosophical sources—the "historical a priori" satisfies the need of immanence that characterizes phenomenological research, and finally, I consider it as the connection between the phenomenological attitude and Foucault's "historical epistemology." My argument consists of demonstrating that the emphasis on the methodological principles of experience and immanence of phenomenology was characteristic of a certain way in which German phenomenology was received in France during the first half of the 20th century, in particular at the time when Foucault began to conceive his first works in the early 1950s. I will focus particularly on the role that disciplines other than pure philosophy—such as psychiatry and biology—played in the way in which Husserl, together with Heidegger's phenomenological insights, was received and reworked in France at that time. I believe indeed that the way in which not only philosophers, but also psychiatrists and biologists, proclaimed their closeness to the "phenomenological attitude"[21] towards experience could lead us to bring to light the methodological core of phenomenology—and not just the doctrinal one—as it was received by the young Foucault. This will lead us not only to understand the sense of Foucault's own early agreement to phenomenology—as it appears in particular in his "Introduction" to Ludwig Binswanger's "Dream and Existence"[22]—but also to show the methodological coherence between this first phenomenological phase of his work and the later development of archaeology. Thus, rather than accept or reject outright the thesis of Foucault's agreement with phenomenology *tout court*, in this paper I seek to identify a certain Foucauldian "attitude" or "style" of phenomenological research. By means of the concept of "historical a priori," I try to show that this methodological attitude shapes Foucault's archaeological project since the 1950s, at which time Foucault firmly believed—as did Ludwig Binswanger—that "man, in his forms of existence, is the only means of getting to man." (DIE 67/32).

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[17] Ibid., 378 (English transl. 369).

[18] Ibid. On Foucault's opposition to Husserl's philosophy of history, see Bernard Charles Flynn, "Michel Foucault and the Husserlian Problematic of a Transcendental Philosophy of History," *Philosophy Today*, 22 (1978): 224–238.

[19] See Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences*, 381/373): "The very problem here can be made understandable only through recourse to the historical a priori as the universal source of all conceivable problems of understanding. The problem of genuine historical explanation comes together, in the case of the sciences, with 'epistemological' grounding or clarification."

[20] Foucault, NC 11/XVII; 196/238. Also Husserl characterizes his historical a priori as "concrete:" see *The Crisis of European Sciences,* 380/372.

With this goal in mind, I will first focus on the context of the interest of the young Foucault in existential psychiatry and especially in the work of the Swiss psychiatrist Ludwig Binswanger, which Foucault introduced to France by means his "Introduction" of 1954.

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[21] See Georges Lanteri-Laura, *La psychiatrie phénoménologique. Fondements philosophiques*, Paris: PUF, 1963.

[22] Michel Foucault, "Introduction" to Ludwig Binswanger, *Le rêve et l'existence*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1954, 9–128; *Dits et Écrits,* vol. 1, n. 1, 65–118. English transl. by Forrest Williams, "Dream, Imagination and Existence," *Review of Existential Psychology & Psychiatry*, 19–1 (1985): 29–78. All further references to this work are designated in the text as "DIE" followed by the page reference to the French edition and then to the English transl.

The phenomenological "attitude"

Several commentators focusing on Foucault's early works concur in recognizing the phenomenological horizon within which they were conceived.[23] Hence, the Introduction to "Dream and Existence" would be phenomenological for at least two reasons: first, to the extent that it dwells on and develops—through Binswanger—Husserl's problematization of meaning; and second, because it embraces the cause of the "existential analysis" (*Daseinsanalyse*), an anthropological project whose founding guidelines Binswanger recognized in Heidegger's philosophical program.[24] Actually, one should rather note that Foucault's agreement to Binswanger's "existential analysis" presents itself already as a criticism towards, at once both Husserl and Heidegger's positions. If Foucault praises Binswanger's approach to phenomenology, it is to the extent that this approach was able to deal with the problem of experience without referring—as the pure philosophical phenomenology did—to either the transcendental structures of knowledge (Husserl's eidetic of pure consciousness) nor the purely ontological structures of existence (Heidegger's analytic of *Dasein*). According to Foucault, instead of presenting itself as "some a priori form of philosophical speculation" (DIE 66/32), the existential analysis indeed allows the philosopher to "outflank the problem of ontology and anthropology by going straight to concrete existence, to its development and its historical content" (DIE 67/32). By applying the philosophical phenomenology to the concrete, historical individual experience (*Lebensgeschichte*), Binswanger's agreement to phenomenology not only exceeded the boundaries of Husserl's gnoseology, but also braved the ban that Heidegger had imposed on phenomenology regarding its temptation of crossing the limit that separated it from some positive sciences like psychology, biology, and anthropology. In Foucault's own words, "the existential analysis of Binswanger avoid[ed] any a priori distinction between ontology and anthropology," and relocated such a distinction "at the terminus of an inquiry whose point of departure is characterized not by a line of division, but by an encounter with concrete existence" (DIE 67/32–33). Thus, Foucault's agreement with Binswanger's *Daseinsanalyse* should be understood as an important indicator of a non-doctrinal commitment to phenomenology, as he states quite ironically in his Introduction: "we are fallible enough to believe in history even when it is a question of *Existenz*" (DIE 80/43).

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[23] José Luis Moreno Pestaña, *En devenant Foucault: sociogenèse d'un grand philosophe*, Bellecombe-en-Bauges: Éditions du Croquant, 2006. Todd May, "Foucault's Relation to Phenomenology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, 2nd ed., ed. by Gary Gutting, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 284–311; *Foucault et la phénoménologie*, special issue of *Les Études philosophiques*, 106, 3 (2013). I permit myself to refer also to Elisabetta Basso, *Foucault e la "Daseinsanalyse": un'indagine metodologica*, Milano: Mimesis, 2007; Elisabetta Basso, "Le rêve et l'existence, histoire d'une traduction", in Jean-François Bert, Elisabetta Basso, eds., *Foucault à Münsterlingen.* À l'origine de l'histoire de la folie, Avec des photographies de Jacqueline Verdeaux, Paris, Éditions EHESS, 2015, and Elisabetta Basso, "À propos d'un cours inédit de Michel Foucault sur l'analyse existentielle de Ludwig Binswanger (Lille 1953–54)", *Revue de synthèse*, 137, 1–2 (2016), 35–59.

[24] "Dream and Existence" ("Traum und Existenz," *Neue Schweizer Rundschau*, vol. 23, 1930: 673–685; 766–779 (now in his *Ausgewählte Werke in vier Bänden*, vols. 1–4, ed. by Hans-Jürg Barun, Heidelberg: Asanger 1992–94, vol. 3, 95–119; English translation: "Dream and Existence," in *Being-in-the-World. Selected Papers of Ludwig Binswanger*, transl. by Jacob Needleman, New York: Harper & Row, 1963, 1975, 222–248; this translation was revised by Keith Hoeller in *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, vol. 19, no. 1, 1984–85, special issue on "Dream and Existence") has a crucial role within Binswanger's *corpus*, since the Swiss psychiatrist expresses there for the first time his philosophical ambition of combining Heidegger's "analytic of *Dasein*" with psychopathology, under the form of an "existential analysis" (*Daseinsanalyse*). In this paper, I use indifferently the expressions "existential psychiatry" and "phenomenological psychiatry." Actually, the latter expression is more general and includes some forms that differ from each other. "Existential" psychiatry is one of these forms, which comes precisely from Binswanger's involvement with Heidegger's analytic. Already at the time of Binswanger, one has to distinguish, for instance, between Binswanger's *Daseinsanalysis*, and phenomenology as it was understood by other psychiatrists such as Karl Jaspers and Eugène Minkowski. To be precise, already within Binswanger's work one could distinguish more "phases," throughout which the keystone moves initially from Husserl to Heidegger (from "Dream and Existence" until Binswanger's works of the 1950s on schizophrenia), and then toward Husserl again (when Binswanger comes back, in the 1960s, toward a more gnoseological approach grounded in Husserl's late genetic phenomenology). It is a matter of important and necessary differentiation. Nonetheless, I wonder if it is not equally plausible to

Nonethless, to most Foucault scholars the Introduction to "Dream and Existence," as well as the encounter between Foucault and Binswanger,[25]

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take into account the common use of the expression "phenomenological psychiatry," one that somehow implicitly accounts for the fact that it is not an ultimate and definitive philosophical program that psychiatrists referring to phenomenology look for, but rather an "attitude," namely, a more general methodological inspiration.

[25] Foucault visited Binswanger's psychiatric clinic in Kreuzlingen (Switzerland) at the beginning of the 1950s, in order to submit to Binswanger the French translation of "Dream and Existence" (see Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault: 1926–1984,* Paris: Flammarion, 1989, 1991, 63–67. English transl. by Betsy Wing, *Michel Foucault*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University

appears to conflict with the anti-anthropological and anti-phenomenological struggle that characterizes Foucault's thought since the 1960s. Thus, commentators usually consider Foucault's writing on Binswanger as merely the result of a kind of youthful fascination for an anthropological psychiatry aiming to reach something like the verities of the human being. This is the reason why any attempt at bringing closer archaeology and *Daseinsanalyse* seems to be destined to fail. Besides, this is a position that is supported by Foucault's own later criticisms against the existential approach in psychopathology, at the time of the publication of *History of Madness* (1961). At the beginning of the 1960s, on the one hand, Foucault can no longer be satisfied with the historical uncriticalness of Binswanger's anthropological commitment, one which was limited to the individual history and therefore had an "ambiguous link with a psychiatric practice, which it simultaneously ignored and took for granted."[26] Faced with concrete historical psychiatric practices, existential anthropology now appears to Foucault to be something like a "mythical explanation."[27] This is the reason why in the second edition of *Mental Illness and Personality* (1954)—published in 1962 with the new title of *Mental Illness and Psychology*—the final chapters are no longer concerned with the "existential forms of illness," but with their "historical conditions," and Foucault goes so far as to conclude that "it is only in history that one can discover the sole concrete a priori from which mental illness draws, with the empty opening up of its possibility, its necessary figures."[28] On the other

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Press, 1991. See also Roland Kuhn, "L'essai de Ludwig Binswanger 'Le rêve et l'existence' et sa signification pour la psychothérapie," in *Des interprétations du rêve. Psychanalyse, herméneutique, Daseinsanalyse*, ed. by Hervé Mésot, Paris: PUF, 2001, 153–164). The correspondence between Foucault and Binswanger is now kept in the Binswanger Archive of the University of Tübingen (Germany). Some letters—translated into Italian by Chantal Marazia—have been published in the on line journal: *Pol.it. The Italian on Line Psychiatric Magazine* (http://www.psychiatryonline.it/ital/chantal2004.htm), section "Epistemology and History," directed by Mario Galzigna.

[26] Michel Foucault, "Préface" to *History of Sexuality*, in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow, New York: Pantheon Books, 1984, 333–339, 334.

[27] Michel Foucault, *Maladie mentale et psychologie*, Paris: PUF 1962, 101. (English transl. by Alan Sheridan, *Mental Illness and Psychology*, Berkley etc.: University of California Press, 1987, 85).

[28] Ibid. Foucault concludes the first part of *Mental Illness and Psychology* by arguing that "if this subjectivity of the insane is both a call to and an abandonment of the world, is it not

hand, Foucault can no longer accept the project of building an anthropology, a project that he had strongly opposed in his complementary dissertation of 1960 on Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*,[29] and which will be later the main polemic target of *The Order of Things*.[30]

Still, I think it is worth coming back to Foucault's interest in Binswanger's phenomenological approach and considering if it is possible to recognize in some points a coherence or continuity between it and the archaeological project. One should consider first that phenomenological psychopathology had a strategic philosophical importance in France since the 1920s for many of the most meaningful figures of Foucault's philosophical education. For instance, consider the role Georges Canguilhem acknowledges to the phenomenological approach of psychiatrists like Daniel Lagache, Eugène Minkowski, and Henry Ey in order to account for the normative conception of the pathological as it is outlined in his thesis of 1943 *On the Normal and the Pathological*.[31] But one should also consider the importance that psychopathological research has for the École normale's philosophers in the second half of the 1940s, at the time when Foucault is a student and Georges Gusdorf and Louis Althusser are philosophy lecturers and organize conferences and encounters with some of the most meaningful psychiatrists of the time, including Georges Daumézon, Julian de Ajuriaguerra, Henry Ey or Jacques

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of the world itself that we should ask the secret of its enigmatic status?" (69/56.) The reference to the concept of "world" is quite ironic here, since this concept—as I will show later—is central in Binswanger's existential psychiatry, whose aim was exactly to inquiry into the patients' "world project," a concept taken by Binswanger from Heidegger's *Dasein* or "being-in-the-world."

[29] Michel Foucault, "Introduction à l'*Anthropologie*" (1961), in Immanuel Kant, *Anthropologie d'un point de vue pragmatique*, Paris: Vrin, 2008. (English transl. by Roberto Nigro and Kate Briggs, *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2008.)

[30] On this point, see in particular Béatrice Han's *Foucault's Critical Project*, op. cit.; and "Foucault and Heidegger on Kant and Finitude," in Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, ed., *Foucault and Heidegger: Critical Encounters*, Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002, 127–162.

[31] Georges Canguilhem, *Essai sur quelques problèmes concernant le normal et le pathologique*, Clermont-Ferrand: La Montagne, 1943, Part II: *Y-a-t-il des sciences du normal et du pathologique?*, chap. 1: *Introduction au problème*. (English transl. by C. R. Fawcett, *On the Normal and the Pathological,* Dordrecht, Boston: Reidel, 1978).

Lacan.[32] Jean Hyppolite, when he becomes the director of the École normale in 1954, is also strongly convinced of the philosophical role that research in psychopathology could play for philosophy, and he frequently discusses with Foucault the essays that the latter publishes in the same year: *Mental Illness and Personality*, and the Introduction to Binswanger. Furthermore, at this time Foucault reads Lacan's writings, and it seems that he also attends some of his lectures at Sainte-Anne hospital.[33] Now, it is worth emphasizing that Lacan was among one of the first psychiatrists in France—from the beginning of the 1930s until at least the first half of the 1940s—to adopt in psychopathology the phenomenological approach of Binswanger and Karl Jaspers.[34]

It is exactly within this context that Foucault reflects upon the problem of madness throughout the 1950s. In fact, despite his objections he ends up addressing the phenomenological psychopathology in 1961, his *History of Madness* still owes a lot to the phenomenological perspective. First, one should compare Foucault's intention of writing the history of "madness" before any psychopathological conceptualization, to the psychiatric-phenomenological project of approaching the mental disease by considering it as non-scientific phenomenon, independently from any clinical classification and before any medical appropriation, as a "vital and human truth." A truth—according to Minkowski's words—"of which history could grasp only what it can understand 'historically,' and that it is far from being the whole."[35] Similarly, Foucault aims to trace the "degree zero of the history" where madness "was undifferentiated experience"[36] and "still remains for us the mode of access to the natural truth of man."[37] But, while Minkowski, faced with this "essentially human madness" that "affects the human being's destiny by excluding him from the living beings' community,"[38] opted for reforming psychiatry by giving it an anthropological turn,[39] Foucault prefers to investigate the phenomenon of the exclusion, that is "that other trick through which men, the gesture of sovereign reason that locks up their neighbor, communicate and recognize each other in the merciless language of non-madness."[40] Thus, Foucault ends up denouncing *any* kind of psychiatry, since "if carried back to its roots, the psychology of madness would appear to be not the mastery of mental illness and hence the possibility of its disappearance, but the destruction of psychology itself and the discovery of that essential, non-psychological because nonmoralizable relation that is the relation between Reason and Unreason."[41]

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[32] For all these biographical accounts, see Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, op. cit.

[33] According to Maurice Pinguet, Foucault attended Lacan's seminar at Sainte-Anne hospital in 1953 ("Les années d'apprentissage," *Le Débat*, 41 (1986): 122–131, 125). David Macey, in his biography of Foucault, mentions the French psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu, who stated that he himself attended Lacan's lecture together with Foucault, although unfortunately he does not specify which one. (*The Lives of Michel Foucault: A Biography*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1993).

[34] On this point, see Henning Schmidgen, "Fortunes diverses. L'œuvre de jeunesse de Jacques Lacan et la phénoménologie," *Psychanalyse à l'université*, 19, 76 (1994): 111–134.

[35] Eugène Minkowski, "Psychiatrie et métaphysique. A la recherche de l'humain et du vécu," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 52 (1947): 333–358, 339.

[36] Michel Foucault, "Préface" to *Folie et déraison*, Paris: Plon, 1961; *Dits et écrits*, op. cit., vol. 1, n. 4, 159–167: 159. (English transl. by Jonathan Murphy and Jean Khalfa, "Preface to the 1961 edition," *History of Madness*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, XXVII.)

It is a position that, at the time of publication of *History and Madness*, roused the reaction of the group of psychiatrists of *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, a journal that—since its foundation in 1925—had a fundamental role in supporting the existential stream of psychiatry in France,[42] thereby becoming the election platform for all French psychiatrists who aimed to develop the phenomenological approach to psychopathology. The leading figure of the group, Henri Ey, accused Foucault's intellectual position of being "ideological," and he considered such an "archeological" way of "killing psychiatry" to be inconsistent with Foucault's early interest in "the fundamental problems of psychopathology."[43] Yet, on this same occasion, Eugène Minkowski recalled Foucault's Introduction to "Dream and Existence" and he maintained that one should consider it as fundamental "in order to situate Foucault's thought."[44] I think this call to situate or contextualize Foucault's work is valuable if we want to understand the sense of Foucault's reading of phenomenological psychiatry and, consequently, the meaning this kind of call to phenomenology has at the origin of Foucault's archaeological research.

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[37] Michel Foucault, *Mental Illness and Psychology,* 88/74.

[38] Eugène Minkowski, "Psychiatrie et métaphysique," 339–340: "Elle [la folie] se traduit par une brèche, profonde et irréparable à première vue. Mais placé en face de l'un de nos semblables, quel qu'il soit, nous ne saurions nous contenter de l'idée d'une brèche comme telle, ni renoncer à voir en lui un "semblable". [...] Et c'est ainsi que naît le désir de réduire la brèche au strict minimum [...]. Et là prend naissance le courant, non pas philanthropique, mais anthropologique de la psychiatrie."

[39] On this point, see also Henri Ey, "La 'folie' et les valeurs humains" (1945), in his Études psychiatriques, vol. 1, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer & Cie, 1948, 2nd ed. 1952, 15–21; and "Anthropologie du malade mental," *Esprit*, 20, 197 (1952): 891–896.

[40] Michel Foucault, "Preface to the 1961 edition," 159/XXVII.

[41] Michel Foucault, *Mental Illness and Psychology*, 89/74.

[42] See the "Avant propos" of the first issue of the journal, by Angelo Hesnard and René Laforgue: *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 1 (1925), 7. It is precisely *L'Évolution psychiatrique* that published in 1938 (10, 1, 3–34) the first article of Binswanger in French: *La conception de l'homme, chez Freud, à la lumière de l'anthropologie philosophique*, transl. by Hans Pollnow.

The compatibility between the existential approach in psychiatry and Foucault's archaeology has been indirectly argued also by another French psychiatrist, who had a great role in developing the phenomenological approach in France: Georges Lanteri-Laura. Lanteri-Laura starts by wandering about the issues of the stream of the "anti-psychiatry," a movement that, since its origins in the 1960s, has linked together the existential tradition of psychiatry and Foucault's archaeological analysis.[45] He maintains that phenomenology lent to anti-psychiatry its skills and issues, insofar as it did not present itself as a doctrine, but rather as an "attitude" able to "put in parentheses any preliminary theoretical position" towards any established

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[43] See Henry Ey's opening speech to the "Journées annuelles de l'Évolution *psychiatrique*", 6–7 décembre 1969: "La conception idéologique de l'*Histoire de la folie* de Michel Foucault," *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 36, 2 (1971): 225. Henry Ey had written a review of the French translation of Binswanger's "Dream and Existence" in 1956, and he had described Foucault's Introduction as "great and substantial" ("Rêve et existence", *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 21, 1956: 109–118).

[44] "La conception idéologique de l'*Histoire de la folie*," 288.

[45] It would be probably an exaggeration to affirm—as the French philosopher Henri Maldiney has done—that "if the phenomenological attitude had prevailed in psychiatry, the anti-psychiatry would not be born" ("Psychose et presence," 1976, in his *Penser l'homme et la folie*. *A la lumière de l'analyse existentielle et de l'analyse du destin*, Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1991, 2nd ed. 1997, 5–82, 9). Yet, one should admit that existential psychiatry had an overriding place in the works of such "anti-psychiatrists" as Roland Laing and David Cooper, that refer explicitly to the projects of, respectively, Karl Jaspers, Eugène Minkowski, and Ludwig Binswanger. Just think, for instance, of the subtitle of Laing's main work: *An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (London, Tavistock, 1960), or the title of the collection in which appeared in 1964 Laing and Cooper's *Reason and Violence*: "Studies in Existential Analysis and Phenomenology." One could mention also the Italian psychiatrist Franco Basaglia, who linked together existential psychiatry and Foucault's work (see his works of the period 1953–1968: *Scritti*, Torino: Einaudi, 1981–82, ed. by Franca Ongaro Basaglia, vol. 1: *Dalla psichiatria fenomenologica all'esperienza di Gorizia*).

(reductive) system of knowledge.[46] Hence, phenomenology would formulate the need to doubt the validity of any interpretation intended as the "reductive choice" performed on a subject, which should be considered instead from an historical perspective. From this point of view, Foucault's essay of 1954 on Binswanger shares with *The History of Madness* such a phenomenological need, to the extent that it refuses to conceive the forms of existence and their expressions from the perspective of a science "of the order of positive knowledge" (DIE 66/32). Through Binswanger, Foucault clearly expresses the phenomenological project of overcoming at once "science" and "speculation," in order to let the phenomena appear, rather than tracing them back to a given order of meanings or categories. As Foucault himself makes clear in 1980, if "reading what has been defined 'existential analysis' or 'phenomenological psychiatry' certainly was important for [him] at a period when he was working in psychiatric hospitals," it is because such a current showed him "something different to counterbalance the traditional grids of the medical gaze."[47] Thus, this archaeology, that ends up criticizing phenomenological psychiatry, locates in its turn the grids that rule the different ways of experiencing reality as well as the systems of orientation of the gaze that delimit and classify it.

Furthermore, in another of his last writings—the Preface to the American edition of his *History of Sexuality*—Foucault takes up again his early work on Binswanger and explicitly asserts that:

> To study forms of experience in this way—in their history—is an idea that originated with an earlier project, in which I made use of the *methods*

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[46] Georges Lanteri-Laura, "Le Voyage dans l'anti-psychiatrie anglaise," *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 61, 3 (1996): 621–633, 623. A similar remark has been done by Todd May in regard to Foucault's career itself, in order to find a common thread between the early writings on phenomenology and the later political works. According to May, what remains continuous throughout Foucault's career is an underlying non-reductive approach to the questions: "What are we? What might we be?" ("Foucault's Relation to Phenomenology," 307–308: "As Foucault's thought matures, the character of what is 'heavy and oppressive' changes. But what is at issue—who we are, who we might be—remains the same. In the end, Foucault leaves phenomenology, but the spirit of phenomenology does not leave him.")

[47] Michel Foucault, *Entretien avec Michel Foucault* (1980), *Dits et écrits*, vol. IV, n. 281, 41–95, 41. English transl. by R. James Goldstein and James Cascaito, *Remarks on Marx. Conversation with Duccio Trombadori*, New York: Semiotext(e), 1991, 72.

> of existential analysis in the field of psychiatry and in the domain of "mental illness".[48]

This is obviously not a matter of taking such a statement textually. Yet, I believe that this way of emphasizing the methodological meaning of the phenomenological psychiatry, at the early stages of archaeology, could somehow orientate an inquiry into Foucault's relation to phenomenology.

I now propose to again take up Minkowski's suggestion about the expediency of situating Foucault's archaeology of madness within the theoretical context of the Introduction to "Dream and Existence." I consider it to be highly relevant that it is Minkowski who makes this remark, since Minkowski was one of the first in France to refer explicitly to the work of Ludwig Binswanger, since his early writings of the 1920s, with whom he shared the project of reforming psychopathology according to the "new orientation" that phenomenology could give to it.[49] And it is Minkowski again who—in the early 1950s—stressed the expediency of translating into French the works of his Swiss colleague in order to thereby introduce the "existential analysis" in the context of French psychiatry.[50] One should be reminded, in this respect, that the Introduction to "Dream and Existence" of 1954 is not an isolated case among Foucault's works, since the philosopher later worked on the French translation of Binswanger's clinical case of Suzanne Urban in 1957.[51]

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[48] Michel Foucault, "Preface" to the *History of Sexuality*, in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow, New York: Pantheon Books 1984, 333–339; *Dits et* écrits, vol. IV, n. 340: *Préface à l' "Histoire de la sexualité"*, 578–584, p. 579. The italic is mine.

[49] Minkowski presented his first phenomenological essay ("Étude psychologique et analyse phénoménologique d'un cas de mélancolie schizophrénique") in 1922 at the 63rd session of the "*Schweizer Verein für Psychiatrie*" in Zürich, the same occasion in which Binswanger presented his lecture *On Phenomenology* (*Über Phänomenologie*). There are many references to Binswanger throughout the work of Minkowski: See "La genèse de la notion de schizophrénie et ses caractères essentiels," *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 1 (1925): 193–236; *La schizophrénie. Psychopathologie des schizoïdes et des schizophrènes*, Paris: Payot 1927; Desclée de Brouwer, 1953; *Le temps vécu. Études phénoménologiques et psychopathologiques*, Paris: d'Artrey 1933, 285; "Phénoménologie et analyse existentielle en psychopathologie," *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 1 (1948): 137–185; "Le contact humain," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 55, 2 (1950): 113–127; "Les notions bleulériennes: voie d'accès aux analyses phénoménologiques et existentielles," *Annales Médico-Psychologiques*, 15, 2 (1957): 833–844.

[50] Eugène Minkowski, *La Schizophrénie* (1953), 237. See also J. H. van Den Berg, "Bref exposé de la position phénoménologique en psychiatrie," *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 2 (1947): 23–41.

Actually, with the exception of Minkowski's references during the 1920s, Binswanger's work in France begins to be known only during the 1940s, and—interestingly—not only within the field of clinical psychopathology, but in the context of a philosophical-epistemological problematization of psychology and the various "explanatory idols" by which it was attempting at grasping the "human reality."[52] I refer here to Jean-Paul Sartre's criticism of the postulates of empirical psychology as it appears in the "phenomenological ontology" of 1943 (*Being and Nothingness*), although the reference to Binswanger's *Daseinsanalyse* is not explicit in his outline of an "existential psychoanalysis," and despite Sartre's belief that "this psychoanalysis has not yet found its Freud."[53] But above all, one should refer to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945). This work refers in turn to Binswanger's phenomenological approach, and presents it by making use of Sartre's expression: "existential psychoanalysis."[54] Yet, differently from Sartre, Merleau-Ponty distances the concept of "existence" from any implication with the concept of "consciousness," and analyzes it within the context of a wider problematization of the experience of the "lived body" in the phenomenon of perception. Now, Merleau-Ponty's way of employing Binswanger's methodological approach for his own phenomenological purpose appears to me to be very important in order to grasp not only Foucault's own reading of Binswanger, but also the role that this early interest in phenomenological psychiatry plays throughout the course of Foucault's thought.

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[51] Ludwig Binswanger, "Studien zum Schizophrenieproblem: Der Fall Suzanne Urban" (1952–53), *Ausgewählte Werke*, vol. 4: *Der Mensch in der Psychiatrie*, ed. by Alice Holzhey-Kunz, Heidelberg, Asanger, 1994, 210–332; French transl. by Jacqueline Verdeaux, Roland Kuhn and Michel Foucault, *Le cas Suzanne Urban. Étude sur la schizophrénie*, Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1957 (Paris: Gérard Monfort, 1988, 2002).

[52] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'être et le néant. Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, Paris: Gallimard, 1943, Part IV, Chap. 2-II: "La Psychanalyse existentielle," 620. (English transl. by Hazel E. Barnes, *Being and Nothingness. An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, London: Methuen & Co., 1957, Part IV, Chap. 2-II: "Existential Psychoanalysis," 559).

[53] Ibid., p. 620 (575).

[54] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris: Gallimard 1945, 187. English transl. by Colin Smith, *Phenomenology of Perception*, London, New York: Routledge 2002, 161. Actually Binswanger has never used the expression "existential psychoanalysis" for characterizing his psychiatric approach. The Binswanger's works to which Merleau-Ponty refers are: *Über Psychotherapie* (1935); *Traum und Existenz*, (1930); *Über Ideenflucht* (1932); *Das Raumprobleme in der Psychopathologie* (1933).

Like Binswanger, Merleau-Ponty conceives the notions of "expression" and "meaning" as the "direction" or the "embodied sense" according to which existence realizes itself as an irreducible whole of body and world. He presents this argument by giving an example of a clinical case of Binswanger, that of a young girl who lost the use of speech. According to Merleau-Ponty, what characterizes the phenomenological-existential approach is its attitude towards the phenomenon, in this case the symptom: instead of looking for the hidden cause (internal or external) or meaning of it, the phenomenologist explains it by a "return to existence" that consists in dwelling upon its "modalities" or "forms." Now, according to the phenomenologist these forms actually *are* already the phenomenon's explication, so the loss of speech *is* the refuse of co-existence. In other words, the expression is already what it signifies, the sign "does not convey its significance, it is filled with it."[55] The phenomenological or existential analysis thus works within the plan of immanence of the phenomenon, and it is exactly this methodological attitude which characterizes Merleau-Ponty's approach to experience.

Now, the concern of liberating expression from the grip of a pure "theory of meaning" also characterizes Foucault's approach to the themes of "meaning" and "expression" as it is outlined in the Introduction to "Dream and Existence." Here Foucault in his turn distinguishes between "image" and "expression" or poetic imagination, and he maintains that the latter does not find its greatest expansion "where it finds the greatest number of substitutes for reality, where it invents the most duplications and metaphors, but, on the contrary, where it best restores presence to itself—where the proliferation of analogies well up, and where the metaphors by neutralizing each other, restore the depth to immediacy" (DIE 115–116/71–72). Foucault's argument here is very close not only to Merleau-Ponty's approach, but also to the arguments outlined by both Minkowski and Lacan during the 1930s, when they claimed the immediacy of the phenomenon or the expression against any hermeneutical approach intended to discover in it a hidden meaning.[56] So, what draws Foucault's attention to the existential analysis in the middle of the 1950s is not only its "basic opposition to any science of human facts of the order of positive knowledge, experimental analysis, and naturalistic reflection" (DIE 66/32) but its distance from a philosophical approach that needs to go *beyond* or *before* the phenomena in order to explain them.[57] It is exactly this call to immanence that Foucault emphasizes when, in the 1980s, he recalls the "methods" of phenomenological psychiatry as a way of approaching the forms of experience "in their history," namely, in their concreteness. By turning to Binswanger, Foucault suggests, like Merleau-Ponty before him, the opportunity of looking at phenomenology not from a doctrinal perspective, but only as a "philosophy which puts essences back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their 'facticity'".[58] In this sense, the phenomenological approach would consist, for the young Foucault, in the "analysis of the immanent meaning of any lived experience."[59]

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[55] *Phenomenology of Perception*, 187/161. On this point, see Ludwig Binswanger, *Le cas Suzanne Urban*, 67: "Dans la métaphore théâtrale d'Ellen West, nous ne verrons pas seulement une métaphore au sens psychologique et poétique, une image évocatrice, mais surtout une expression immédiate verbale du mode de son être dans le monde."

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[56] See in particular Eugène Minkowski, *Vers une cosmologie. Fragments philosophiques*, Paris: Montaigne, 1936, 256: "Quant au concept du symbole, à l'instar de la métaphore, il disjoint trop à notre gré ce qui symbolise et ce qui est symbolisé, et fait ainsi violence aux données immédiates que nous avons devant nous." As regards Lacan, I refer here to his first writings on paranoia, that analyze the psychopathological expression not from a "semantic," but from a "syntactic" perspective. See Lacan's "Le problème du style et la conception psychiatrique des formes paranoïaques de l'expérience," in his *De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité*, Paris: Le François, 1932, Seuil, 1975, 387.

[57] The two targets of Foucault's criticism, in his essay on Binswanger, are Freud's interpretation of dreams and Husserl's eidetic of consciousness. At the origin of the defects of Freudian theory Foucault sees "an inadequate elaboration of the notion of symbol: Freud takes the symbol as merely the tangential point where, for an instant, the limpid meaning joins with the material of the images taken as a transformed and transformable residue of perception. The symbol is that surface of contact, that film, which separates, as it joins, an inner world and an external world" (DIE 72/36). Thus, psychoanalysis has exhausted image in the multiplicity of meanings, but "the imaginary world has its own laws, its specific structures, and image is somewhat more than the immediate fulfillment of meaning" (70/35). The criticism against Husserl's phenomenology is more moderate. According to Foucault, while the Freudian analysis sees only an artificial connection—the symbol—between meaning and expression, "phenomenology, on the contrary, enables one to recapture the meaning in the context of the expressive act which founds it" (DIE 78/41), thereby "reinstat[ing] acts of expression in their fullness" (DIE 79/42). Thus, phenomenology would show the possibility of developing itself towards a "theory of expression." Nevertheless, even though phenomenology is able to reinstate the act of meaning in its expressive base, "it cut [it] off from any form of objective indication. No external context can restore it in its truth," so there is no possibility of a "real encounter" with time, space, and others (ibid). This is why, Foucault concludes, the expression cannot be understood "along the lines of pure phenomenology."

So, what emerges from this analysis, and—more generally—from the interest of these French philosophers in phenomenological psychiatry, is a methodological reading of German phenomenology that goes beyond the traditional philosophical concerns of gnoseology and ontology. Hence, during the first half of the 20th century in France, phenomenology is not intended to be just a philosophical doctrine to be accepted or rejected as a whole, nor does it coincide outright with Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, or with Heidegger's phenomenological ontology. For this same reason, it is also not intended to be a means for doubting the plausibility of the empirical sciences from a purely philosophical point of view. The phenomenological "attitude" is rather employed by these same sciences as a methodological tool by which they could define and grasp better, "from inside," their own objects.

One should consider, in this respect, that the phenomenological criterion of immanence, at that time, becomes in France the theoretical core not only of a certain part of psychiatry, but also of a part of biology whose goal is to approach life not by an extrinsic rationality, but from the immanent normativity of life itself. It is worth remarking, for instance, that in 1946 the French psychiatrist Daniel Lagache considered Canguilhem's thesis on *The Normal and the Pathological* as an "anthropological phenomenology," and he concluded by urging both psychology and biology to become aware of the potential implications of considering the "position of man in the world."[60] Canguilhem himself, indeed, in a paper written in 1947 on the "biological philosophy," shows the expediency of conceiving biology not just as "the universe of science, objectivity, and *hors de soi*" as opposed to the "universe of consciousness, subjectivity, value, and meaning",[61] but as a research that would be able to grasp all these concepts as emerging as the intrinsic determinations of the organism. It is exactly the immanence of the philosophical concepts to the living being, that Canguilhem claims in his harangue against rationalism, or what he calls "a philosophy of *après coup*."[62] And this is also the sense of his almost Heideggerian argument, according to which man distinguishes himself from plants and animals to the extent that he "inhabits the world."[63]

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[58] Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, 7. (*Phenomenology of Perception*, VII).

[59] Michel Foucault, *La psychologie de 1850 à 1950*, in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 1, 127.

[60] Daniel Lagache, "Le normal et le pathologique d'après Georges Canguilhem," *Bulletin de la Faculté des Lettres de Strasbourg*, 24 (1946): 117–130, see 129–130.

[61] Georges Canguilhem, "Note sur la situation faite en France à la philosophie biologique," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 52 (1947): 322–332. It is worth remarking that this paper preceded a contribution of Eugène Minkowski on "Psychiatrie et métaphysique. A la recherche de l'humain et du vécu" (333–358).

Foucault will describe very well the concern of this philosophical biology in 1978, in his Introduction to Canguilhem—namely, the text where he outlines the two lineages of the French way of receiving phenomenology—where he recognizes the specificity of the biologist's knowledge in that it examines "a type of object to which he himself belongs, since he lives and since he [...] develops this nature of the living in an activity of knowledge."[64] It is exactly this concurrence of the philosophical investigation with its "objects" that Merleau-Ponty emphasizes in 1947, in the same issue of the *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* where Canguilhem publishes his "Note" on philosophical biology. He writes: "The universality of knowledge is no longer guaranteed in each of us by that stronghold of absolute (*a priori*) consciousness," neither is it guaranteed by "the evidence of the object."[65] "The germ of universality," is to be found "in the thing where our perception places us."[66] This means that the "universality" for which philosophical research looks is always embodied and situated in a historical existence; it is to be found in existence as experiencing, living, being in the world, or, to quote Foucault's essay on Binswanger, "existence which is living itself and is experiencing itself, which recognizes itself or loses itself, in a world that is at once the plenitude of its own project and the 'element' of its situation" (DIE 66/32). Hence, Merleau-Ponty concludes, the only a priori the philosopher can turn to in his analysis of experience is something like an "*a priori of the species*," an a priori that coincides with the concrete, historical "normative structure" of being in the world. This is an a priori that Merleau-Ponty borrows from the Gestalt theory, and

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[62] Georges Canguilhem, "Note sur la situation faite en France à la philosophie biologique," 327.

[63] Georges Canguilhem, *Le normal et le pathologique*, 116 (*On the Normal and the Pathological*, 104); *Le vivant et son milieu* (1946–47), in his *La connaissance de la vie*, Paris: Hachette, 1952 (Vrin, 1965), 129–154 (English transl. "The Living and Its Milieu," in his *Knowledge of Life*, transl. by Stefanos Geroulanos and Daniela Ginsburg, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, 98–120).

[64] Michel Foucault, "Introduction" to Georges Canguilhem, *On the Normal and the Pathological*, Boston: D. Riedel, 1978, IX–XX. (*Dits et* écrits, vol. 3, 440).

[65] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Le métaphysique dans l'homme," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 52, 3–4 (1947), 290–307; also, in his *Sens et non sens*, Paris: Gallimard 1996, 102–119, 106 (English translation by Hubert Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus, "The Metaphysical in Man," in *Sense and Non-Sense*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964, 83–98, 93).

[66] Ibid.

> of which [man] forms no distinct concept but which he puts together as an experienced pianist deciphers an unknown piece of music: without himself grasping the motives of each gesture or each operation, without being able to bring to the surface of consciousness all the sediment of knowledge which he is using at that moment.[67]

Here, Merleau-Ponty's point is that the "facts" of behavior correspond to a structure or norm, and that this norm is "inscribed in the facts themselves."[68] That means that this "internal rule" which lets these facts appear "is not the external unfolding of a pre-existing reason," but coincides with this same appearance ("*it is the very appearance of the world and not the condition of its possibility; it is the birth of a norm and is not realized according to a norm*").[69] Now, such a concrete a priori conceived as the norm of the phenomena and targeted to uncover in the experience itself the principle of its own justification is the methodological core of Binswanger's phenomenological approach. As I will show later, Binswanger, like Merleau-Ponty, emphasizes the common methodological thread between the phenomenological attitude towards phenomena and a biology that inquires into the living being starting from its immanent normativity.

I believe that this reference to biology is crucial in order to understand the methodological meaning the French philosophers give to phenomenology at the moment they receive and rework it during the first half of the 20th century. It is worth remarking, on this point, that it is exactly in this scientific and philosophical context that the young Foucault, in 1958, translates into French the main work of the German physiologist Viktor von Weizsäcker: *Der Gestaltkreis: Theorie der Einheit von Wahrnehmen und Bewegen* (1940),[70] a work that, at once, claimed its closeness to the phenomenological attitude towards existence and put the idea of the "inner normativity" of life at the heart of the study of the living being and the structure of its being in the world. Now, this work, together with Kurt Goldstein's *Der Aufbau des Organismus* (1934),[71] had already been the subject of Merleau-Ponty's research in the 1940s (*La structure du comportement*; *Phénoménologie de la perception*), and it was published in the same collection of Binswanger's French translations ("Dream and Existence" and the clinical case of *Suzanne Urban*).[72]

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *La structure du comportement*, Paris: PUF, 1942, 134. (English transl. by Alden L. Fisher, *The Structure of Behavior*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1965, 123).

[69] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la Perception*, op. cit., 88. (*Phenomenology of Perception*, 61).

I think this theoretical context is fundamental not only in order to understand Foucault's own reading of Binswanger's project during the 1950s, but also in order to find a common thread between Foucault's early interest in phenomenological psychiatry and archaeology. In what follows I dwell first upon Binswanger's methodology, and in particular on his approach to the phenomenological concept of "a priori." I will try then to show that

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[70] Viktor von Weizsäcker, *Der Gestaltkreis: Theorie der Einheit von Wahrnehmen und Bewegen*, Leipzig: Thieme 1940 (4th ed. Stuttgart: Thieme, 1948; *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Dieter Janz, Wilhelm Rimpau, Walter Schindler, Peter Achilles, Mechthilde Kütemeyer, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp 1997.) French transl. by Michel Foucault and Daniel Rocher, *Le cycle de la structure*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1958. The French edition of this work was preceded by a Preface written by the French psychiatrist Henri Ey. See also Henri Ey, "A propos de 'Cycle de la structure' de V. von Weizsäcker", *L'Évolution Psychiatrique*, 2 (1957): 379–389.

[71] Kurt Goldstein, *Der Aufbau des Organismus. Einführung in die Biologie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Erfahrungen am kranken Menschen*, Haag: M. Nijhoff 1934. French transl. by E. Burckhardt and Jean Kuntz, *La structure de l'organisme. Introduction à la biologie à partir de la pathologie humaine*, Paris: Gallimard, 1951. This work was published in the philosophical collection directed by Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. (English transl. *The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man,* New York: American Book Co., 1939; Zone Books, 1995).

[72] To this same collection belonged also the French translation of one of the main works of the Dutch physiologist Frederik J. J. Buytendijk: *Attitudes et mouvements: étude fonctionnelle du mouvement humain* (transl. by L. van Haecht, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1957), prefaced by Minkowski, and a work on the Rorschach test by Roland Kuhn, the Swiss psychiatrist thanks to whom Foucault met Binswanger in the early 1950s: *Über Maskendeutungen im Rorschachschen Versuch*, Basel: Karger, 1944, 1954; French transl. by Jacqueline Verdeaux, *Phénoménologie du masque à travers le test de Rorschach*, Paris: Desclée, de Brouwer 1957.

Binswanger's own approach to this concept, intended as the immanent condition of possibility of experience, is compatible, from a methodological point of view, with Foucault's archaeological project of uncovering, in a given system of knowledge, the "conditions which define, *together with its historical possibility*, the domain of its experience and the structure of its rationality" (NC XI/XV).

A paradoxical a priori

The main question at stake in Binswanger's commitment to phenomenology is a methodological one. From the beginning of the 1920s, Binswanger looks indeed for a scientific method that would let the psychiatrist link the analysis of the individual, historical, existences to the rational "form" that encompasses them and by which they could be explained. It is a matter of both respecting the individuality and concreteness of existence and going beyond its singular and contingent expressions in order to look for their conditions of possibility. According to Binswanger, these conditions of possibility of the phenomena are the principle or the "norm" that governs them. It is exactly in this sense that Binswanger's reading of, respectively, Husserl's concept of "essence" (*Wesen*) and, later, Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* should be understood. So, Binswanger's reading of phenomenology consists less in the application of some phenomenological concepts to the field of empiric science than in a methodological use of them. The psychiatrist indeed employs these concepts as a kind of "systematic clue" to be used in order to understand the different basic forms or styles by which men organize and structure their "being-in-the-world" as a "world project."[73] Hence, *Dasein*, conceived as the "structure" of existence, could guide the psychiatrist through the various expressions of mental diseases, furnishing him with the "structural a priori" that let him understand and explain them, but also classify them from a scientific point of view.

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[73] Ludwig Binswanger, "Über die daseinsanalytische Forschungsrichtung in der Psychiatrie," *Schweizer Archiv für Psychiatrie und Neurologie*, vol. 57 (1946): 209–235; now in his *Ausgewählte Werke in vier Bänden*, vols. 1–4, ed. by Hans-Jürg Barun, Heidelberg: Asanger 1992–94, vol. 3, 231–57, 242. (English transl.: "The Existential Analysis School of Thought," in *Existence—A New Dimension in Psychiatry and Psychology*, ed. by Rollo May, Ernest Angel and Henri F. Ellenberger, New York: Basic Books, 1958, 191–212, 201).

This perspective is particularly clear in Binswanger's 1946 article on the existential approach in psychiatry. Here Binswanger explicitly states that, in the field of psychopathology, the concept of *Dasein*—that in Heidegger is an ontological thesis—should be employed by a "practical existential analysis" as a methodological tool or "thread" targeted to study the forms that structure the patients' world project. Hence, Binswanger conceives the *Dasein* as a "structure" functioning "according to a positive norm," a norm that one should consider on the basis of its expression as an action.[74] Now, it is worth remarking that at the same time of his theoretical commitment with Heidegger's philosophy, Binswanger emphasizes the "harmony between the *methodology* of the sciences of the spirit (*Geisteswissenschaften*), and the natural sciences."[75] In this respect, he mentions both Kurt Goldstein's and Viktor von Weizsäcker's conception of the biological normativity of behavior,[76] and he remarks with these authors that all the vital events, from their most elementary biological expressions, are not fixed responses to environmental stimuli, but the original creation of "forms" of behavior that function as "directions" for further future forms. These forms are the immanent conditions of possibility of the expressions of behavior. In other words, according to Binswanger, there is something in existence that cannot be reduced to its simple material facticity: it is the condition of the possibility of facticity, or its "a priori structure." Now, such an a priori structure is immanent to facticity, as it corresponds to its inner, normative organization.

Foucault gives a clear example of the *daseinsanalytical* concept of "a priori structure" in *Maladie mentale et personnalité*, where he presents the existential analysis of the structure of "anxiety," a structure that Binswanger had analyzed in particular in the clinical case of Suzanne Urban. Foucault describes this structure in terms of "a priori of existence,"[77] meaning that it is a form of experience that at once is both anchored to its individual and historical manifestations and cannot be thought *before* them, and also goes beyond them, in that it organizes and explains them, by giving the phenomena their norm. So, the "existential a priori" is "historical" in that it is inseparable from the phenomenon in which it manifests itself by furnishing it with its form. This is why Binswanger attaches a special importance to the dream and considers it as an expression of existence, insofar as the dream presents itself as the dramatization of this "a priori of existence" that Binswanger also calls the "sense-direction" (*Bedeutungsrichtung*) or the "spiritual trend" (*geistigen Tendenz*) of existence.[78] This is also the reason why Foucault—in his Introduction to "Dream and Existence"—remarks that the dream "anticipates," is "a prefiguring of history" (DIE 99/58). That is to say, in the "future perfect" represented by the dream the *a prioris* of existence present themselves as *actual* conditions of possibilities of history. Thus, Binswanger does not conceive dream as a phenomenon to be "interpreted," but as "leading-category" (*leitenden Kategorie*)[79] targeted to disentangle the "basic, a priori structures" of the pathological experiences.

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[74] Ludwig Binswanger, *Über Ideenflucht, Schweizer Archiv für Neurologie und Psychiatrie*, vol. 27, 2, 1932, 203–17; vol. 28, nos. 1–2, 1932, 18–26; 183–202; vol. 29, no. 1, 1932, 193ff.; vol. 30, no. 1, 1933; 68–85; now in his *Ausgewählte Werke in vier Bänden*, vol. 1, 2–231; published also as *Über Ideenflucht*, Zürich: Orel Füssli, 1933 (reprinted, New York: Garland 1980).

[75] Ludwig Binswanger, *Über Ideenflucht* (1992): 209.

[76] Ludwig Binswanger, "Über die daseinsanalytische Forschungsrichtung," 240 ("The Existential School of Thought," 198–199).

[77] Michel Foucault, *Maladie mentale et personnalité*, Paris: PUF, 1954, 54.

Here, Binswanger's reference to both Goldstein and Weizsäcker's medical anthropologies is again of the utmost importance, in that for them, too, the biological concept of "a priori structure" of behavior was targeted to explain the forms of the living being not on the basis of a causal past, but from the perspective of the future. In other words, even though these structures are "a priori"—they are "directions" of existence, leading-categories, so they are not yet actual—these a prioris emerge from the living being's history and cannot be conceived separately from this history. For it is a matter of "empirical a priori." It is exactly this model Binswanger has in mind when he turns to Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*. Thus, Heidegger's methodological intuition that "the question of existence never gets straightened out except through existing itself"[80] is declined by Binswanger in the field of psychological research, and the *Dasein* becomes the theoretical tool by which the psychiatrist uncovers, *in their history*, the a priori structures or the conditions of possibility of the various expressions of existence.

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[78] Ludwig Binswanger, *Wandlungen in der Auffassung und Deutung des Traumes*, Berlin: Springer, 1928, 108.

[79] Ibid., 38.

[80] Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, § 4, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. II, ed. by F.-W. von Herrmann, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann 1977, 12 (English transl. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, *Being and Time*, Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1962, 33).

This methodological approach to existence—one which moves from existence's concrete historical forms in order to explain these forms themselves—is exactly what drew the attention of the French philosophers towards Binswanger at a time when Canguilhem, by referring in turn to Kurt Goldstein, held that "the thought of the living must take from the living the idea of the living."[81] That is to say, the phenomenon of living cannot be explained but from inside, from the living itself. Therefore, it is no accident that Foucault focuses his attention on Weizsäcker at the same time he studies Binswanger. More than in a doctrinal or "existentialist" sense, phenomenology in this context is received by Foucault—through Binswanger—as a methodological direction that asked philosophy to study the forms of experience in their history, in their concrete expressions. On this basis, it is possible to understand better the sense of the repeated warnings that Foucault gives in his Introduction to "Dream and Existence," where he claims that "detouring through a more or less Heideggerian philosophy is not some initiatory rite which might open a door to the esotericism of the analysis of Dasein" (DIE 67/32–33). This is also the reason why he explicitly maintains that existential analysis—even though it looks for the "*a prioris* of existence"—does not refer anthropology to some *a priori* form of philosophical speculation" (DIE 66/32).[82]

I think that such an approach opens the way for conceiving transcendentality differently from the purely gnoseological transcendentality with which Foucault deals in his archaeological analyses of, respectively, the Kantian "analytic of truth," and Husserl's "constituting subjectivity." What Foucault outlines in his Introduction to Binswanger is the conception of a paradoxical a priori, a "structural" a priori that emerges from the concreteness of experience, before being theorized. It is a matter of a paradoxical transcendental that presents itself at the same time as a tool targeted *to diagnose* a particular existential configuration, and as the configuration principle *to be diagnosed* by means of such a diagnosis which is actually grounded on it. The emphasis that Foucault—in his presentation of Binswanger's analysis of dream—places on the future in order to show the (a priori) structures of existence is targeted exactly to point out this concurrence or simultaneity of reality and transcendentality: "The dream is *already* this *future* making itself," it "is not a later edition of a previous form, it *manifests* itself as the *coming-to-be*" (DIE 99/57–58). That is to say that the conditions of possibility of existence coincide with existence itself, with an "existence which makes itself through time, that existence in its movement toward the future" (DIE 99/58).

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[81] Georges Canguilhem, *La connaissance de la vie*, 13 (*Knowledge of Life*, XX).

[82] Interestingly enough, in these same years the French psychiatrist Henri Ey defines Heidegger's phenomenology in terms of "structural psychology" ("Le développement 'mécaniciste' de la psychiatrie à l'abri du dualisme 'cartésien'," in his *Études psychiatriques*, op. cit., vol. 1, 65).

Toward a historical epistemology

Thus, what attracted the young Foucault towards Binswanger – at a time when he was looking for something different from the alternative between pure phenomenology and Marxism's material causality[83] – is exactly the immanent way by which the existential analysis was able to explain experience by means of experience itself. Binswanger's approach indeed appeared as a thought that refused to lay the foundations of reality on a historical-material determination, on a constitutive subjectivity, or on some ontological speculation.

Even though it functions in a different context and presents different goals from clinical psychopathology, I believe that Foucault's archaeological concept of "historical a priori," from a theoretical point of view, presents a methodological affinity with the "structural a priori" outlined by Binswanger's *Daseinsanalyse*. Therefore, it is at a methodological level that one should consider the compatibility between Foucault's early work on Binswanger and the development of archaeology. The "history" to which Binswanger and Foucault each refer is certainly not the same: while the psychiatrist is concerned with the patients' individual life history, the "archaeologist of knowledge" aims at unraveling the epistemological changes and developments of sciences. Furthermore, the young Foucault's agreement with Binswanger was driven in part by something like the search for the verity of "man"'s existence, a search that, on the contrary, is strictly banned from the archaeological epistemological concerns. Yet, the way in which the two approaches inquire into phenomena—by means of a *historicized a priori*—appears to me to be still compatible. In other words, both Binswanger's existential analysis and Foucault's archaeology deal with and work out the problem of reconciling the historicity of phenomena and the transcendentality of the theoretical research. Just as Binswanger's "a priori of existence" was the actual form or the normative, structural condition of possibility of the phenomenon, so Foucault's historical a priori is "a condition of reality for statements," "the specific form of their mode of being." It is "the a priori of a history that is given" (AS 167/143). More precisely, it is phenomena's normativity: the "group of rules that are not imposed from the outside on the elements that they relate together; they are caught up in the very things that they connect" (AS 168/144).

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[83] Michel Foucault, "Structuralisme et poststructuralisme" (1983), *Dits et* écrits, vol 4, 431–462 (English transl. by J. Harding, "Structuralism and Post-Structuralism," in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. by Paul Rabinow, vol. 3: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. by James D. Faubion, New York: New Press, 1998, 433–458).

Such a concurrence or simultaneity between the conditions of reality and reality itself is why Foucault gives a theoretical account for the concept of historical a priori—in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*—only after he had already used it in *The Order of Things*. In this latter work, Foucault indeed presents it as the "organization," the "articulation," the "arrangement" or the "mode of being of the objects," the "structure" that "provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognized to be true."[84]

In this passage of *The Order of Things*, the concept of historical a priori is supposed to account for what Canguilhem—during those same years—had recognized as the epistemological distinction between the "true saying" (*dire vrai*), and the "to be in the true" (*dans le vrai*).[85] Many scholars have already pointed out what distinguishes Foucault's perspective from Canguilhem's.[86]

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[84] Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, 171 (*The Order of Things*, 155).

[85] See Georges Canguilhem, "Galilée: la signification de l'œuvre et la leçon de l'homme" (1964), in *Études d'histoire et de philosophie des sciences*, Paris: Vrin, 1968, 37–50.

[86] Étienne Balibar, "Science et vérité dans la philosophie de Georges Canguilhem," in *Georges Canguilhem, philosophes, historien des sciences*, ed. by the Collège International de Philosophie, Paris: Albin Michel, 1992, 58–76. Béatrice Han, *L'ontologie manqué de Michel Foucault*, 134–141 (*Foucault's Critical Project*, 79–85). François Delaporte, "Foucault, Epistemology and History," *Economy and Society*, 27/2–3 (1998): 285–297. Arnold Davidson, "On Epistemology and Archeology: From Canguilhem to Foucault," in his *The Emergence of Sexuality: Historical Epistemology and the Formation of Concepts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 192–206. Kevin Thompson, "Historicity and Transcendentality," 12–17.

I would rather note here that the first occurrence of the notion of "historical a priori" from Foucault appears in a article of the early 1950s, which is then published in 1957 as "La recherche scientifique et la psychologie."[87] In this paper, Foucault recognizes the main feature of psychology in that it can choose to be scientific or not. Different from sciences like physics or chemistry, which "emerge as possible research fields within an already scientific objectivity" (that is to say that they work in the frame of the "*dire vrai*"), psychology "does not articulate itself within the horizon of a science," "in the space of a science," "under the constellation of objectivity."[88] So psychology must decide about its own status. It is a necessary choice, since only to the extent that it opts for scientificity could psychology become "true psychology."[89] Now, what outlines the contour of this horizon within which the "status of truth" of a science like psychology can be defined is exactly the historical a priori. And yet, this a priori *is* the same horizon of which it maps out the conditions of possibility. In other words, the historical a priori is contemporaneous to the reality that it detects and describes, it emerges and expresses itself only by its functioning. That is why it should not be considered as an autonomous philosophical theme, but rather as an operational concept, a "diagnostic" or methodological tool. A tool that is finally able to answer Foucault's archeological demand for immanence, according to which "*the history of knowledge can be written only on the basis of what was contemporaneous with it*" (MC 221/207).

Hence, the historical a priori presents itself as an explication of the phenomenon that is always immanent to the phenomenon's description. This is the reason why I maintain that the historical a priori is a concept that answers to at least two of the main methodological concerns of phenomenology: first, what I called the "principle of immanence," according to which philosophical research should respect the phenomena and start from them in order to find their rationality; and secondly, the idea that phenomena are normative, and organize themselves according to a normative structure. Thus, Foucault's archaeology, from a methodological point of view, would

[87] Michel Foucault, "La recherche scientifique et la psychologie" (1957), *Dits et écrits*, vol. 1, 137–158.

[88] Ibid., 137–138.

[89] Ibid., 138.

correspond to the concerns of the phenomenological research. But, different from the purely philosophical phenomenology, it expands these concerns beyond the theory of knowledge (*connaissance*)—a theory working at the level of "*dire vrai*"—in order to study the historical emergence of knowledge as "*savoir*" (*être dans le vrai*). As Foucault explains in his *Birth of the Clinic*, archaeology presents itself as an epistemology that "defines not the *mode of knowledge*, but the *world of objects to be known*" (NC VI–VII/X).

Interestingly, in this same passage from *The Birth of the Clinic* Foucault employs a metaphor taken from the psychological field. With a critical reference to Gaston Bachelard's *The Formation of the Scientific Mind*,[90] Foucault asserts that what occurred to medical perception towards the end of the eighteenth century, "was not a 'psychoanalysis' of medical knowledge." He goes on to state that "'positive' medicine is not a medicine that has made an 'objectal' choice in favor of objectivity itself" (NC VI–VII/X), but a medicine that operates in an another "world of objects." Now, archaeology is interested in exactly such a world, that is, the "articulation of medical language and its object" (NC VII/XI)—an articulation which defines, "with its *historical possibility*, the *domain of its experience*" (NC XI/XV). Foucault emphasizes the fact that, between the articulation of the medical language and its object, "there can be no priority"(NC VII/XI), as words and things are contemporaneous. That is to say that at "the heart of things" there isn't any primary and ultimate truth-origin, any objective evidence, but a "penetrating, profound historicity" (MC 14/XXI).

Thus, Foucault distinguishes the gnoseological approach to knowledge (*connaissance*) from his own archaeological account for knowledge intended as "*savoir*." Now, it seems to me that such a distinction reflects at some points the way in which Foucault, in the 1950s, distinguished the theory of the objective meanings outlined by psychoanalysis from Binswanger's attention to the particular world or "world-project," within which meanings *can* mean what they mean, and they *actually* mean what they mean. What emerges from Foucault's position is a holist approach targeted to grasp the configuration of the "world" within which meanings are inscribed, that is, the global structure that rules the historical meanings of meanings, thereby furnishing them with their conditions of possibility.

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[90] Gaston Bachelard, *La formation de l'esprit scientifique: contribution à une psychanalyse de la connaissance objective*. Paris: Vrin, 1938, 2001. (English transl. by M. McAllester Jones, *The Formation of the Scientific Mind*, Manchester: Clinamen, 2001).

Hence Foucault's epistemology is historical in that it does not aim to penetrate the objective meanings of discourses, but "our own world of discourse" (AS 32–33/24). Now, I believe that such an "historical epistemology" maintains a strong methodological link with the phenomenological approach in psychopathology with which the young Foucault had dealt during the 1950s. So, like Binswanger's "Dream and Existence," Foucault's Introduction too, "brings us even more than it says" (DIE 68–69/34). And it brings us the idea that phenomenology could have its say in an epistemology which would not limit itself to a theory of knowledge (*Erkenntnistheorie*), or a general theory of science (*Wissenschaftslehre*), but which works together with the history of sciences.

I found quite interesting, in this respect, the way in which Kevin Thompson—in the above mentioned paper on "Historicity and Transcendentality"—considers Foucault's archaeology as working under the rubric of a "phenomenology of the concept." Such a phenomenology, according to Thompson, would go back to Jean Cavaillès' methodological reading of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, to the extent that Cavaillès's theory of science has opened "a new way of doing phenomenology, one that takes its bearings from the integration of the historical and the transcendental."[91] Still, I think that what Thompson calls the phenomenology of the concept, in Foucault, does not arise from a theoretical option for the historicity of the transcendental, but from a *methodological* one. As I have tried to show, Foucault's historical a priori is an operational concept, a tool that can be grasped only by its functioning. It is a concept that cannot be thought independently from those sciences that, at the same time, it structures, and from which it can be disentangled. The historicity of Foucault's a priori consists exactly in its contemporaneousness with these sciences, and not—as in the case of Cavaillès—in a theoretical intention of "accounting for the necessary intrinsic progress of scientific knowledge."[92] Foucault's historical epistemology accounts for a necessity that is not the necessity of logic and science, but of the reality "of a history that is given." Nor does such a necessity concern the "scientific" rationality of knowledge, since the level in which such a necessity is analyzed is not the level of objectivity. Actually, what the paradoxical concept of historical a priori points out is the concurrence of necessity and contingency: what Foucault's epistemology calls "historicity" is not the "progress" of scientific knowledge, but the concurrence, the contemporaneousness of rationality with the sciences that embody it.

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[91] See Kevin Thompson, "Historicity and Transcendentality," 11. Also David Webb recognizes the influence of Cavaillès in Foucault's concept of historical a priori: "Cavaillès, Husserl and the Historicity of Science," *Angelaki*, 8–3 (59–72).

[92] Ibid., 7.

For this reason, I contest equally Thompson's idea that Foucault would have been able to go beyond Canguilhem in that he has "moved from epistemology to archaeology."[93] In fact, if it is true—as Thompson rightly points out—that Foucault is not concerned, like Canguilhem, with "true saying," but with the principles that determine what is to be "in the true," this does not mean that, compared to Foucault, Canguilhem's approach is limited. According to Thompson, since the latter "remains within the internal parameters of its object," then it "fails to account for the changing nature of scientific knowledge as a whole," while "a phenomenology of the concept demands, then, that transcendentality and historicity be thought together."[94] I object to the thesis that Canguilhem's epistemology presents itself as an important attempt at historicizing the transcendental.

I contend that Canguilhem's choice of not going beyond the internal parameters of its object is exactly the methodological link between his approach and Foucault's archaeology. Indeed, Canguilhem's epistemology cannot be conceived separately from the history of science.[95] Most importantly, this history is immanent to the object itself. As Canguilhem maintains in his famous conference of 1966: "The history of sciences is the history of an object which *is* a history, which has a history, whereas science is the science of an object which is not history, which does not have a history."[96] This means that, even though Canguilhem analyzes the scientific objects at the level of "*dire vrai*," this analysis cannot be done independently from the "être *dans le vrai*," since it presupposes it. The fact that epistemology cannot be conceived independently from history of science indeed implies an original and important meaning of historicity. What makes the historicity of the scientific object, for Canguilhem, is not just the fact that sciences develop and change along the time, but the fact that the scientific object is an "object *of* the history of science." This means also that, in the last analysis, the historicity of such an object consists in its contemporaneousness with the historian that analyzes it. This is the reason why it is not possible to go beyond "the internal parameters" of the object, and this is what makes the political sense of Canguilhem's historical epistemology.[97]

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[93] Ibid., 12.

[94] Ibid., p. 15.

[95] See Georges Canguilhem, "L'objet de l'histoire des sciences," in his *Études d'histoire et de philosophie des sciences*, Paris: Vrin, 1968, 9–23, 12. (English transl. by Mary Tiles, "The Object of the History of Sciences," in *Continental Philosophy of Science*, ed. by Gary Gutting, Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, 198–207, 200: "Without relation to a history of sciences an epistemology would be a less important labor which was completely superfluous to the science of which it pretends to speak.")

Sure enough, compared to Canguilhem, Foucault's archaeology widens the frame of the inquiry of epistemology, in that it moves from the parameters of the objects to the wider frames of the epochs. Yet, the methodological principle of the two analyses is the same, that is, an immanent inquiry into a reality in which the *conditions* of knowledge are at the same time *conditioned*. I think that the sense of such a methodological affinity becomes clearer in the development of archeology into genealogy, insofar as genealogy—in that it is a critical analysis of the present by the present itself—emphasizes the paradoxical character of archaeology's both historical and transcendental critique. Thus, it is no accident that Foucault comes back to Canguilhem precisely in the 1970s, at a time in which he dwells upon Nietzsche. A Nietzsche that, by means of a genealogy intended as an immanent critique of reason, had been able to achieve the project of judging the finitude by the finitude itself.[98] So, in 1978—through Canguilhem and Nietzsche—Foucault returns to the problem of "a rationality that aspires to the universal while developing within contingency"[99] and, like Canguilhem, instead of recognizing here the failure of historical epistemology, he locates the *powers* of reason in the *limits* of reason.[100]

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[96] Ibid., 16 (202). The italic is mine.

[97] On this point, see Jean-François Braunstein, "'Désunités', styles et épistémologies historiques," in his *L'histoire des sciences. Méthodes, styles et controverses*, Paris: Vrin, 2008, 227–243.

[98] On this point, see Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, Paris: PUF, 1962 (English transl. by Hugh Tomlinson, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, London, New York: Continuum, 1983, 2002).

[99] Michel Foucault, "Introduction by Michel Foucault," 468.

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[100] See Georges Canguilhem, "Le rôle de l'épistémologie dans l'historiographie scientifique contemporaine," in his *Idéologie et rationalité dans l'histoire des sciences de la vie. Nouvelles études d'histoire et philosophie des sciences*, Paris: Vrin, 1977, 1981, 14. (English transl. by Arthur Goldhammer, "The *Role of Epistemology* in the Contemporary History of Science," in his *Ideology and Rationality in the History of the Life Sciences*, Boston: MIT Press, 1988, 1–23). For this reason, I cannot agree with Todd May, who argues that Foucault's rejection of phenomenology depends on Canguilhem and Nietzsche, in that these latter "teach us [that] our knowledge of ourselves is more constituted than constituting, then we must step back methodologically from experience in order to understand it. We must seek its nature elsewhere than within it" ("Foucault's Relation to Phenomenology", 305–306).

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ECONOMY, ART AND EMOTION. THE EMOTIONAL ECONOMY AND ITS BOUNDARIES IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT OF MICHEL FOUCAULT

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Abstract

Foucault assumes the possibility of discursive and dispositive shaping of affectivity or emotions while simultaneously viewing them – similarly to desire – as offering potential for resistance. Rational control and also the proliferation of emotions in neoliberalism bind the subject to the existing power structures. The concept of governmentality allows him to consider the aspects of being governed and the governing of the self in tandem. Foucault defines the term 'economy' in the narrower sense of a doctrine of affluence respectively as business and, on the other hand, as a mode of socialization which characterizes power structures. In Foucault the aspect of self-constitution by means of applying self-technologies takes on equal significance to that of the external constitution of the subject – ethics and aesthetics come to the fore. Modern art in its various fields such as literature and painting is integral to Foucault's analysis of parrhesia and linked to the manifestation of truth. The close relationship between art, physicality and the creation of emotions in Foucault's work thus also becomes clear when considering individual artistic media such as film and photography. These areas also have a high potential to release possibilities for disengagement from emotional economies and for their restructuring. In Foucault's work art even becomes the benchmark for lifestyle and the model for a liberal self-determined life of ethical responsibility.

Keywords

Art, Affectivity, Economy, Ethics of the Self, Parrhesia

1. Introduction

Neoliberalism is a current form of governmentality – the art of ruling which envisages both the ruling of others and also mastery of the self. It expands the subject position of 'homo economicus', occupying all areas of life and implying a 'normalization project' and domestication of passions. Equally, neoliberalism includes control over one's own emotions. In the work of Michel Foucault affectivity should be understood as fundamentally constituted, however without the influence of the individual being underestimated. When considering individual emotions and feelings, Foucault explores anger, rage, sensitivity and impatience in particular. All of these are particularly subject to control by means of rationality. It becomes clear that Foucault assumes the possibility of discursive and dispositive shaping of these emotions while simultaneously viewing them – similarly to desire – as offering potential for resistance. He accentuates the freedom of human self-design in order to make social changes conceivable, thus locating issues of physicality, emotionality and desire in a socio-political dimension. Rational explanations can lose their power of persuasion and the placation of emotions can fail. Rationality, argues Foucault, also means appeasement; irrationality thus facilitates transgressions and transformations. In Foucault's theory, irrationality and emotions are of crucial importance for the shaping and transformation of the self and society. In this context he argues that literature and art play a key role as a counter-discourse and means of self-shaping within the scope of aesthetics respectively the ethics of the self. Philosophy in a modified form can, and should, also exercise an influence on the shaping of life in the philosophical sense of 'ethos'. What role does the interaction of emotion and economy in general, and the emotional economy in particular, play and what are the boundaries of the emotional economy which Foucault describes in his philosophy? What are the consequences in political terms?

2. Economy and emotion in Foucault's work

Foucault's interest in economy is a continuous theme in his work, even if there are some longer interruptions. In his book *The order of things,* for instance, he examines knowledge of riches in order to present in detail the underlying epistemes of the 17th and 18th centuries, while the concept expounded in his lecture *The Birth of Bio-Politics*, dealing with the history of governmentality, focuses on economy. Foucault argues that in liberal and neoliberal governance the question of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of government is replaced by the question of its success or failure. With the rise of the political economy liberalism, the new form of rationality of governance, focuses on maximizing the limitation of governmental action and governmental practices in a minimal state – Foucault writes of a limiting principle[1] – in order to create a free market which, in accordance with the principle of free competition respectively of rivalry, conceals the truth of prices, resulting in mutual enrichment.[2] He continues, "The market determines that a good government is no longer quite simply one that is just. The market now means that, to be a good government, government has to function according to the truth."[3] He describes the market as a 'principle of veridiction'.[4] When considering the task of public law under such conditions he poses the question,

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[1] See Foucault, Michel: *Geschichte der Gouvernementalität II: Die Geburt der Biopolitik: Vorlesung am Collège de France 1978–1979.* Frankfurt am Main (Suhrkamp Verlag), 2004b, p. 42. Elsewhere Foucault refers to a "regulative principle of a frugal government". (Foucault 2004b: 42)

[2] Foucault points to a Europe of collective enrichment. (See Foucault 2004b: 85) He continues "This idea of a progress, of a European progress, is a fundamental theme in liberalism and completely overturns the themes of European equilibrium". (Foucault 2004b: 85) A further consequence of the free market as a governmental practice is, asserts Foucault, an extension of the market; a world market and, in the end, globalization. (See Foucault 2004b: 86) "I mean simply that this may be the first time Europe appears as an economic unit, as an economic subject in the world, or considers the world as able to be and having to be its economic domain. It seems to me that it is the first time that Europe appears in its own eyes as having to have the world for its unlimited market. Europe is no longer merely covetous of all the world's riches that sparkle in its dreams or perceptions." (Foucault 2004b: 86) He continues, "That is to say, there will be Europe on one side with Europeans as the players, and then the world on the other, which will be the stake. The game is in Europe, but the stake is the world." (Foucault 2004b: 87) Foucault believes neither that he sees here the beginnings of colonialism, which must be viewed as having started earlier, nor the imperialism which first commences in the 19th century, "But let's say that we have the start of a new type of global calculation in European governmental practice. I think that there are many signs of this appearance of a new form of global rationality, of a new calculation on the scale of the world." (Foucault 2004b: 87)

[3] Foucault 2004b: 56.

[4] See Foucault 2004b: 57. The market before this was 'a market of jurisprudence'. (See Foucault 2004b: 58)

"How can we set juridical limits to the exercise of power by a public authority?"[5] The shifts associated with this take place in two directions; on the one hand, based on natural rights – Foucault calls this the revolutionary approach – and, on the other, the principle of utilitarianism, the radical approach. "Government's limit of competence will be bounded by the utility of governmental intervention."[6] In this context Foucault asserts "Utilitarianism is a technology of government".[7] Taking this as his starting point, he distinguishes between two different kinds of freedom – freedom to exercise basic rights and freedom as the independence of the governed with regard to the government.[8] The political and socio-economic systems are heterogeneous and disparate, resulting in the ambiguity of European liberalism of the 19th and 20th centuries since the logic of the strategy requires a connection with the heterogeneous.[9] In this context it becomes apparent that the radical approach has been more powerful than the revolutionary approach of human rights and has prevailed to a greater extent. Foucault defines exchange and utilitarianism as the two points of anchorage of liberal governmental technology. He continues, "Government is only interested in interests."[10] Foucault asserts "that the limitation of its power is not given by respect for the freedom of individuals, but simply by the evidence of economic analysis".[11]

Parallel to the establishment of freedom, this form of governmentality is simultaneously concerned with its limitation. The problem of security is closely interlinked to liberal governmental skill – protection of individual interests as well as the protection of collective interests over individual interests, thus resulting in a "game of freedom and security".[12] These tendencies have become even more pronounced in the late 20th and early 21st centuries; the security dispositive has thus established itself as one of the most important phenomena behind social structures; stimuli which Foucault analyses in his work *Security, Territory, Population*. In this context, the 19th century saw the rise of a 'culture of danger', comprising an 'invasion of everyday dangers' and an 'incitement of the fear of danger'.[13] It also becomes apparent that forms of government constitute the subject formation in specific ways, also in terms of emotionality and affectivity, such as feelings of fear, of being threatened and of uncertainty.

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[5] Foucault 2004b: 65.

[6] Foucault 2004b: 67; he continues "The question addressed to government [...] is: Is it useful? For what is it useful? Within what limits is it useful? When does it become harmful?" (Foucault 2004b: 67)

[7] Foucault 2004b: 68.

[8] See Foucault 2004b: 69.

[9] See Foucault 2004b: 69f.

[10] Foucault 2004b: 74.

[11] Foucault 2004b: 95.

[12] Foucault 2004b: 100. He continues, "The second consequence of this liberalism and liberal art of government is the considerable extension of procedures of control, constraint and

These characteristics are further reinforced and disseminated by neoliberalism. As *homo economicus* the neoliberal subject is focused on competition, increasingly becoming the entrepreneur of his own self. "As neoliberalism takes root as a widespread cultural discourse, the market-centric economic calculation – and all its attendant profit-seeking epistemologies and individualist social ontologies – becomes the mode of rationality for self-reflection and the barometer for individual success."[14] Foucault defines the subject formation of neoliberalism as the 'subject of interests'.

> Foucault characterizes these 'interests' as the bedrock for all decisions: [the] principle of an irreducible, non-transferable, atomistic individual choice which is unconditionally referred to the subject himself' (C-BB, 272). Interests are those irrational and sometimes ineffable connections, whether positive or

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coercion which are something like the counterpart and counterweights of different freedoms." (Foucault 2004b: 102)

[13] See Foucault, Michel: *Geschichte der Gouvernementalität I: Sicherheit, Territorium, Bevölkerung: Vorlesung am Collège de France 1977–1978*. Frankfurt am Main (Suhrkamp Verlag), 2004a, p. 101f. In this context Foucault alludes to the emergence of crime novels. He also writes, "There is no liberalism without the culture of danger." (Foucault 2004b: 102)

[14] Winnubst, Shannon: "The missing Link: Homo Economicus (Reading Foucault and Bataille Together)". In: Falzon, Christopher; 0'Leary, Timothy; Sawicki, Jana (Eds.): *A Companion to Foucault*. Malden, Oxford, Chichester (Wiley-Blackwell), 2013, p. 466. She continues "The fundamental values of work and utility that are sanctified in the infamous Protestant work ethic are thus fading from prominence in the contemporary milieu of neoliberalism. While we may still express allegiance to them, particularly, as in the US, as well worn vehicles for xenophobic nationalism, we reserve our true admiration for those who achieve economic success with the smallest effort of labor: the great entrepreneurial innovation is great precisely because it grants success with minimal effort. ‚Maximize interest, minimize labor! This becomes the slogan of these neoliberal times'." (Winnubst 2013: 466)

> negative, that we have to experience; they are the reasons we care about things; they are what psychoanalysis calls cathexes.[15]

This choice is related to the desire for self-enhancement, Neoliberalism is thus also linked to excess, "too much is never enough".[16] Commenting on this, Winnubst writes, "It lays claim to excess as its central social value – and thus kills it."[17] She continues, "it also tells us the truth of neoliberalism: the excess is not, finally, what it claims to be. Indeed, as both Bataille and Foucault see so lucidly, forms of human living in the twentieth century know nothing of real pleasure, nothing of jouissance."[18] The proliferation of emotions is not of a satisfying nature, but rather binds the subject to the existing power structures of being governed. Foucault sees the conclusions derived from these observations as being, among others, the concept of aesthetics respectively the ethics of the self, in which the self transforms its shaping into a topic to counter its economizing within the scope of the subjectification process. "Particularly in the rise of the neoliberalism that we are currently witnessing across the globe, this examination of economics is central to the shared Bataillean-Foucauldian projects of rethinking the possibilities for living meaningful lives – of rethinking ethics."[19] A consideration of economics in all its varying dimensions is indispensable for this purpose.

3. The boundaries of emotional economy in Foucault's work

On the one hand Foucault defines the term 'economy' in the narrower sense of a doctrine of affluence respectively as business and, on the other, as a mode of socialization which characterizes power structures, including, in particular, disciplining, normalization and sexualization; stimuli for the subject's being governed. Foucault argues that we must assume both the 'power of the economy' and also the 'economy of power', whereby there is a "decentralized understanding of the economy and of power";[20] a "micro/macroeconomics of power".[21] It is possible to speak of a "decentralization of the economy"[22] and, simultaneously, of a decentralization of the concept of power which understands power as being productive, whereby, in line with the principle of rationality, power is exercised either calculatingly or economically.[23] Krämer asserts "He thus decentralizes and 'dethrones' the term 'economy', locating it in the complex arena of balances of power",[24] concluding:

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[15] Winnubst 2013: 466.

[16] Winnubst 2013: 467.

[17] Winnubst 2013: 467.

[18] Winnubst 2013: 467.

[19] Winnubst 2013: 468.

[20] Krämer, Thomas: *Die Ökonomie der Macht: zum Ökonomiebegriff in Michel Foucault's Spätwerk*

> The assumption of the 'political economy of the body' provides the concept of the economy in Foucault's work, with the crucial addition required to include the dimensions of disciplining and normalization. [...] He 'dethrones' the economy, as it were, by taking it out of its previous framework of meaning, linked to work, production of goods and market events, and placing it in the politically volatile field of complex social balances of force. [...] Foucault thus also simultaneously opposes a centralist view of a capitalist-economic totality as a transcendental, eternally valid entity.[25]

He continues, "'[T]he capitalist economy' [is] itself something which is social engineered [...], whereby it is, nevertheless, able to open up a new field of rationality and operational access to political intervention."[26]

Foucault's interest increasingly focuses on forms of governmentality and processes of subjectification, which are equally concerned with the constitution of affectivity. "The domestication of passions illustrates that early liberal concepts were already primarily focused on the shaping of the subject. The subject experiences impetus towards rationalization."[27] Furthermore,

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(1975–1979). Marburg (Tectum), 2011, p. 13.

[21] Krämer 2011: 13.

[22] Krämer 2011: 21; Krämer references William Walters.

[23] Seen from the perspective of a power strategy, processes can also prove to be 'uneconomic'. It is thus certainly possible to refer to increased efficiency within the context of the application of power strategies: "The political economy of the body utilizes the microphysics of power and political anatomy in an attempt to optimize and rationalize this relationship of input and output." (Krämer 2011: 37) In this context one must assume historically differing types of rationality. (See Krämer 2011: 99)

[24] Krämer 2011: 77.

[25] Krämer 2011: 20.

[26] Krämer 2011: 56.

[27] Michalitsch, Gabriele: *Die neoliberale Domestizierung des Subjekts: Von den Leidenschaften zum*

"The first significant innovation of neoliberalism consists of the removal of limits to the market, affecting not only the state but also the subject."[28] And:

> This early concept of the domestication of passions, aimed at shaping the subject, is radicalized in the neoliberal context. Reason is reduced to calculation. Passions – the expression of the incalculable, anti-reasonable – are not only tamed, becoming merely interests, but also completely eliminated, since market calculation determines not only all arenas, but also the self-relationship.[29]

On the other hand, passion mutates into a commodity. In this context, neoliberal government presents itself as "a freedom-creating form of the exercise of power."[30] This also includes a tendency to stimulate emotions. Foucault combines this 'having become' of the subject with the aspect of self-formation by means of applying self-technologies. The concept of governmentality allows him to consider these aspects in tandem, so that, in addition to being governed, the governing of the self, self-management, increasingly

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Kalkül. Frankfurt, New York (Campus), 2006., p. 63. Elsewhere she writes "The early liberal domestication of passions into interests is now further developed into a reduced consideration of costs and benefits. Rationality now means a market-oriented, utility-maximizing calculation." (Michalitsch 2006: 66) She continues "Calculation now also determines the self-relationship. Passions appear to have become extinct; they are replaced by the commodity of calculated passion, simulated to facilitate its marketability. The process of domestication thus comes to its temporary end in the form of simulation. The economization of the social culminates in the economized shaping of subjectivity." (Michalitsch 2006: 98) And "Access to the individual takes place on the cognitive, emotional and social plane." (Michalitsch 2006: 100) The author describes the emotive consequences as follows: "In the emotional context, it is not possible to make connections between a negative sensitivity and social conditions. This results in uncertainty, fear of the future, indifference and resignation, leading to a lessening of emotions or increased aggressiveness, manifested in the social field as exclusion, competition and the erosion of solidarity. (See Gerlach 2001, 173ff.)" (Michalitsch 2006: 100) She continues "Self-alienating identifications, depoliticization and privatization of individual existences, resignation, indifference – in particular with regard to democracy –; development of a real life perceived to be uninfluenceable and de-historicization of social and personal consciousness are the consequence, however ensure the production of utilizable human capital." (Michalitsch 2006: 100) "This domestication of passions is the prerequisite for the autonomization of the economy." (Michalitsch 2006: 148)

[28] Michalitsch 2006: 93.

[29] Michalitsch 2006: 149.

[30] Krämer 2011: 116.

becomes the central focus of Foucault's philosophy.[31] The aspect of self-constitution takes on equal significance to that of the external constitution of the subject – ethics and aesthetics come to the fore. The boundaries of the emotional economy in Foucault's philosophical concept are clearly delineated. Art is particularly significant in this context.

4. Emotion, literature and art in the work of Michel Foucault

In its murmuring of language, literature exhibits a proximity to madness which represents the otherness of reason. The otherness of literature, which characterizes its specificity, allows it to become a counter-discourse. Literature and philosophy are thus partners in thought. Foucault's preoccupation with literature takes as its starting point the ontology of language; the self-referentiality of language which he demonstrates on the basis of Raymond Roussel's literature and its potential for transgression. In this context, Foucault references Bataille, de Sade, Artaud, Blanchot, etc., discussing each from a specific perspective. What is the significance, what is the function and what is the position of literature in the overall context of Foucault's philosophy? What link can be identified between emotion and literature? The focus of his exploration of various authors proves to be desire as described in fictional representations of literature. While, in de Sade's work, discipline as a form of power transcending limits of possible experience is integral to the narrative, Bataille displays a desire for self-transgression as a form of ecstasy in both sexual experience and death. Artaud focuses on the experience of physicality in conjunction with the possibilities which the body offers for forms of expression, culminating in the scream; and Klossowski describes a sexual-mythical experience. Literature, asserts Blanchot, moves towards the furthest point, providing the opportunity to experience the impossible; literary language is the embodiment of contradiction, incomprehension and uncertainty. Blanchot's universe of literature is a universe of the 'dispossession' of the self. When considering visual art Foucault references Bosch and Goya. Literature and art should thus be viewed as spheres of the 'experience of the outside', facilitating borderline experiences – also in the sense of the insane/distorted, of madness. Descartes' methodic doubt in his *Meditations*, argues Foucault, already excluded such knowledge from modern thinking. The various concepts of literature presented in Foucault's work demonstrate, on the one hand, the possibility of other, new and excessive forms of affectivity in the literary setting and, on the other, of affective subject constitution by means of involved quasi-discourses which bring with them the shaping and regulation of feelings, thus enhancing the governability of the subject.

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[31] Krämer writes, "Foucault's analysis of transformation processes in our Western episteme demonstrates that neither freedom nor rulership are immutable entities." (Krämer 2011: 129)

Modern art[32] in its various fields such as literature and painting is, argues Foucault, the "bearer of cynicism", a "cynicism that culture turned against itself",[33] and is thus integral to his analysis of parrhesia and therefore "linked to the manifestation of truth".[34] The objective is to "expose, unmask, reveal, excavate the fundamentals of existence and to forcibly return it to parrhesia".[35] In this context Foucault writes that "there is an anti-Platonism of modern art which was the great scandal of Manet and which, I think, without characterizing all art possible today, has been a profound tendency which is found from Manet to Francis Bacon, from Baudelaire to Samuel Beckett or Burroughs. Anti-Platonism: art as the site of the interruption of the basic, stripping existence bare."[36] Foucault posits "And art thereby established a polemical relationship of reduction, refusal and aggression to culture, social norms, values and aesthetic canons."[37] He continues, "And if this is not just in art, in the modern world, in our world, it is especially in art that the most intense forms of a truth-telling with the courage to take the risk of offending are concentrated."[38] 'Aggression' and 'vulnerability' point to an emotionality in the creative and receptive process which is mobilized by artistic truth-telling; linked to an experimental critique in a fundamental manner and facilitates a breaking open of the emotional economy. The concept of the parrhesia of modern art can be understood as a resumption and contextual intensification of Foucault's reflections on the ontology of language and his concept of literature as a counter-discourse. Art, in this context, increasingly becomes a specific form of truth-telling. Here also, Foucault's tendency to return to a topic in a procedural, extending, shifting, refining manner which locates the topic in a larger context becomes apparent. For him, the ontology of language is increasingly integrated into the ontology of the subject. Modern literature and art as a form of truth-telling combine the artistic existence; the creation of art and the courage to say everything in the sense of critique, resuming Foucault's concept of art as a counter-discourse within the scope of his subject-theoretical considerations in the shift to a series of self-practices, without wishing to codify art in its function. The genealogical examination of the forms of subjectification linked to truth-telling within the framework of the ethics respectively the aesthetics of the self also illustrates the methodological premise of the historical a priori in the context of a nexus of knowledge, power and subject.

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[32] Foucault references here in particular artists of the classical modern movement, such as Manet, Klee and Kandinsky. By analysing their art Foucault demonstrates fractures in the visual which make the invisible visible. Comparable phenomena can also be observed in the visual within the context of the change of epistemes and/or discourse rules. When exploring this topic Foucault wishes to retain its independence, not permitting it to be subsumed in the sphere of the un-speakable. Foucault cites Magritte when discussing the question of the representation of art.

[33] Foucault, Michel: *Der Mut zur Wahrheit: Die Regierung des Selbst und der anderen II*. Berlin (Suhrkamp Verlag), 2010, p. 249.

[34] Foucault 2010: 246.

[35] Foucault 2010: 247.

[36] Foucault 2010: 248; Foucault also speaks of an anti-Aristotelianism of modern art.

[37] Foucault 2010: 248.

When discussing the photography of Duane Michals Foucault emphasizes the significance of thought and feeling in the reception process of visual art. Art should, argues Foucault, facilitate experiences and penetration of new spheres of experience. He thus writes, "Time may bring changes, old age and death, but thought and feeling are stronger than time. Only they can see and make visible its invisible wrinkles."[39] He continues "He [referring to Duane Michals] invites him to take on the undefined role of the reader or viewer, suggesting thoughts or feeling to him (because feelings move the soul and spread spontaneously from soul to soul)."[40] The purpose of this process is to reveal the invisible. In addition to the significance of thought

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[38] Foucault 2010: 249.

[39] Foucault, Michel: "Denken, Fühlen". In: Foucault, Michel: *Dits et Ecrits: Schriften: Schriften in vier Bänden: Dits et Ecrits IV: 1980–1988.* Defert, Daniel; Ewald, François (Eds.). Frankfurt am Main (Suhrkamp Verlag), 2005, p. 302.

[40] Foucault 2005: 300.

Foucault unambiguously emphasizes feeling as a dimension of the production and reception of art which can heighten awareness. Artistic experience is concerned with the transformation of the subject, focusing in particular on the consideration of perception, feeling and emotion. When discussing film Foucault concentrates on the affective-physical experience; what is seen becomes part of our bodies. This also results in a specific experience of the story which goes beyond knowledge.[41] The particular effect of film on the human body within the scope of the reception process initiated by its presence mode is to establish a comprehensive connection to the individual's relationship to the world and, over and above this, an action-theoretical dimension. The link to what is dreamed and possible is also important; it can thus be concluded that overall Foucault's work views film as having a subject-shaping function – in conjunction with a subject-changing effect. The close relationship between art, physicality and the creation of emotions in Foucault's work thus also becomes clear when considering artistic media.

Foucault gives preference to 'emotion' and 'affectivity' as the overarching terms for differing types and intensities of feeling.[42] While he does not offer any theory of feelings in the narrower sense, affectivity is, nevertheless, of key significance to his philosophical concept. Subjectification and the construction of emotionality must be viewed in a narrower relationship and are located in a social and political context. Emotions implement subject positions linked to the use of practices of power, in particular in institutional contexts, anchoring them in the individual's body.[43] Feelings are subject to continual 'pacification', as Foucault illustrates using the example of rage and resentment. With considering desire he refers to "the normalisation and domestication of pleasure".[44] Nevertheless, emotions remain connected to a potential for resistance, which Foucault associates in particular with the self-shaping of affectivity by means of self-technologies – also including reading and writing – within the framework of his ethics respectively aesthetics of the self. Despite their tendency to be fixed, emotions are thus changeable and capable of elaboration. An example of this self-shaping in the sense of a *de-subjectification* and *de-subjugation* can be found in Baudelaire's dandyism as a form of self-stylization in both the real and the literary world. Foucault thus understands affectivity as, on the one hand, constructed, subject to discursive and dispositive shaping, as well as, on the other hand, as self-shaped. This also applies to the relationship between the shaping of emotions and the economy. While the emotional economy can also be found in the fields of literature and visual art; art can, over and above this, be viewed as a special area of the boundaries of the emotional economy – as an area which facilitates the transgression of boundaries and the transformation of the subject.

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[41] Foucault writes, "and she [referring to the grandmother seen in the film] is not part of what we know but instead part of our bodies, our way of acting, doing, thinking, dreaming and suddenly we have removed the sand which concealed these small, enigmatic gems inside us." In: Foucault, Michel: "Die Rückkehr des Pierre Rivière". In: Foucault, Michel: *Dits et Ecrits: Schriften: Schriften in vier Bänden: Dits et Ecrits III: 1976–1979.* Defert, Daniel; Ewald, François (Eds.), Frankfurt am Main (Suhrkamp Verlag), 2003, p. 161. He continues "One cannot pose the question of knowledge to the cinema; this would be a completely pointless undertaking." (Foucault 2003: 161)

[42] This preference places Foucault in the philosophical tradition stretching from antiquity to the 17th century. See on this subject Hübsch, Stefan: "Vom Affekt zum Gefühl". In: Hübsch, Stefan; Kaegi, Dominic (Eds.): *Philosophische Beiträge zur Theorie der Emotionen*. Heidelberg (Universitätsverlag C. Winter), 1999, p. 137–150.

[43] See Foucault, Michel: "Pouvoir et corps". In: Foucault, Michel: *Dits et écrits I: 1954–1975.* D. Defert, Daniel; Ewald, François (Eds.), Paris (Quarto Gallimard), 2001a, p. 1622–1628.

5. Conclusion

Overall it is possible to speak of a "historically enlightened potential of Foucauldian governmentality studies".[45] Foucault consistently links the term 'economy' with "forms of the political rationality of practices", exploring "fields of the rationality of the exercise of power",[46] whereby the specific rationality of neoliberalism takes the form of a proliferation of emotions. The metaphor of the emotional economy refers to subjectification processes, e.g. means of disciplining and bio-politics which also involve the formation of perceptions, moods, feelings and emotions. The shaping of the subject by micro- and macrophysical forms of power makes it appear to be heteronomously determined, because of, among other things, the related processes of creating emotions. In this context, the discursive respectively quasi-discursive disposition of literature and visual art also contributes to the emotional economy and the emotion-creating economy. The discursive and dispositive constitution of the subject also takes place by means of the quasi-discourses in literature and visual art and by means of cultural dispositives, however these arenas also have a high potential to release possibilities for disengagement from emotional economies and for their restructuring. In Foucault's work art even becomes the benchmark for lifestyle and the model for a liberal self-determined life of ethical responsibility. This examination of literature and visual arts is related to Foucault's ethical-aesthetic viewpoint, whereby life should be based on the role model of art.

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[44] Winnubst 2013: 467.

[45] Krämer 2011: 129.

[46] Krämer 2011: 123.

> What strikes me is the fact that in our society, art has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something which is specialized or which is done by experts who are artists. But could not everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the painting or the house be an art object but not our life?[47]

In the analogy to, and referencing of, art, the self becomes, with the aid of self-technologies, an autonomous ethical subject – also in the political context. In this way Foucault attempts to move closer to a political desideratum. He asserts that "'There is a science of governing but none of not-wanting-to-be-governed.'"[48] His objective is to develop such a science. To this end, knowledge of the emotional economy's methods and of boundaries is essential. In this context, art and aesthetics play a key role in an ethical-political turnaround with regard to subjectification.

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[48] Krämer 2011: 121; Krämer quotes Bröckling 2007: 287.

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THE MANY LIVES OF GUY DEBORD

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Abstract
Guy Debord, political militant and leading theorist of the Situationist International, is an anomaly to the discourse of philosophy. Debord self-identified as a "strategist", yet his thinking of the spectacle and praxis remain not only influential on philosophy but also profoundly philosophical in inspiration. It might seem obvious to locate Debord as what Alain Badiou calls an "anti-philosopher", one who puts forward their own life as the theatre of their ideas, and place Debord alongside Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, Kierkegaard, and other "moralists" and thinkers. While Debord does make his own life emblematic, in his autobiography *Panegyric* and his film *In Girum*, I want to suggest we take Debord seriously as a thinker of life. This is not individual life, but collective life, and life posed against capitalism as the accumulation of "dead labor" in the form of the spectacle. To return to Debord, as an anomaly, is to return to the attempt to think the dialectics of life and non-life, life and pseudo-life, which has, ironically, become occluded by the contemporary thinking of biopolitics.

Keywords
Guy Debord, Life, Vitalism, Nihilism, Dialectics

It might seem strange to treat Guy Debord as a philosopher. Giorgio Agamben recalls his suggesting to Debord that he was a philosopher and Debord's reply: "Look, I am not a philosopher, I am a strategist".[1] Agamben continues:

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[1] Giorgio Agamben, "Metropolis", transl. Arianna Bove, *Generation-Online* (2005): http://www.generation-online.org/p/fpagamben4.htm. See also Debord's comment: "I have been very interested in war, in the theoreticians of its strategy, but also in reminiscences of battles and in the countless other disruptions history mentions, surface eddies on the river of time. I am not unaware that war is the domain of danger and disappointment, perhaps even more so than the other sides of life. This consideration has not, however, diminished the attraction that I have felt for it." Guy Debord, *Panegyric*, transl. James Brook (London and New York: Verso, 1991), p. 63.

> This statement struck me because I used to see him as a philosopher as I saw myself as one, but I think that what he meant to say was that every thought, however "pure", general or abstract it tries to be, is always marked by historical and temporal signs and thus captured and somehow engaged in a strategy and urgency.[2]

If Debord is a philosopher then he may be a philosopher of a peculiar type. Certainly, there have been several important works devoted to the thought of Guy Debord,[3] but can we clarify what kind of philosopher Debord might be?

It might seem obvious, if we follow Alain Badiou, to place Debord as an "anti-philosopher". In Badiou's words, such thinkers "claim to be the contemporaries not only of the truths that proceed in their time but they also make their own life the theatre of their ideas, and their body the place of the Absolute".[4] Debord's autobiographical writing, especially *Panegyric*,[5] and his filmmaking, especially *In Girum*,[6] would seem to make his own life and body "the place of the Absolute".[7] In particular, the throwing of life against the abstractions of capitalism, singularly in the form of the "spectacle", suggest Debord belongs to the long line of thinkers who throw a singular life against philosophy as a "mode of capture": Pascal, Jacobi, Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein and Deleuze. T. J. Clark notes that one of Debord's favourite quotations from Lukács was "History is the history of the unceasing overthrow of the objective forms that shape the life of man".[8]

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[2] Agamben, "Metropolis".

[3] The most important being Anselm Jappe, *Guy Debord*, transl. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999) and Tom Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle: Hegelian Marxism and Situationist Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

[4] Alain Badiou, *Wittgenstein's Antiphilosophy*, transl. and intro. Bruno Bosteels (London and New York: Verso, 2011), p. 68.

[5] "There is nothing more natural than to consider everything as starting from oneself, chosen as the centre of the world", Debord, *Panegyric*, p. 7.

[6] "Thus, instead of adding one more film to the thousands of commonplace films, I prefer to explain why I shall do nothing of the sort. I am going to replace the frivolous adventures typically recounted by the cinema with the examination of an important subject: myself." Guy Debord, *Complete Cinematic Works*, ed. and transl. Ken Knabb (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2003), p. 149.

[7] See Benjamin Noys, "Guy Debord's Time-Image", "Debord's filmmaking" special issue, ed. Jason Smith, *Grey Room* 52 (2013): 94–107. DOI: 10.1162/GREY_a_00118

What is interesting, however, is that when Badiou does discuss Debord he does *not* place him in this lineage. Badiou, in *Theory of the Subject,* regards Debord's film *In Girum* as the balance sheet of the active nihilist, that "particularly odious and particularly promising" character.[9] Debord, in a letter to Jacques Le Glou (15 November 1982), expressed particular ire concerning the opinions of Badiou on *In Girum,* describing him as "Maoist carrion".[10] Badiou, probably unaware of this insult, would come to a more unequivocally laudatory judgement, describing *In Girum,* in 1990, as revealing a "pure temporal moment [that] speaks to the glory of cinema, [and] which may very well survive us humans".[11] The seeming contradiction of these judgements, however, does not mitigate the tendency of Badiou to place Debord in a complex position of what we might call an "insightful nihilist". Badiou does not credit Debord with a philosophical inventiveness, but with a cinematic inventiveness that actually goes beyond the limits of human life.

Moving away from Badiou, we might locate Debord as a philosopher in a more obvious way. Debord is an "old young Hegelian".[12] Debord was deeply influenced by Lukács's Hegelian reading of Marx, in *History and Class Consciousness*, and Debord's publishing house would translate into French the work of the young Hegelian August Cieszkowski, who would place such an emphasis on praxis.[13] The equivocal position of Debord in relation to philosophy can be explained as the usual young Hegelian/Marxist desire to transit philosophy to its realization in life. Not simply an anti-philosophy, which poses life in the singular against philosophy, Debord's programme would be similar to that of the young Marx, in terms of the collective realization of the absolute in the body and life of the proletariat. This would radically distinguish him from those anti-philosophers who pitch the singular body or life against philosophy and justify Debord's absence from the list of anti-philosophers.

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[8] In Jappe, *Guy Debord*, p. x.

[9] Alain Badiou, *Theory of the Subject*, transl. and intro. Bruno Bosteels (London: Continuum, 2009), p. 329.

[10] Guy Debord, "Letter to Jacques Le Glou (15 November 1982)", *Not Bored!*, http://www.notbored.org/debord-15November1982.html.

[11] Alain Badiou, "Rhapsody for the Theatre: A Short Philosophical Treatise" [1990], transl. Bruno Bosteels, *Theatre Survey* 49.2 (2008): 187–238, 188.

[12] Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, p. 37.

[13] Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, pp. 73–74.

This, however, does leave us with a problem of resolving the issue of life in Debord's thought. While Debord thinking of life may not be directly anti-philosophical, to analyse Debord as a thinker of collective life is to raise the spectre of vitalism. To critics who called them vitalists, the Situationists replied "we have made the most radical critique of the poverty of all presently permitted life".[14] Anselm Jappe has noted the possible equivocation of Debord's thinking on this point. Debord's embrace, after Lukács, of process against reification and abstraction could be read in a vitalist direction, in line with Bergson's positing of duration against abstract time.[15] Jappe also notes that Debord does not embrace the classic vitalist opposition to science and technology as forms of abstraction, but we could add that vitalists themselves, especially those associated with the avant-garde, came to think life and technology as integrated and "infused" together.[16]

Why should this charge of vitalism be a problem? The problem is that if Debord belongs to the vitalist division of life from non-life or life from pseudo-life, as Debord puts it, he risks embracing the irrationalist consequences of vitalism. Max Horkheimer argued, in a 1934 essay on Bergson, that vitalism dissolves the problem of history into that of life and so prevents any rational and collective appropriation of history.[17] In a way, the turn to vitalism risks returning Debord to the problem of anti-philosophy, but this time cast in a collective rather than an individual form (one could suggest an odd parallel with the collective vitalist moments in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, or the notion of the multitude in Toni Negri). Here I do not want to absolve Debord of the risk of vitalism, but return to his texts to see what he wrote on life. After all, Spinoza suggested that the primary problem of reading, he had in mind the bible, was reading "to the letter".[18] Rather than the hermeneutic desire to reconstruct meaning in depth, what might a reading of the letter of the text imply in the case of Debord? This is especially true, I believe, as Debord's texts (as he suggested) have been reduced to a cryptic and fragmentary state by the defeat of the movements he supported. Our relatively recent past can be further from us than obviously past ages.[19]

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[14] SI, *The Situationist Anthology*, ed. and transl. Ken Knabb (Bureau of Public Secrets, 2007), p. 80.

[15] Jappe, *Guy Debord*, pp. 137–38.

[16] Federico Luisetti, "Reflections on Duchamp: Bergson Readymade", transl. D. Sharp, *diacritics*, 38.4 (2008): 77–93.

[17] Max Horkheimer, "On Bergson's metaphysics of time", *Radical Philosophy* 131 (2005): 9–19.

[18] See Warren Montag, *Bodies, Masses, Power* (London and New York: Verso, 1999), pp. 1–25.

Therefore, I want to focus on *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967).[20] Life is, we might say, an intermittent concept in that work. It is especially evident in the opening discussion of the spectacle, but it is not a central concept in the way time is (although time is also linked to life). Life also appears largely in the negative.[21] Life emerges against non-life or pseudo-life. This is evident in thesis one:

> The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of *spectacles*. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation. (p. 12; #1)

Life, today, is "an immense accumulation of spectacles" that completely occludes the "directly lived". Similarly, in thesis two, the spectacle is characterised as an "inversion" of life and "the autonomous movement of non-life" (p. 12; #2).

The spectacle, which should not be mistaken for the media or the merely visual, is a real and concrete organization of life in the mode of negation. Life, in the society of the spectacle, only appears as the negation of actual life. This is why we only have "counterfeit life" (p. 32; #48) or "the pseudo-use of life" (p. 33; #49), or the "semblance of life" (p. 38; #60). We can grasp life through its inversion by the spectacle, as if through a glass darkly. Life is not the continuous stream of images. "Images" here being not only visual images, but all the forms of reification and spectacles of power. Life is not the static, the reified, the non-historical, the passive, the false, and the alienating.

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[19] In his later *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* Debord argues that due to the dominance of the spectacle that he would have to write in a new way, by means of decoys and absences, to avoid recuperation by the spectacle. Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, transl. Malcolm Imrie (London and New York: Verso, 1990), p. 2 (#I).

[20] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, transl. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995). Further references by page number and thesis number in text.

[21] See also Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, pp. 219–238.

Life, as suggested by the notion of the "situation" and so the Situationists, is an activity in which humans are engaged in their own production as if in a game.[22] Life is a particular experience of the body and of time that does not recede into contemplation and the image.

The first thing that should be stated is that Debord's conception of life is not simply a "naturalism" of life. Debord is not positing life as an exterior force of nature. Instead, Debord is committed to thinking the historical process by which Being is replaced by Having and then by Appearing (p. 16; #17). We cannot simply reverse this, nor should we, in line with Heidegger, or a certain reading of Heidegger,[23] evince fascination for some lost moment of Being or life associated with unity.[24] This is clearly stated in thesis sixty-eight:

> It is doubtless impossible to contrast the pseudo-need imposed by the reign of modem consumerism with any authentic need or desire that is not itself equally determined by society and its history. But the commodity in the stage of its abundance attests to an absolute break in the organic development of social needs. The commodity's mechanical accumulation unleashes a *limitless artificiality* in face of which all living desire is disarmed. The cumulative power of this autonomous realm of artifice necessarily everywhere entails a *falsification of life*. (pp. 44–45; #68)

Of course, the problem with such a conception, that refuses a nostalgia for unity, is of pessimism or melancholy.[25] Life is lost irredeemably.[26] Certainly, we can mark this as a problem for Debord. If the recovery of life through the revolution, more precisely through those workers' councils that will seize the means of life (p. 87; #117), is not achieved then pessimism or melancholia seem the only plausible reaction.[27]

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[22] Debord defines the "situation" "the concrete construction of momentary ambiences of life and their transformation into a superior passional quality", in Guy Debord, "Report on the Construction of Situations and on the International Situationist Tendency's Conditions of Organization and Action" (1957), *Bureau of Public Secrets*, 2006: http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/report.htm; see also Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, pp. 69–71 and pp. 92–95.

[23] Here we would need to re-examine "The Question Concerning Technology", which is an essay that seems to encourage nostalgia for past ways of Being, but also suggests that the only way to access Being today is through the "en-framing" of "modern technology". I would suggest that it might be possible, perhaps as a perverse exercise, to re-read the essay as one concerning "real abstraction" rather than "technology". See Martin Heidegger, *and Other Essays*, transl. and intro. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1977).

[24] It appears that Debord never read or commented on Heidegger; see Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, pp. 121–22.

Debord certainly struggles to maintain this dialectic of life and the non-living that would not fall foul of a vitalist oscillation between the pristine power of life and its (inevitable?) collapse into representation or capitalist value. We could say, to use the point made by Tom Bunyard,[28] that this is an effect of the abstraction of the concept of the spectacle. The tendency to set-up an abstract opposition between the spectacle and life, the failure to provide a detailed articulation between life and the spectacle, leaves Debord's thought vulnerable. I do not plan to offer that articulation here, but merely to suggest the necessity of reading Debord with this possibility in mind, which is to say, dialectically. Life has to be understood in its shaping by history or, more precisely, in its consonance with history and time.

This is why Debord has a taste for the Renaissance, a time when "in the exuberant life of the Italian cities, in the arts of festival, life came to recognize itself as the enjoyment of the passing of time. But this enjoyment of transience would turn out to be transient itself" (p. 103; #139).[29] This is life not as pure duration, but life as irreversible. Life needs to be experienced as irreversible, to experience its "biological element" in its historical form (p. 114; #160). In capitalism "it is simply forbidden to get old" (p. 115; #160),[30] but the dialectical experience of time is one of passage, of wearing away, of the passing of all things, including capitalism itself.[31]

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[25] For the melancholy reading of Debord, see, amongst others, Vincent Kaufmann, *Guy Debord: Revolution in the Service of Poetry* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

[26] One instance of this loss is the loss of the taste of alcohol: "The majority of wines, almost all spirits, and every one of the beers whose memory I have evoked here have today completely lost their tastes – first on the world market and then locally – with the progress of industry as well as the disappearance or economic re-education of the social classes that had long remained independent of large industrial production, and so too of the various regulations that now prohibit virtually anything that is not industrially produced. The bottles, so that they can still be sold, have faithfully retained their labels; this attention to detail provides the assurance that one can photograph them as they used to be, not drink them." (Debord, *Panegyric*, p. 38.)

[27] See Guy Debord, *Comments*. It is notable that the concept of life is less present in this text, which traces how the "integrated spectacle" now "permeates all reality" (p. 9, #IV).

28 Bunyard, *Debord, Time and Spectacle*, p. 38.

29 Debord argues that the achievement of the classless society will result in an Athens or a Florence that reaches to all the corners of the world, a city from which no one will be rejected and which, having brought down all of its enemies, will at last be able to surrender itself joyously to the true divisions and never-ending confrontations of historical life. Guy Debord, "Preface to the Fourth Italian Edition of Society of the Spectacle", *Not Bored*: http://www.

In conclusion, we should note the displacement of Debord's dialectic of life and non-life by the thought of biopolitics. While biopolitics, articulated by Foucault, owed a debt to Marx,[32] it also signalled the displacement of Marxism. This displacement initially seemed to be inflicted on Althusser, whose Marxism of structures seemed to have little time for life. This, however, concealed a common front between Foucault and Althusser in their rejection of "humanist" Marxism, of which Debord was one of the last and most significant representatives. The displacement of Marxism, in the form of Althusser, signalled a burying of Debord. Life would return as biopolitics in Foucault and in the more vitalist form articulated by Deleuze and Guattari, but certainly commodity fetishism would remain a lost concept, as it has been for Althusser.[33] This is significant, as Gillian Rose remarks that: "[t]he theory of commodity fetishism is the most speculative moment

notbored.org/debord-preface.html

[30] See Tiqqun, *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*, transl. Ariana Reines (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2012). See also Debord, *Cinematic Works*, pp. 173–4: "Those who have not yet begun to live but who are saving themselves for a better time, and who therefore have such a horror of growing old, are waiting for nothing less than a permanent paradise. Some of them locate this paradise in a total revolution, others in a career promotion, some even in both at once. In either case they are waiting to access what they have gazed upon in the inverted imagery of the spectacle: a happy, eternally present unity."

[31] In *Comments*, Debord notes that this understanding of time passing can be given an optimistic or pessimistic reading, contrasting Baltasar Gracián with Omar Khayyám (p. 85; #XXXI). Once again, we could suggest this marks a shift between *The Society of the Spectacle* and the later *Comments*.

[32] Michel Foucault, "The Mesh of Power", *Viewpoint Magazine*, 12 September 2012: https://www.viewpointmag.com/2012/09/12/the-mesh-of-power/.

[33] "I was happy to have attempted – in 1967 and completely contrary to Althusser's sombre denial – a kind of 'salvage by transfer' of the Marxist method by adding to it a large dose of Hegel, at the same time as it reprised a critique of political economy that wanted to bear in mind the Marxist method's ascertainable developments in our poor country, as they were foreseeable from what preceded them." Debord, "Letter to Giorgio Agamben", 6 August 1990, *Not Bored!*: http://www.notbored.org/debord-6August1990.html.

in Marx's exposition of capital".[34] The moment of commodity fetishism is the most Hegelian moment, the moment of mediation and articulation of the relationship of capitalism to life. The devaluation of this conception is what opens the space for biopolitics as the displacement and replacement of commodity fetishism.

Of the biopolitical thinkers, it is Agamben who has most engaged with Debord, but once again we can say this is not particularly in a dialectical mode but more resonant with a certain epochal pessimism that one can trace in Agamben's thinking (a result of his debt to Heidegger, as well as the political context).[35] Debord's writing, for Agamben, becomes "the clearest and most severe analysis of the miseries and slavery" of the present, not a way out of that.[36] Agamben, then, accentuates the Heideggerean and Benjaminian tones in Debord in an "epochal" direction. This is both the notion of Heidegger's consideration of epochal modes of access to Being, refigured through "bare life", and the pessimism of the late Benjamin that resonates with Debord's late pessimism. This furthers the tendency to oppose life and the spectacle and is in line with the anti-Hegelian and anti-dialectical mode of contemporary thought. While, as we have noted, Debord's work makes such a reading possible,[37] we should add this is not the only reading of Debord.[38] What makes Debord illegible to the present is the necessity to read him dialectically and also, through the dialectic, against some of his own tendencies. Debord's dialectic is not (always) complete. Like many "dialectical" thinkers of the 20th century, most obviously Adorno, the dialectic is in tension with its own "completion". Debord, of course, does not explicitly fall prey to a "negative dialectic", but then the articulations of life and non-life and, especially, the negation of the negation, the transition from non-life back to life, remain fragmentary and incomplete. I cannot hope to complete this dialectic here, for a number of reasons, but I do want to indicate what needs to be done.

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[34] Gillian Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology* (New York and London: Verso, 2009), p. 232.

[35] Certainly, Debord's concept of the spectacle engages with an epochal timespan: "At the root of the spectacle lies that oldest of all social divisions of labor, the specialization of *power*. The specialized role played by the spectacle is that of spokesman for all other activities, a sort of diplomatic representative of hierarchical society at its own court, and the source of the only discourse which that society allows itself to hear. Thus the most modern aspect of the spectacle is also at bottom the most archaic." Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, pp. 18–19; #23.

[36] Giorgio Agamben, "Marginal Notes on Commentaries on the Society of the Spectacle", in *Means without End*, transl. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 73–90, p. 73.

[37] As Bunyard notes, Debord can leave us "with a rather loose and amorphous notion of biopolitics: a vision of life, understood as abstract potential, that has become shaped and managed by a dominant power structure" (p. 302).

[38] See T. J. Clark and Donald Nicholson-Smith, "Why Art Can't Kill the Situationist International", *October* 79, Guy Debord and the Internationale Situationniste. (Winter, 1997): 15–31. "One of us remembers him at the College de France in 1966, sitting in on Hyppolite's course on Hegel's *Logic,* and having to endure a final session at which the master invited two young Turks to give papers. '*Trois etapes de la degenerescence de la culture bourgeois francais*' [three stages of the degeneration of French bourgeois culture], said Debord as the last speaker sat down.

Debord, as I have suggested, is always a thinker of life in relation to time. He is especially concerned with the passing of time, as we have seen. This is evident in this quotation from *Panegyric*:

> First, like everyone, I appreciated the effect of slight drunkenness; then very soon I grew to like what lies beyond violent drunkenness, when one has passed that stage: a magnificent and terrible peace, the true taste of the passage of time.[39]

The experience of alcohol creates the passage to time and to time as passage.[40] We can say the same of life, in the sense that life and time are consonant for Debord. The dialectical life is the life that can achieve this "true taste of the passage of time".

'*Premierement, l'erudition classique*' [at first, classical erudition] – he had in mind Hyppolite himself, who had spoken briefly at the start of things – '*quand meme base sur une certaine connaissance generale. Ensuite le petit con stalinien, avec ses mots de passe, 'Travail', 'Force' et 'Terreur'. Et enfin – derniere bassesse – le semiologue*' [even if based on a certain general knowledge. Then comes the little Stalinist cunt, with his words from the past, 'Work', 'Strength', and 'Terror'. And finally – the last degradation – the semiologist]. In other words, *The Society of the Spectacle* was conceived and written specifically as a book for bad times. It was intended to keep the habit of totalization alive – but of course to express, in every detail of its verbal texture and overall structure, what a labor of rediscovery and revoicing (indeed, of restating the obvious) that project would now involve." (p. 24.)

[39] Debord, *Panegyric*, p. 35.

[40] "The sensation of the passing of time has always been vivid for me, and I have been attracted by it just as others are allured by dizzying heights or by water. In this sense I have loved my era, which has seen the end of all existing security and the dissolution of everything that was socially ordained. These are pleasures that the practice of the greatest art would not have given me." Guy Debord, *Cinematic Works*, p. 189.

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THE THEFT OF TIME. A HISTORICAL TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS (PLUS A HEGELIAN-MARXIST PREFACE AND A SPECTACULAR EPILOGUE), AS WRITTEN BY GUY DEBORD

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Abstract

"In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni", "we walk in circles in the night and we are consumed by fire". This latin palindrome attributed to Virgil constitutes the title of Guy Debord's last film. Through this title, the French author expresses a vision of time that he had already put forward in the pages of his seminal essay *The society of spectacle* (1967). Namely: the vision of a spectacular time (simultaneously percieved as irreversible and cyclical) that, according to Debord, forms the necessary basis of modern capitalism, understood as an unending process of commodity accumulation. In our paper, we will try to grasp the determinations of this "spectacular time", presenting it as the most basic form of alienation, and showing how its concrete social implementation prevents modern man from living his life in an authentic way.

Keywords
Time, History, Capitalism

Despite the scarce attention it has deserved from most of the commentators on Guy Debord,[1] the problem of historical time is far from being an accessory element in the context of his greatest work: *La Société du Spectacle* (1967).[2] And it is not pure chance that, in one of the very first paragraphs of his essay,[3] the author takes care of defining the use of time (*l'emploi du temps*) as the condition of possibility of the constitution of a society (our own) where all life finds itself reduced to "an immense accumulation of *spectacles*."[4] Here, we stand before the establishment of a first draft of a relation between the regime of spectacle and the experience of time, a first draft Debord will polish and deepen in the two chapters that, even from a formal point of view, represent the heart of *La Société du Spectacle*: "Temps et Histoire" and "Le Temps Spectaculaire."[5] In those pages – where, using the letterist and situationist practice of *détournement,*[6] the author freely pillages the hegelian and marxist philosophies of history –, what until then had been merely suggested becomes clear: at the roots of the society of the spectacle is, above everything else, a long economical-political process of dispossession (*dépossession*) or expropriation (*expropriation*) of the time of both individuals and groups.[7]

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[1] See, however, (BUNYARD 2011); (BUNYARD, 2014).

[2] See (DEBORD 1967: 764–873).

What we will try to broach in the first parts of this article are the three fundamental phases of this historical movement of dispossession of the lived time, namely: 1) the institution of the agricultural mode of production; 2) the sedimentation and dissemination of the three great monotheistic religions and; 3) the formation of the bourgeois capitalist economy. In so doing, we will sketch a genealogical-critical picture of the different forms of alienation of time that, in the last part of this aricle, will allow us to fully contextualize and understand the origin of the "historical moment that contains us."[8] That is: the birth of a spectacular time (*temps spectaculaire*), simultaneously irreversible in the rhythm of its production and cyclical in the rhythm of its consumption, conforming, as per Debord, the necessary basis of modern capitalist societies.

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[3] See (DEBORD 1967: 768).

[4] (DEBORD 1967: 766): "Toute la vie des sociétés dans lesquelles règnent les conditions modernes de production s'annonce comme une immense accumulation de *spectacles*." See (MARX, Karl & ENGELS, Friedrich 1962: 49): "Der Reichtum der Gesellschaften, in welchen kapitalistische Produktionsweise herrscht, erscheint als eine '*ungeheure Warensammlung*', die enzelne Ware als seine Elementarform."

[5] See (DEBORD 1967: 820–830 and 831–836).

[6] See (DEBORD 1967: 221–229 and 853–855).

[7] See (DEBORD 1967: 835): "Pour amener les travailleurs au statut de producteurs et consommateurs 'libres' du temps-marchandise, la condition préalable a été l'*expropriation violente de leur temps*. Le retour spectaculaire du temps n'est devenu possible qu'à partir de cette première dépossession du producteur."

[8] (DEBORD 1967: 768): "[...] le spectacle n'est rien d'autre que [...] le moment historique qui nous contient."

1. The Hegelian-Marxist preface: man and time

The reflection that Debord builds up about historical time starts with a *détournement*, namely: the application to man of the definition of individuality proposed by Hegel in *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. In fact, in the § 125 of *La Société du Spectacle*, man is characterized as "[...] 'the negative being who is solely to the extent that he suppresses being'."[9] What does this mean? In substance, this means that man only realizes himself through the process in which, continuously, he ceases to be the being he (now) is, in order to become the being he is (yet) not. As Debord will point out, after a commentator of Hegel, that negative process with which man identifies himself is time itself.[10] But man is not only the time seen as the *future* by which the *present* is *surpassed*; he is as well, and indissociably, the time seen as the *past* that is *included* in the *present*. Far from simply incinerating his past, man encompasses it synthetically in its present, a present that will be immediately dissolved into a future that preserves it.

That is not all: due to the retrospective reach of his conscience – a conscience that, "[...] like the modern telescope, [...] recaptures *in time* the retreat of nebulae at the periphery of the universe"[11] – man arises, not only as the place where its own past is conserved, but also as the place where the unconscious past of time may finally come to know of itself. By dint of its integration in human history, natural history (or the up-to-then blind evolution of the universe) finds itself thematized and understood, thus becoming self-conscious or, which is the same, starting to exist in an effectively historical, because already reflected, way.

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[9] (DEBORD 1967: 820): "L'homme, 'l'être négatif qui est uniquement dans la mesure où il supprime l'être' [...]." Cfr. (HEGEL 1986a: 243): "[...] die Individualität stellt sich vielmehr in der Handlung als das negative Wesen dar, welches nur ist, insofern es Sein aufhebt."

[10] See (DEBORD 1967: 820): "L'homme [...] est identique au temps"; (PAPAIOANNOU 1965: 14): "L'homme et le temps sont identiques [...]"; (HEGEL 1986b: 48–51): "Die Zeit, als die negative Einheit des Außersichseins, ist gleichfalls ein schlechthin Abstraktes, Ideelles. – Sie ist das Sein, das, indem es *ist*, *nicht* ist, und indem es *nicht* ist, *ist*, das *angeschaute* Werden [...]."

[11] (DEBORD 1967: 820): "[...] comme le télescope moderne dont la portée rattrape *dans le temps* la fuite des nébuleuses à la périphérie de l'univers."

This is why Debord tells us that the temporalization of man – that is: the permanent dialectical movement of abrogation (*Aufhebung*) of his being, in which he simultaneously projects himself in the future and retains his past – follows alongside the humanization of time, or the act by which human conscience appropriates the history that preceded it.[12] According to our author, there is nothing abstract about such an act. For starters, because it always materializes in a concrete context: the human society, which, in last analysis, is the venue where the entire course of history is explicitly recovered.

At this point, it is important to ask: why did Debord choose to anchor, *in initio litis*, his reflection on time and history to a reflection on man and society? Merely because he concieves history as the process of self-determination, not of a speculative conscience (after Hegel), but of a revolutionary conscience (after Marx), whose main task is to violently take over the reality of a social time that – as we shall now see – was successively stolen from it.

2. The theft of time, act I: the original separation between cyclical and irreversible time in primitive agricultural societies

For Debord, the first episode of this process of extortion goes back to the invention of the agricultural mode of production, a mode that imposed an experience of duration moulded around the experience of nature, and in so doing imposed the social adoption of a *cyclical model of time.*[13] We are dealing with a negative comprehension of time, through which it allows itself to be understood, not as the *principle of a progress*, but as the *principle of a return*: that of the seasons and of the climate conditions that either benefit or impair production. The social time that is thus consolidated simply configures the vehicle for the recurrence of the same, and is, therefore, a sort of historical substitute of eternity: all its passage does is foster the repetition of the same set of gestures that are carried out under the same conditions.

However, and as Debord himself will tirelessly emphasize, this cyclical experience of time is exclusively made by those at the base of the social pyramid (the vast mass of the people). Strictly speaking, in the primitive agricultural communities, two separate times live together side by side, whose separation is already dependent on the class division of society. We are talking about the *cyclical* time that governs the life and the *production* of the *ruled classes*, and of the *irreversible* time that governs the life and the *power* of the *ruling classes*. In this picture, the power-owning classes do not merely hierarchically organize the social work and appropriate its reduced surplus value; they also appropriate "[...] *the temporal surplus value* [resulting from] their organization of social time [...]", thus subtracting themselves from the cyclical regime of production (which they supervise in a panoramic fashion) and reserving for themselves the enjoyment of the irreversible.[14] In effect, according to Debord, the ruling classes are here those that own the private property of history (*la propriété privée de l'histoire*), under the form of the exclusive possession of the action that changes it, of the writing that records it and of the myths that justify it. The separate time they inhabit (whose first unit of measure can be found in the linear succession of dynasties) is, essentially, the time of war: the time that allows the masters of cyclical society (*maîtres de la société cyclique*) to construct their personal history by deregulating the static background of the agricultural world. For those moving within that background, "history thus occurs [...] as something alien [to them], as that which they didn't want and against which they thought themselves protected",[15] more precisely: the military conflicts that, by spilling blood, introduce a violent difference in the repetitive rythm of their existence. We stand before a history that leaves fundamentally untouched the history of those who, actually, do not have one: the peasant masses that, despite the successive collapses of empires, continue to walk in circles at the base of a universe that remains impervious to the irreversible, or that is only visited by it in a barbaric and superficial manner.

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[12] (DEBORD 1967: 820): "La temporalisation de l'homme [...] est égale à une humanisation du temps."

[13] See (DEBORD 1967: 820–823).

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[14] (DEBORD 1967: 821): "Le pouvoir qui s'est constitué au-dessus de la pénurie de la société du temps cyclique, [...] s'approprie [...] *la plus-value temporelle* de son organisation du temps social: elle possède pour elle seule le temps irréversible du vivant. [...] Les propriétaires de la plus-value historique détiennent la connaissance et la jouissance des événements vécus."

[15] (DEBORD 1967: 822): "L'histoire survient donc devant les hommes comme un facteur étranger, comme ce qu'ils n'ont pas voulu et ce contre quoi ils se croyaient abrités."

3. The theft of time, act II: the false democratization of irreversible time by the three great abrahamic religions

The societies that flourished in the shadow of the three great abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) faced themselves with an apparent democratization of irreversible time.[16] In fact, for Debord, these religions are the instances of the abstract universal recognition (*reconnaissance universelle abstraite*) of irreversible time – a time that, by dint of those religions, found itself opened to everybody, although only in a illusory manner. For the irreversible time that is affirmed in this context is just a semi-historical (*semi-historique*) time, where history is hindered by myth, and in particular by the myth that identifies historical time with a religious process, scatologically oriented towards the production of a single redemptive event: the coming of God's kingdom.

Read under this light, history only serves as a preparation for the arrival of what lies outside or beyond it as its negation, that is: eternity (to which the value and the truth of human time are pledged). In reality, though they conceive time as a progressive and cumulative movement, semi-historical religions surreptitiously invert the irreversible direction of its march, by viewing it as the vehicle for a *return to eternity*. For them, time mainly constitutes the object of a countdown (*compte à rebours*), where each new instant merely brings us slightly closer to "our beloved homeland", the "place beyond the heavens" from whence we came and whence we shall return.[17] It should therefore come as no surprise that Debord declares that the abrahamic religions simply excommunicate cyclical time from the realm of immanence in order to establish it in the realm of transcendence, chaining in such a gesture the intra-historical future to the need to return man to a supra-historical past (eternity). This means that, due to the force of attraction that eternity wields over it, irreversible time is being forced to run regressively towards that which suppresses it, generating along the way a history whose meaning always lies elsewhere. As Debord writes: "Eternity has left cyclical time and is beyond it. Eternity is the element that demeans the irreversibility of time, that supresses history within history itself, by placing itself […] *on the other side of irreversible time*."[18]

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[16] See (DEBORD 1967: 825–826).

[17] See (PLOTINUS 1924: I, VI, 8, 16): "Φεύγωμεν δὴ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα"; (PLATO, 2003, 247c): "τόπος ὑπέροὺράνιους."

4. The theft of time, act III: the reduction of irreversible time to the time of labor in bourgeois capitalist societies

With the rise to power of the bourgeoisie – the third essential moment of the expropriation process we are here concerned with – we witness the victory of a profoundly historical time (*victoire du temps profondément historique*).[19] That is to say: the liberalization of an irreversible social time that is thus finding its meaning and its truth, not in the territory of myth and transcendence, but in the territory of history and immanence. However, this irreversible time has its value, not *in itself*, but only *within itself*; it is valued, not as an end, but as a means, or by virtue of what it engenders. And that is not the general freedom preached by the bourgeois revolutionary ideology, but the freedom of generalized trade imposed by the bourgeois power.

Strictly speaking, and as Debord emphasizes, the irreversible time enshrined by the bourgeois order is simply the time of labour, a time that, thanks to it, is for the first time unchained from the cyclical to serve a progressive and cumulative movement of production of commodities (*marchandises*). At the genesis of this reduction of time to labor is the fact that the bourgeoisie is the first ruling class to which the exploitation of labor is, not merely *a value*, but *the only value*. Moreover: because it "[…] has justly identified its own value as a ruling class with labor […]", the bourgeoisie must also identify its own progress with the progress of labor.[20]

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[18] (DEBORD 1967: 825): "L'éternité est sorti du temps cyclique. Elle est son au-delà. Elle est l'élément qui rabaisse l'irréversibilité du temps, qui supprime l'histoire dans l'histoire même, en se plaçant […] *de l'autre côté du temps irréversible*." According to our author, it is precisely this religious postponement of true history that caused the millenarist rebellions of the European peasants who demanded, against the Christian church of their time, the immediate establishment of paradise on earth. See (DEBORD 1967: 826–827), where the author sustains an interpretation of millenarism that is diametrically opposed to the one of Norman Cohn. See (COHN 1957).

[19] See (DEBORD 1967: 828–829).

[20] (DEBORD 1967: 828): "[…] la bourgeoisie qui supprime tout privilège, qui ne reconnaît aucune valeur qui ne découle de l'exploitation du travail, a justement identifié au travail sa propre valeur comme classe dominante, et fait du progrès du travail son propre progrès."

By identifying labor as the only value, the bourgeoisie forged a new world, a world that now has at the base of its society (the working masses) the engine of its own irreversible progress. In effect, the history promoted by the bourgeois economy configures, not an action exclusively carried out by the individuals of the ruling classes (as was the case in the context of the agricultural economy), but an action that encompasses in a sectional manner the totality of the "economic agents." "For the first time, the worker at the base of society is not materially *alien to history*, because it is now by dint of its base that society moves irreversibly."[21]

Here is a history that, simultaneously and paradoxically, now enmeshes and segregates those who propel it. Let us be clear: because "[...] the weapon of its victory was precisely the mass production of objects [...]" (in accordance with the laws of the commodity laid out by Marx in the first chapter of *Das Kapital*), the irreversible time coined by the bourgeoisie must be, above all things, the time of things (*temps des choses*).[22] Or, if we'd prefer: a reified time (*temps réifiée*), whose "endless end" consists in the infinite process of production and accumulation of commodities that it substantiates. Well: for our author, this time represents a kind of sociological vortex with a tendency to absorb the totality of the time lived by the groups and the individuals. In fact, the bourgeoisie imposed upon society an irreversible time, whose enjoyment is denied to it. Why? Because, in order to preserve the sole source of its value, the bourgeoisie must exorcize as an aberration every single use of time that does not conform itself to the economic needs of the production. The success of the new ruling class is, therefore, indissociably linked to a new crystallizing of social time, to the reconstitution of a new type of immobility within history. Namely: the immobility that circumscribes to labor, or to the mass production of commodities destined to the abstract space of the market, the set of possibilities opened up by the immanentization of the irreversible. We can consequently say, with Debord, that "the main product that the economic development has transferred from luxurious rarity to common consumption is [...] *history*, but only in the form of the history of the abstract movement of things that dominates all qualitative use of life."[23]

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[21] (DEBORD 1967: 829): "Pour la première fois le travailleur, à la base de la société, n'est pas matériellement étranger à l'histoire, car c'est maintenant par sa base que la société se meut irréversiblement."

[22] (DEBORD 1967: 829): "Le triomphe du temps irréversible est aussi sa métamorphose en *temps des choses*, parce que l'arme de sa victoire a été précisément la production en série des objets [...]." See (MARX, Karl & ENGELS, Friedrich 1962: 49–98).

5. The spectacular epilogue: the invention of a consumable pseudo-cyclical time

Due to the development of capitalism, the irreversible time that characterizes the bourgeois order would be globally unified, thus transforming universal history in an actual reality (since the whole world found itself subjected to the yoke of that time).[24] Despite being everywhere the same, the universal history established by capitalism is, conforming to Debord, no more than a new postponement of history. Better yet: a "ghost history" that consolidates the reduction of the living time of human self-realization to the dead time of mercantile production. In truth, the irreversible time that is affirmed by capitalism as the general time of society is but the commodity-time (*temps-marchandise*) that denotes the unit of measure of the production of things. What does this mean? It means it simply globalizes the complex of specialized interests that constitute it – those of the world market – and therefore can only be seen as a particular time (*temps particulier*) that expands in a universal way.

We are dealing here with an economic time that is a mere abstraction of the irreversible time. At the very least because, proceeding through the accumulation of homogeneous intervals (whose only value resides in the quantity of commodities that can be produced within them), such a time necessarily implies the disqualification of the concrete duration.[25] This is why Debord tells us that the time of capitalist economy stands out mainly by its exchangeable (*échangeable*) nature. It is "exchangeable" in the sense that each of the instants composing it can be indifferently exchanged with the one that came before or the one that will come after it (since all of them contain the exact same potential of quantitative production); but also in the sense that each of those instants contributes to the production of a commodity that can be exchanged against payment in the free and global market.

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[23] (DEBORD 1967: 829): "Le principal produit que le développement économique a fait passer de la rareté luxueuse à la consommation courante est donc l'*histoire*, mais seulement en tant qu'histoire du mouvement abstrait des choses qui domine tout usage qualitatif de la vie."

[24] See (DEBORD 1967: 830 and ff.).

[25] See (DEBORD 1967: 777–778): "[...] la forme-marchandise est de part en part l'égalité à soi-même, la catégorie du quantitatif. C'est le quantitatif qu'elle développe, et elle ne peut se développer qu'en lui" (777).

From the bowels of this time is born the consumable time (*temps consommable*), that is: the time of the alienated consumption that, in the advanced phase of capitalist accumulation, "[...] becomes for the masses a supplementary duty to alienated production."[26] In this context, the totality of the sold labor of a society is globally transformed into a total commodity (*marchandise total*) that must be economically reabsorbed by the very society that produced it. It's a vicious circle that extracts the zombie consumer from the proletarian's corpse:

> Whereas in the primitive phase of capitalist accumulation "political economy sees in the *proletarian* only the *worker*", who must receive the minimum indispensable for the conservation of his labor power, without ever considering him "in his leisure, in his humanity", these ideas of the ruling class are reversed as soon as the production of commodities reaches a level of abundance that requires a surplus of collaboration from the worker. Suddenly redeemed from the total contempt which is clearly shown to him by all the modalities of organization and surveillance of production, this worker rediscovers himself every day, outside of production and under the guise of the consumer, seemingly treated (with rushed politeness) as a great person. At this point, the *humanism of the commodity* takes charge of the worker's "leisure and humanity, simply because political economy now can and must dominate those spheres *as political economy.*[27]

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[26] (DEBORD 1967: 779): "À ce point de la 'deuxième révolution industrielle', la consommation aliénée devient pour les masses un devoir supplémentaire à la production aliénée."

[27] (DEBORD 1967: 779): "Alors que dans la phase primitive de l'accumulation capitaliste 'l'économie politique ne voit dans le *prolétaire* que l'*ouvrier*', qui doit recevoir le minimum indispensable pour la conservation de sa force de travail, sans jamais le considérer 'dans ses loisirs, dans son humanité', cette position des idées de la classe dominante se renverse aussitôt que le degré d'abondance atteint dans la production des marchandises exige un surplus de collaboration de l'ouvrier. Cet ouvrier, soudain lavé du mépris total qui lui est clairement signifié par toutes les modalités d'organisation et surveillance de la production, se retrouve chaque jour en dehors de celle-ci apparemment traité comme une grande personne, avec une politesse empressée, sous le déguisement du consommateur. Alors l'*humanisme de la marchandise* prend en charge 'les loisirs et l'humanité' du travailleur, tout simplement parce que l'économie politique peut et doit maintenant dominer ces sphères *en tant qu'économie politique*." See (MARX, Karl & ENGELS, Friedrich 1968: 588): "Es versteht sich von selbst, daß die

In so doing, the capitalist political economy segregates a social time (the time of consumption) that is a simple excrescence of the commodity-time of production. Its only function is to subject to the needs of the market the totality of the survival (*survie*) of modern societies, in other words: the totality of the daily life that therein takes place outside the realm of labor. We are thus facing an industrially transformed time (*temps transformé par l'industrie*) that extends the logic of production to every field of life. Besides, and as Debord correctly notes, "the time which has its basis in the production of commodities is itself a consumable commodity."[28] Or, at least, a time that presents itself as the raw material of a series of "[...] diversified products that impose themselves on the market as socially organized uses of time" (the summer vacations, for instance).[29]

We therefore understand in which way the social time we are discussing can be justly baptized as "consumable." But, in which way can we say, with our author, that it is also "pseudo-cyclical" (*pseudo-cyclique*)? In as much as, in order to perpetuate the vicious circle of production and consumption, it reappropriates the cyclical rhythm that ruled the life of pre-industrial societies. "Pseudo-cyclical time leans on the natural traces of cyclical time and also composes with them new homologous combinations: the day and the night, the weekly work and the weekly rest, the recurrence of vacation periods."[30]

It is precisely this consumable pseudo-cyclical time (*temps pseudo-cyclique*

Nationalökonomie den *Proletarier*, d. h. den, der ohne Kapital und Grundrente, rein von der Arbeit und einer einseitigen, abstrakten Arbeit lebt, nur als *Arbeiter* betrachtet. Sie kann daher den Satz aufstellen, daß er ebensowohl, wie jedes Pferd, soviel erwerben muß, um arbeiten zu können. Sie betrachtet ihn nicht in seiner arbeitslosen Zeit, als Mensch, sondern überläßt diese Betrachtung der Kriminaljustiz, den Ärzten, der Religion, den statistischen Tabellen, der Politik und dem Bettelvogt."

[28] (DEBORD 1967: 832): "Le temps qui a sa base dans la production des marchandises est lui-même une marchandise consommable [...]."

[29] (DEBORD 1967: 832): "Tout le temps consommable de la société moderne en vient à être traité en matière première de nouveaux produits diversifiés qui s'imposent sur le marché comme emplois du temps socialement organisés." See, also, (DEBORD 1967: 832): "Dans son secteur le plus avancé, le capitalisme concentré s'oriente vers la vente de blocs de temps 'tout equipés', chacun d'eux constituant une seule marchandise unifiée, qui a intégré un certain nombre de marchandises diverses."

30 (DEBORD 1967: 832): "Le temps pseudo-cyclique à la fois prend appui sur les traces naturelles du temps cyclique, et en compose de nouvelles combinaisons homologues: le jour et la nuit, le travail et le repos hebdomadaires, le retour des périodes de vacances."

consommable) that, for Debord, conforms the spectacular time (*temps spectaculaire*), that is: the time that characterizes the society of the spectacle that ours still is. This time is defined as "spectacular" in a double sense, namely: 1) in the sense in which it constitutes the time of the consumption of images (*temps de la consommation des images*) and; 2) in the sense in which it constitutes the image of the consumption of time (*image de la consommation du temps*). To put it simply: that time is the place of the passive absorption of a complex of visual representations (= time of the consumption of images) that, by massively publicizing commodities, also publicize – and because of that – a mercantile mode of using the survival (= image of the consumption of time).

We know it well: in 2018 as in 1967, the image of the consumption of time that is sold to us promotes pleasure (a beer on the beach, a cholocate bar at night...) as life's *nec plus ultra*, for whose cyclical return we must wait. The frantic multiplication of these representations of pleasure is obviously destined to camouflage its polar opposite: the reality of an unpleasant and alienated everyday, that remains chained to the economic needs of production (needs that those representations merely reshape, by identifying the free time as the time of free consumption).[31]

Smothered by the torrent of spectacular images that are constantly falling upon it, the individual life finds itself sadly separated from the mediated history in which it is said to participate. For starters, because individuals do not live (except as passive spectators) the pseudo-events that those images compulsively project, in a movement that ultimately aims at the construction of a pseudo-history, of an *imagined history* that would be able to compensate the historical glaciation of modern society.[32] Thus placed on the margins of mediatic history,

> [The] individual experience of the separated daily life remains without language, without concept, without critical access to its own past, which has been recorded nowhere. It does not communicate itself. It is not understood and is forgotten, to the profit of the false spectacular memory of the non-memorable.[33]

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[31] See (DEBORD 1967: 773).

[32] See (DEBORD 1967: 851): "*temps gelé*." See, also, (DEBORD 1967: 834): "paralysie de l'histoire."

[33] (DEBORD 1967: 834): "Ce vécu individuel de la vie quotidienne séparée reste sans langage, sans concept, sans accès critique à son propre passé qui n'est consigné nulle part. Il ne se

Besides falsifying the life of individuals, the society that allows itself to be governed by the logic of the spectacle endorses and aggravates the capitalist conception of human biology, by understanding it as a merely accessory element from the point of view of production. Hasn't Jonathan Crary shown us that, in the course of the last years, techno-capitalism has elected the time of sleep as its arch-enemy?[34] Indifferent to the physiological needs of the human body, the spectacular economy reveals an equal scorn for the time of individual life, and tries by all means to prevent the worker from seeing it as an irreversible process of usury. That is to say: as an exercise in self-realization that is fatally promised to death. In fact, the conscience of death can have no seat at the table of an economy that, in order to place the individual at the service of its goals – those of infinite production – needs above all to spectacularly falsify its time, affirming it as a sequence in itself infinite of events that no ending can haunt. We are dealing with a social elision of death that, according to Debord, results in the social elision of life. Or, at least, in the social elision of life understood as a time that, being finite, is for that reason all the more *urgent*.

"Time", writes our author on the footsteps of Hegel, "is the *necessary* alienation, [...] the medium where the subject realizes himself by losing himself, becomes other in order to become truly himself."[35] But, it is the exact opposite of that necessary alienation that modern capitalist societies impose on us, more precisely: the alienation suffered by a subject that, in finding himself separated at birth from its own activity (an activity which merely produces a world that is alien to him),[36] finds himself inherently disappropriated from his time. Because it petrifies the individual's movement of self-determination, this form of social alienation must by force be overcome. How? Through the realization of a typically situationist revolutionary programme:[37] the humanization of the everyday that, for Debord, must have

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comunique pas. Il est incompris et oublié au profit de la fausse mémoire spectaculaire du non-mémorable."

[34] See (CRARY 2013).

[35] (DEBORD 1967: 835): "Le temps est l'aliénation *nécessaire*, comme le montrait Hegel, le milieu où le sujet se réalise en se perdant, devient autre pour devenir la vérité de lui-même." Cfr. (HEGEL 1986a: 132–133), among many other possible texts.

[36] See (DEBORD 1967: 773–774).

37 See, for instance, (VANEIGEM 1967).

as its foundation "[...] a playful model of irreversible time of individuals and groups, [...] in which *independent federated times* are simultaneously present."[38]

One may perhaps say – and not without reason – that for someone who has so thoroughly diagnosed the disease, Debord is rather vague (to say the least) about the method for its cure. In any case, *La Société du Spectacle* points clearly to the starting point of such a cure: the simple (but already revolutionary) claim to our right to live fully (in) our very own historical time.[39]

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[38] (DEBORD 1967: 836): "Le projet révolutionnaire d'une société sans classes, d'une vie historique généralisée, est le projet d'un dépérissement de la mesure sociale du temps, au profit d'un modèle ludique de temps irréversible des individus et des groupes, modèle dans lequel sont simultanément présents des *temps indépendants fédérés*. C'est le programme d'une réalisation totale, dans le milieu du temps, du communisme qui supprime 'tout ce qui existe indépendamment des individus'." See (MARX, Karl & ENGELS, Friedrich 1973: 368): "Das Bestehende, was der Kommunismus schafft, ist eben die wirkliche Basis zur Unmöglichmachung alles von den Individuen unabhängig Bestehenden, sofern dies Bestehende dennoch nichts als ein Produkt des bisherigen Verkehrs der Individuen selbst ist."

[39] See (DEBORD 1967: 829): "Dans la revendication de *vivre* le temps historique qu'il fait, le prolétariat trouve le simple centre inoubliable de son projet révolutionnaire; et chacune des tentatives jusqu'ici brisées d'exécution de ce projet marque un point de départ possible de la vie nouvelle historique."

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FROM THE VOID TO THE IDEA: DISSIDENCE AND EXPERIMENTATION IN ALAIN BADIOU'S PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

In this paper we intend to interrogate Badiou's dissidence from previous conceptions of philosophy and understand, at the same time, the role of experimentation in Badiou's work. The theme of dissident negation and affirmative experimentation is recurrent in Badiou's discussion of the four truth procedures, but is less discussed regarding the role Badiou reserves for philosophy itself. We will try to discuss that role by dislocating some of his considerations regarding the non-philosophical domains of truth (love, science, art, politics) to the discussion of philosophy's role itself. We will argue that Badiou, like Althusser, denies the philosopher the role of truth-teller and legislator by conceiving philosophy as an empty space, only to reinstate the philosopher's sovereignty in the figure of the judge.

Keywords
Badiou, Philosophy, Negation, Affirmation, Althusser

1. From dissidence to experimentation

How can we account for Badiou's inclusion in a book dedicated to the theme of Experimentation and Dissidence in philosophy? If we understand the conjunction of experimentation and dissidence to be a certain dwelling in the margins of philosophy, or the experience of being outside-in in philosophy, then certainly Badiou would not be the first philosopher to come to our mind, all the more so if we take into consideration the field of post-war French philosophy and the myriad of philosophical dissidents that populated it.

It's not so much the rejection, in Badiou's writings, of a supposed end of philosophy – after all, such a rejection of all kinds of ends ended up being yet another mode of the discourse of "ends"[1] – but the firm negation that philosophical writing must itself answer to the challenge of the contemporary by questioning the possibility of its continuation: the possibility of philosophy itself. Disregarding such questioning, Badiou doesn't offer a justification for philosophy against a supposed imperative of the historical moment, but an affirmative manifesto for its continued existence.[2] Unlike others that came out of the French philosophical moment of the sixties,[3] Badiou never questioned the continued relevance of philosophy on account of the catastrophes that marked the twentieth-century.

Even more problematic is Badiou's own conception of philosophy, in the form that it assumed since the publication of *Being and Event* in 1988: a form that he himself has no problem to label as classic,[4] that is, a form of doing philosophy without any regard for the post-Kantian critique of metaphysics. This means, in the case of Badiou, giving pride of place to concepts such as Subject and Truth and, what's more, to declare that truths are universally valid, independently of the cultural context that saw their emergence or of the language in which they were originally formulated.[5] Furthermore, for Badiou, philosophy is indissolubly tied to that most classical of disciplines, ontology, understood in Aristotelian fashion as the description of being-as-being, i.e., being outside any qualitative determination. It is because ontology is philosophy's unsurpassable horizon that Heidegger was declared to be, by Badiou, in 1988, the last "universally recognizable philosopher",[6] a statement that – for all the distances that Badiou takes in relation to Heidegger – is nevertheless a form of self-inscription in a lineage for which the question of being takes precedence over that of beings.

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[1] See Tusa & Badiou 2017.

[2] See Badiou 1989 and Badiou 2009.

[3] See Worms 2009: 467–480; Maniglier 2011.

[4] "To put it another way, we can state that Deleuze's philosophy, like my own, moreover, is resolutely *classical*. And, in this context, classicism is relatively easy to define. Namely, may be qualified as classical any philosophy that does not submit to the critical injunctions of Kant. Such a philosophy considers, for all intents and purposes, the Kantian indictment of metaphysics as null and void (...)". Badiou 2000: 44–5.

[5] For a defense and exposition of Badiou's conception of universalism, see Badiou 1997.

[6] "Along with Heidegger, it will be maintained that philosophy as such can only be re-assigned on the basis of the ontological question." Badiou 2005 [1998]: 2.

The reference to Heidegger's redirection of philosophy and to the Aristotelian formulation of ontology is, furthermore, a form of taking his distances in relation to post-Hegelian determinate ontologies, such as Marxists social ontologies, or what Foucault called a "critical ontology of ourselves": ontology, for Badiou, must be non-critical in its rejection of the Kantian prescription of epistemic limits, and so must also reject the historical and anthropological determinations contained in Foucault's formula. Ontology proper, for Badiou, must be subtracted from history or from any other specific category of objects. In fact, ontology is subject-less, in the sense that an object is something already taken in a relation to a subject,[7] and ontology's task is to account for being in its pure indeterminacy, before any qualitative attribution.

So, for Badiou, there is a proper ontology whose recognition and appointment are thus incumbent upon a "philosophy as such".[8] This gesture, that can be interpreted as an identitarian defense of the discipline of philosophy against the challenge posed by some figures of modernity – of which the triplet Marx-Nietzsche-Freud is usually presented as the stand-in – was of course accused of conservatism and neo-classicism.[9] If Badiou is someone who, in his writings, strives to incorporate the lessons of avant-garde art and revolutionary politics, his conception of philosophy, so goes the argument, remains closed to the subversive character that he celebrates in the four domains of truth.

We can, however, look at the meaning of the doublet experimentation / dissidence from another angle and regard them not exclusively as a celebration of philosophical marginality, but as another name for the dialectical relation between affirmation and negation or the place of the negative and the affirmative in the production of philosophical texts. More precisely, if we subtract dissidence and experimentation from the possible speculative and prescriptive roles they can have, this conceptual pair may prove fruitful in understanding Badiou's relation to the philosophical tradition and to the place of philosophy itself.

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[7] See Badiou 1988.

[8] See Badiou 2005: 2.

[9] See Osborne 2007.

The problem of negation was central in Badiou's so-called red years, i.e., the period in which his theoretical production was essentially an extension of his political militancy in Maoist circles.[10] In his (and his co-authors) works of the seventies, – The rational kernel of *Hegelian dialectics* (1972), *Theory of contraction* (1975) and *Of ideology* (1976) – negation assumed a purely political and social meaning, one derived essentially from Maoist-Marxist dialectics. It didn't specify any particular form of relation to the philosophical tradition nor was it posed as a moment in the process of creation of a novelty. Even if Badiou would later see in these texts the attempt at "inventing the philosophical resources to accompany, to reinforce, the philosophical novelty that comes with the age",[11] the subordination of the three works to the political language of Maoist activism would later lead Badiou to distance himself from what he called their "suture" to the political condition.[12]

After the publication of *Being and event*, the question of negation and affirmation would take a very different turn in Badiou's writings, either with regard to the non-philosophical truth conditions, or in relation to philosophy and its relation to tradition. When considering negation and affirmation in the non-philosophical domains that are the conditions of philosophy, politics loses its exclusivity as the sole truth domain. Negation is also no longer at the center of truth-processes since these are, for Badiou, the result of an evental rupture which marks, at the same time, a break with the existing situation and the creation, by a faithful subject, of something new. Regarding philosophy, *Being and event* and, one year later, *Manifesto for philosophy*, are an affirmation of its possibility, but a possibility whose conditions must be rethought. If Badiou has no consideration whatsoever by the theme of the end of philosophy, he defends, in *L'Être et l'événement* and *Manifeste pour la philosophy* a profound reorientation of the discipline. It is worth considering this reorientation itself from the point of view of the articulation between negation and creation in Badiou's renewed conception of philosophy.

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[10] See Badiou 2012.

[11] See Badiou 2012: 7.

[12] *Suture* here describes the case where philosophy recognizes only one of his non-philosophical conditions as the exclusive domain where truth occurs. For other uses of the concept *suture* in the work of Badiou see the entry "suture" in the *Badiou Dictionary*, written by Olivia Lucca Fraser in Corcoran 2015: 341–346.

Badiou approaches the question of negation and its relation to affirmation or creation in a series of texts and lectures written in the last decade and a half,[13] where he deals mostly with politics or with the logical or formal aspects regarding the four conditions of philosophy (politics, art, science and love) and not so much with philosophy itself. But we can, from Badiou's prescriptions on the relation between negation and affirmation regarding the conditions of philosophy withdraw some considerations regarding philosophy itself.

2. The event as dissident experimentation

Following Spinoza's dictum that every determination is negation, Badiou is clear about the negative aspect involved in every creative novelty: every production of the new has a negative relation to the objective laws of the world where that novelty is produced: "In my philosophical vision, in a given world, we have something new only if the rational or conventional laws of this world are interrupted, or put out of their normal effects, by something which happens, and that I name an Event".[14] The expression "creative novelty" has a precise meaning, and must be understood outside of its current connotations and associations with the arts or with forms of high-value cognitive labor such as design and programming. Badiou's understanding of what constitutes a novelty rests ultimately on a negative category, that of the non-calculable: for something to be considered a novelty it must contradict the laws of the world in which it emerges but, if it restricts itself to that contradiction, then its identity would be solely dependent on those laws, and thus it would not be a novelty. The creation of the new is the result of the naming of a truth by a subject, a process that is initiated with what Badiou calls an event, which is at the same time a break with the existing situation and the inauguration of something new. In this sense, an event is not coextensive with any occurrence whatsoever: something happens and that happening cannot be deduced from the positive givens of a situation. A conjunction of the laws that rule a world and of the knowledge recognized by those laws governs what is more or less expectable in a situation, from everyday situations to rare occasions. The event escapes this calculable precisely because it is unthinkable according to the norms that regulate the appearance of phenomena in a determinate world. Otherwise, it would be the reiteration of the already given.

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[13] See Badiou 2007, Badiou 2008, Bdiou 2016: 101–112.

[14] See Badiou 2008: 1878.

That is why every truth, for Badiou, is the creation of something impossible, in the sense that it represents the coming, into a determinate world, of something not deemed possible according to the norms that regulate the appearance of objects in that world. In this sense every novelty is non-transitive to the situation where it first appears, whether we're talking about revolutionary politics, artistic innovations, an authentic amorous encounter or a scientific discovery. If ontology, for Badiou, is a discourse on non-determinate being, the domain of truths cannot be the object of a determinate ontology because it constitutes an exception to the order of being. The event cannot be deduced from any descriptive account of reality, which means rejecting theories of the event as expression of something that, ontologically, precedes it. In politics this means, for example, rejecting conceptions of political action in which politics is presented as the antagonistic expression of social and economic forces[15] that have ontological priority. This is an important point of contention with some Marxist philosophers, like Daniel Bensaïd[16] and Antonio Negri,[17] for whom the delinking between being (in this case the concrete determinations of historical situations) and event renders not only the articulation between theory and action, but also every form of everyday political organization useless. As Bruno Bosteels has argued in numerous occasions, such accusations may be justified by some of Badiou's writings in the period that followed *Being and event*, but they also tend to overlook the numerous places, in Badiou's work, where he insists on the articulation between being and event, namely the work carried out by the faithful subject to force its consequences into the situation where the event emerged in the first place.[18]

Badiou's theory of the event was, after all, a form of re-directing the place of the subject within a philosophical thinking of change and an attempt to solve a theoretical and practical challenge posed at once by philosophical deconstruction and by the failure of revolutionary movements in upholding the promises of emancipation:[19] how to advance a theory of the subject without which change processes are – for Badiou – unthinkable,[20] without reinstating the sovereignty of the classical conception of subjectivity? Badiou intended, at the same time, the destitution of a certain conception of subjectivity, taken to be the primary locus of action – as in consciousness centered philosophies – and the reinstatement of the subject as an essential node in any process of change – against the erasure of the subjectivity in structuralism and deconstruction. The subject of the event is not the origin of truth – he declares his fidelity to something of which he is not the origin or the source – but his action is fundamental for the event to inscribe itself in a situation and for change to take place.

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[15] See Badiou 2011a

[16] See Bensaïd 2004.

[17] See Negri 2011: 11–12.

[18] Bosteels 2011: 306–309.

Subjective action, in Badiou's theory, can therefore be said to be ontologically unanchored, in the sense that there are no ontological guarantees regarding the processes of truth: it is in this sense that Badiou's philosophy was called post-foundational,[21] in that the subject acts without the ontological reassurance of an objective guarantee. Such objective guarantees, in the domain of politics, assumed, in the twentieth-century, the form of a belief that history – conceived as totality provided with sense and direction – was on the side of some subjects while it condemned others to its dustbin. In the same way, and with a much stronger ideological currency in our own times, mainstream classical economics, which constitutes the ideological backbone of most economic opinions circulating in the public space, is grounded in specific anthropological beliefs regarding a determinate human nature: humans are driven by self-interest and their actions are governed by individual forms of calculation destined to optimize their gains vis-a-vis others. It is the absence of objective guarantees when it comes to truths that opens, for Badiou, the space of experimentation.[22] Every true novelty, or every novelty as truth-process, is necessarily experimental, operating without objective grounding and in a horizon of indeterminacy.

[19] This failure is discussed at length in Badiou 1998.

[20] See Badiou & Engelmann 2015: 3–21.

[21] See Marchart 2007: 1–10; 109–133.

[22] "(...) to open up a new situation, a new possibility, it is essential that there be a new creativity of the situation. There has to be something that is an actual opening, which is what I name 'event'. What is an event? An event is simply that which interrupts the law, the rules and the structure of the situation, and thus creates a new possibility." Badiou 2014: 47.

The insistence of Badiou on the universality and eternity of truths, as well as his reference to Saint Paul[23] and to Kierkegaard[24] has lead to accusations of ontological dualism, and of his conception of the event as having a transcendent or miraculous character.[25] But such transcendence, as well as any form of dualism, are consistently denied by Badiou, who claims a strict immanentism for his philosophy. *Logics of worlds* famously opens with the declaration that, against what he deems the axiomatic conviction of the age – that "there only bodies and languages" – there are only bodies and languages, except that there are truths.[26] Truths, however, are not, from an ontological point of view, transcendent to worlds, nor do they constitute a different ontological domain to that of bodies and languages: being, for Badiou, is univocal. A truth is simply the multiplicity of consequences of an event and not something that, from an ontological point of view, can be considered as exterior to the world: it is a set of consequences *in the world*, and not outside of it. In that sense, truths are a supplement to the materiality of bodies and languages, immanent exceptions, rather than divine interventions. Negation and creation are thus strictly immanent affairs and negation, as we have seen, being an essential part of any truth process, is a subordinated part, in that the central aspect of any truth process is the invention of until then unforeseen possibilities.

It is not the case, of course, that, for Badiou, every dissident negation is necessarily a moment in a process of creative experimentation, and not every change is the result of an event. There are many degrees of change, and most of them do not correspond to the kind that Badiou refers to as an event. Only a maximal degree of change corresponds to that. The creation of new possibilities occurs when there is, in a specific world, a maximal change in the intensity with which one or more elements appear in that world: an element whose degree of existence was minimal – which Badiou names the inexistent[27] – acquires a maximum degree of visibility in that world, like the organised proletariat in the Russian Revolution, noise in avant-garde music and abstract forms in modernist painting. If Badiou's theory of change, presented in its most sophisticated form in *Logics of worlds*, accounts for different degrees of change – from indiscernible transformations to the violent break of the event – it seems that the purpose is none other than to celebrate it in its most intense forms: those that deserve the name of truths and are destined for eternity.

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[23] Badiou 1997.

[24] See Badiou 2008: 425–435; Badiou 2010: 95.

[25] Bensaïd 2004.

[26] Badiou 2008: 1–4.

[27] See Badiou 2008a: 321–324.

If the task of the philosopher is that of providing a conceptual space of compossibility of the different truths of the time, then the contemporary philosopher must recognize the creative experiments that constitute truth processes. But what determines a degree of intensity in a world? An event is an event because it represents the maximal change of intensity of the inexistent of a world: but what is a maximal change of intensity? If we take into account the continuities between the situation before and after the event, the position that an event took place can be questioned, not from a reactive point of view, i.e., from the point of view of someone who defends the order negated by the event, but from the point of view of the event itself. Such questioning would be one for which the continuities between the event and the pre-evental world are still strong. From the perspective of some participants in the Russian Revolution, the degree of change, concerning the proletariat, was far from being maximal, since the seizure of state power by the Bolshevik party represented the continuation, over time, of the structures of that same state power itself,[28] its capture by an elite, and the continued subjugation of the working masses, even if that subjugation was carried out in their name.

The recognition that something happened that changed the situation in an unmistakable way is not, according to Badiou, the work of the philosopher, but that of the faithful subject who has to find new names for what took place and force the consequences of the event in the situation. But, as we discussed above, the subject works, in the evental situation, without the guarantees provided by the certainty that history or objectivity are on his side. In the same way, the philosopher does not find in the objective action of the subject such guarantees because the evental character of a change is itself a matter of dispute among different subject positions, even if we restrict ourselves to subjects who are faithful to the experimental side of the event. We believe this is an important point from which to interrogate Badiou's own conception of philosophy. To do so, we will first take a short detour through one of Badiou's masters, Louis Althusser, whose own interrogation about the role of philosophy is important, in our view, to question Badiou's.

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[28] Dardot & Laval 2017.

3. Althusser redivivo: the recommencement of philosophy

For Althusser, the problem posed by the role of philosophy is indissociable from its relation to two other forms of knowledge: science and ideology, with opposite epistemic and political valences. If ideology is a form of naturalization of existing social relations, and thus of the reproduction of existing relations of power and domination, science is what allows to denaturalize the existing social arrangements, namely the science of historical materialism, inaugurated by Marx. Althusser does not read in Marx the realization of philosophy nor the accomplishment of its role, as the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach has lead some to believe. But the emergence of the science of historical materialism calls for a redirection of philosophy's role, and for a radical questioning regarding its possibility. What is left for philosophy to do when the task of explaining reality (natural or social) is incumbent to science? The answer, for Althusser, involves a double determination: on the one side, philosophy must position itself regarding science and ideology and philosophy must take part, inside the philosophical field, in the disputes that traverse the field itself: philosophy represents "class struggle in theory".[29]

This meant that, for Althusser, the continued possibility of philosophy involves a new role for it as the conceptual background to the science of historical materialism in the contemporary configuration of the secular battlefield between idealism and materialism. This doesn't mean that philosophy must assume a determinate doctrine or position that would count as materialist in opposition to certain theoretical contents that would be deemed idealist. Labeling a theory materialist or idealist on account of the primacy given to being or representation, matter or language, mode of production or subjectivity is, in the end, reproducing modes of thought that represent the mainstream in the history of philosophy, a mainstream that Althusser deems essentially idealist.

[29] Althusser 1998: 153.

This form of opposing idealism and materialism is itself idealist, so Althusser claims: idealism is not so much a determinate content but the framework in which such discussion is conducted, a framework that must itself be refused if philosophy is to stop reproducing dominant ideological modes of intellectual production,[30] what Althusser called "la philosophie produite comme philosophie".[31] No wonder then that the handful of names that opposed formal idealist reasoning have been mostly ignored or underappreciated by the histories of philosophy. A materialist turn can thus only come in the form of a voiding of content, a voiding that for Althusser must have its counterpart in a prescriptive openness to the marxist science of historical materialism.[32] Philosophy, when delivered from idealism and its speculative discourse, must necessarily depart from the concrete findings of science or else enjoin the ideological ranks of the dominant classes.

In a similar vein Alberto Toscano once remarked, a propos Badiou, that materialism[33] may not refer to a determinate philosophical doctrine and instead be the name of a counterhegemonic position in the field of philosophy itself. This seems to us to be a good starting point, one that takes as its point of departure the materiality of the philosophical text itself: a materialism that is more interested in the effects produced by the text than in tracing it to the objective social field of classes and class interests of which he is supposedly the expression. Leaving aside the question of the materialist or idealist character of Badiou's philosophy, we can focus instead on the gesture itself represented by Badiou's philosophical strategy: to put it in a formula inspired by Althusser, not so much Badiou's philosophy of politics but Badiou's politics of philosophy.

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[30] "Je précise: ce matérialisme n'est pas une philosophie qui devrait être élaborée en système pour mériter ce nom. (...) ce qui est vraiment décisif dans le marxisme c'est qu'il représente une position en philosophie." Althusser 1994: 35.

[31] Althusser 1994: 61.

[32] For Althusser Marx's discoveries belong to the scientific rather than to the philosophical domain. Althusser 1994.

[33] Presentation in the conference *Materialism today* that took place in Birkbeck College in 2007.

4. From history to the void

In a sense, Badiou's politics of philosophy represents a further opening of the discipline to the domain of the non-philosophical, when we compare it to Althusser: the non-philosophical domains of truth are not restricted to politics or science, as was the case in Althusser and so philosophy's radical openness to what is not philosophy extends much further than the scientific materialism of the science of history. Formally similar is Badiou's negation of structuralist determinism, namely of forms of social and economic determinism when it comes to explain political change: political action is not the expression of class positions occupied by the agents, and revolutionary change is the process whereby maximal visibility is granted to what before was an empty place. Philosophy is, in the process, emptied out of its traditional objects and becomes a space of accommodation of truths that are non-philosophical. A vacant room to be filled, for sure, but one in which the thinking of the compossibility of the different contemporary truths is its historical task.

Badiou once remarked that the history of philosophy is a subtractive one, a depuration in which every great philosophy is a subtraction to the jurisdiction of philosophy of something that previously was considered to be its object.[34] He himself subtracts truth itself from philosophy, displacing it to the four outside conditions. Furthermore, the central question of classical philosophy – the ontological question of being-qua-being – is not the object, for Badiou, of a speculative metaphysics, but the object of mathematics.

The emptying out of content, however, may make us lose sight of the highly complex architecture of the room itself and of the place of the architect. What is the role of the philosopher in philosophy when the latter is conceived as an open space? And, what's more important, if philosophy always comes after the processes of truth themselves, what role can it possibly play in concrete situations of change?

If, with Badiou, the philosopher is discharged of his former sovereign role as truth-teller and legislator, such a discharging is accompanied by an opposite gesture, where a sovereignty of another kind is affirmed: not that of the Kantian lawgiver but that of the judge. The room may have been emptied of its philosophical content, to give room to the non-philosophical experiments in the four conditioning domains, but is it not the case that, in the end, the sovereignty of the philosophical subject is reinstated with a set of rules of access to the vacant room? Badiou is against the philosopher-legislator (against normative political philosophy or prescriptive aesthetics) but adopts the role of gatekeeper. But this figure of the gatekeeper is a legislator of sorts, in that he is the one that sets the rules of access to the restricted club of eternal truths. Badiou wants to empty out philosophy of the traditional speculative gesture of classical metaphysics: like Althusser, he redirects philosophy's mission to the active receiving of truths in the outside domains of art, politics, science and love. But, at the same time, he wants to keep something of classical metaphysics, namely the role of guardian of universal and eternal truths. Even if truths occur outside philosophy, philosophy is the ultimate guarantor of their acknowledgement as such.

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[34] Badiou 2011: 92.

This is only possible because a determinate ontology is refused in the name of the prescriptive metaontological imperative of staying within the bounds of a description of indeterminate being-qua-being. If, on the one side, indeterminateness appears to open in philosophy a void to be filled with the historically determinate non-philosophical truth procedures, it paves the way, in the end, for the return of the philosopher as master.

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NEGATIVE POTENTIALITIES. GIORGIO AGAMBEN AND THE POLITICS OF INOPEROSITY

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyze Giorgio Agamben's contribution to post-foundational political thought by means of his concept of inoperosity. This concept is a key to thinking the relation between aesthetics and politics and to understanding the ways in which literature develops a space of critique and resistance through experimentation, indeterminacy of meaning and unreadability. Firstly, the paper will deal with Agamben's reading of Aristotle in order to clarify his interpretation of terms such as potentiality and energy. Secondly, it will explain how Agamben understands inoperosity as the task of a politics to come, and it will consider this concept through Melville's character Bartleby. Finally, it will try to confront the concept of inoperosity with Nancy's "*désoeuvrement*" with the purpose of exploring the reception of Agamben's ideas and its philosophical significance.

Keywords

Inoperosity, Political Ontology, Potentiality, Biopolitics, Anarchy

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> Get up, stand up: stand up for your rights!
> Bob Marley

Introduction: Sitting

While writing this text, I could not help thinking about the characters in some of my favorite novels. The great Jakob von Gunten, who learned to become a nobody in the Institut Benjamenta, or the greater Bartleby, a scrivener at the Dead Letters Office who insisted on his preference not to do anything, or rather, on his preference "not to". I recalled Kafka, the civil servant, explaining in his journals how his incapability to write—not his capability—was the driving force of his texts, and Bouvard and Pécuchet's love for copying. In all these cases, I guess, we are faced with a sort of unproductive writing, and an insignificant form of life. But at the same time, we are dealing with some of the most relevant novels in Modern (Western) Literature. Should we see this as a coincidence? If we still think that literature can be a space of resistance against the naturalization of language; if we still think that literature, as a space in which meaning is radically indeterminate, offers the possibility of imagining a different way of imagining, that is, the possibility of thinking in different ways; in sum, if we still think literature is a political space, then these figures of unproductivity and insignificance should help us build up a critique of contemporary politics.

But how can we think these figures politically? All of them are far from political life, and further from the political realm of action, reaction, revolution, and so on: they are not standing up for their rights, they do not participate in politics as a practice of the standing up. But they are neither on the side of the president, of course, nor on the opposite side: they are just administrative assistants, bureaucrats who are neither sitting in Parliament nor staging a sit-in demonstration. They are just sitting apart, sitting far from any political chair, post, or square. Not within politics, but sitting apart. In this sense, and if we trust etymology, they are genuine *dissidents* ("dis-sidere", literally "to sit apart"): they are remote, removed from any political structure; they just sit apart, they silently disagree (in this sense, they dissent from dissidence too). Their way of sitting expresses a refusal of the very ontology which sustains politics, that is, the ontology of operativity. Their forms of life depict a different kind of politics—maybe a politics yet to come, based precisely on a lack of production, a lack of action, a sort of inoperosity. That is why, I believe, we should consider them from the perspective of Giorgio Agamben's thought.

The Biopolitics of Operativity

Let us start by considering Agamben's relation to Michel Foucault's biopolitics. According to Foucault, biopolitics is the specific form that politics adopts at the end of the 18th century, with the birth of the social and scientific discourses that develop the medicalization of life and the control of population. Following Foucault, politics is no longer the exercise of sovereign power through the application of a legal order, but rather the government of the population as a species, that is, in its biological constitution (Foucault 1994, 185). Power is not negative; it is not a matter of prohibition: it is rather affirmative, and its task is to produce a positive subjectivity, a positive population, and a positive social order. At that historical moment, then, the whole sphere of life and death becomes political: health, education, nutrition, and disease are matters of the state.

As an inheritor of Foucault's philosophy but also of Heidegger's, Agamben's view of biopolitics is quite different. For him, biopolitics is not the characteristic way of doing politics at a particular historical period, but rather the very constitution of politics: Biopolitics is the name for our political ontology. While Foucault identifies the birth of biopolitics with a historical change, Agamben only observes a difference of degree, an intensification: in our times, that is, the times of World Wars and extermination camps, we are experimenting the most intensive exercise of a biopower that has always been operating and shaping Western civilization.

As we know, Agamben regards biopolitics as a political machine that produces the difference between a political, meaningful life (*bios*) and a life which is non-political, that is, natural, meaningless, unformed (*zoê*): a bare life. While political life is produced, formed, and protected by law, this bare life is both presupposed and denied in politics. It is what is excluded from politics but at the same time included as the non-political, as a political exception. In this regard, the distinctions slave/master, state of nature/rule of law, savage/civilized, insane/sane, but also Jew/Aryan, undocumented immigrants/national citizens, sick/healthy are the different productions of this machine of exceptions. Biopower produces a life that has to be protected, and rejects other dimensions of life, which are radically vulnerable and can therefore be exterminated, persecuted or attacked. By doing this, Agamben is crossing the Foucaultian tradition of biopolitics with the political theology of authors such as Carl Schmitt.

But, if biopolitics is a kind of ontology, it is an ontology of action. Agamben reads Aristotle to reconstruct a sort of archeology of this ontology in which political life, meaningful life, can only be understood as an operative life. Aristotle distinguishes between potentiality (*dynamis*) and act (*energeia*) in order to explain human activity. He also points out that potentiality is always capable of itself and of its contrary, which means that potentiality is not fully translated into acts: there is a "potentiality of not" that the agent can exhibit when he is not acting or doing his art, as an architect while he is not designing a building. But even if Aristotle tries to maintain the difference between potentiality and act, the stress always lies on the second. In this way, when Aristotle wonders if there is a properly human activity, he defines it as a political *praxis*, that is, a *good* living oriented by the actions of a being with logos. Politics is defined then as the realm of praxis with logos, the realm of activities which find their goal in themselves and are structured through logos. To this respect, Agamben's interpretation is contained in his translation of the term *energeia* as "being-in-work". Politics and ethics will be, then, the spaces in which being is deployed as a logical (rational) operativity.

The second move in this archeology is made by Christian theology, according to Agamben. It develops a triple strategy: firstly, it preserves the separation potentiality/action and the primacy of the latter. Secondly, it dissolves potentiality in man's freedom to act, that is to say, in his relation to God and his essential erring and failure, which are defined as sin. Thirdly and finally, Christian theology introduces will as a key term in its anthropology to limit this potentiality and make it governable: when will commands, potentiality is reduced to follow the commands of will, to be positive and to become indiscernible from action. Will is what connects an action with its agents, what transforms actions into something which belongs to a subject, which is appropriable by him. In this sense, there is no action without will, and no will without its commands and duties: actions are justified by these duties and commands, and only considered as meaningful and valuable from this perspective. This new schema of anthropology inaugurates Modernity, essentially different from Ancient thought in its replacement of potentiality by will. And the inclusion of will in ethics and politics implies the category of responsibility: since actions are appropriable by a subject, he must answer for them, account for them. The ontology of operativity, then, depicts a subjectivity that has a will that produces his actions, and that is responsible for them; a subjectivity that has to answer for them before a law or an authority that will consider them to be right or wrong. This authority is interiorized in the form of duty.

What is interesting here is the way in which the terminology of law permeates ethics and politics and takes up the place of concepts such as happiness or potentiality. The link between will and action is established within the subjectivity firstly with the concept of sin, and then with the concept of guilt. A human being is responsible for something because he chooses to act one way or another, and this responsibility makes him guilty of what he does. Guilt marks an individual, singular responsibility of appropriable acts. In this sense, since the subject always has will, he is always guilty. In brief, the primacy of action develops a subjectivity structured as freedom – will – responsibility – guilt – action – duty.

What Agamben shows is that this structure of operativity is at the same time the foundation of law and the foundation of ethics and politics—as if the conditions of possibility of a crime were the very same conditions of possibility of any action. Agamben establishes this connection through the term *karman*, which, following Benveniste, means at the same time "crime" and "work, operation" (2017a, 47–8): guilt and responsibility, then being the effects of will, allow authority to impute actions to a subjectivity which is conceived as a substance (a guilty substance) through this very imputation. In this respect, Agamben's biopolitics is always a biopolitics of operosity. In it, the political and meaningful life is the operative one: a life constituted by a series of responsible actions that follows an imperative (law or duty). The meaningless, bare life is the life that does not produce right actions, that is inoperative and must be censored, sanctioned, forbidden, and persecuted. The biopolitics of operosity builds up the foundation of Law, and Law is continuously producing and preserving this biopolitics through the exercise of a violence that Law itself legitimates through the form of punishment and sanction. Since the sphere of law coincides with the sphere of politics and ethics, life is always being shaped and produced by the power that judges actions right or wrong, meaningful or meaningless, and that makes all subjects potentially guilty.

With the ontology of action as a biopolitics of operosity, Agamben is showing that any action, fair or unfair, revolutionary or conservative, critical or not with the State or Law, is invoking the same structure of operativity and power. Acting is not the solution, Agamben says. Any activity presupposes the structure of responsibility, duty, and guilt which legitimates the exercise of domination through the legitimized violence of Law, and which continues to produce the political exception. No Revolution, no experimentation, no demonstration would help us escape from the realm of power. In this sense, Agamben is provocatively suggesting that a democracy and a dictatorship demand the same logics of exception and cannot therefore imply any substantial improvement. There are just different versions of the same biopolitics of operativity, and life in them is always being shaped and dominated by power.

Inoperosity, gesture, negative potentiality

Aristotle, however, rejected a possibility that could have changed everything, and which Agamben retakes in order to question the primacy of action and will, and to set politics and ethics free from their contradictions (Agamben 2017a, 100). The rejected possibility was that the human being is essentially *argos* (2017b, 48), that he does not have an activity that properly belongs to him: the human being is the animal without specific *praxis*, and maybe this aspect conforms his very political space. Agamben considers that Aristotle's choice of rational *praxis* as the proper being-in-work (*energeia*) of the human being was "tragical", in the sense that "without actions there could not be tragedy" (*Poet.* 1450a, 14–20). On the contrary, Agamben, in his *Pulcinella*, invites us to think politics through comedy, where the character "agisce per imitare il suo carattere, le azioni che compie gli sono eticamente indifferenti e non lo toccano in alcun modo. Per questo, nella loro forma esemplare, esse si convertono in lazzi, cioè in azioni e gesti insensati il cui fine è soltanto quello di interrompere l'azione e liberare il carattere da ogni possibile imputatione di responsabilità" (2016a, 51–2).

Through this comical perspective, Agamben is trying to displace the whole building of biopolitics as operativity. If the human being is *argos*, he does not have a specific praxis, so the primacy of action is cancelled, and the distinction potentiality (*dynamis*)/activity (*energeia*) is relativized. If the human being is *argos*, he develops and shows in his being-in-work his lack of specific operativity: he actualizes the inactualizable, he operates a constitutive lack of operativity, he is inoperative: he has nothing to do and he is always doing nothing. And that means that in every action the human being is expressing both his potentiality of doing something *and* his potentiality of not doing it. Every act of communication is a concrete *speech act* and also the expression of a pure communicability, the manifestation of a capability to communicate, and it is this communicability that matters to Agamben. Since there is no teleology of action, human activity is not accomplishing anything or actualizing a potentiality, but rather trying, attempting, and testing, and through these actions—which are no longer actions, but rather gestures—the human being performs himself. As if life found its form in this erring; as if the form of life derived from the movements of life itself and was not imposed by the commands of will and the finalities of successful practices. In Agamben's words,

> La vita è ciò che si produce nell'atto stesso dell'esercizio come una delizia interna all'atto, come se a furia di gesticolare la mano trovasse alla fine il suo piacere e il suo "uso", l'occhio a forza di guardare s'innamorasse della visione, le gambe, piegandosi ritmicamente, inventassero la passeggiata. (2017a, 115)

This form-of-life, as opposed to a life configured by a transcendental power, breaks the distinction *zoê*/*bios* and stops the political machine of exception. Life is no longer the result of an operativity at work, a series of successful or unsuccessful actions, but what man attempts and depicts with gestures, that is, what man is showing when he explores his negative potentialities. He is not interested in action, but in what is interrupting action, in what cannot be said, expressed, or done but conforms a horizon of exploration, a horizon without destiny or end, but with a long path ahead. Life is inoperative because it does not have to follow any essential command or will, because it does not have to adopt any particular form except the form it is drawing while it tries and moves. Life is about improvisation and experimentation; it is a dance in which steps are not the result of a choreography, but the expression of pure movement.

There are two important strategies Agamben is developing here. Firstly, by disrupting the primacy of action and finality, he is dissolving the distinction potentiality/activity and means/finality and trying to conceive a pure means, following Walter Benjamin's *Zur Kritik der Gewalt* (Benjamin, 1986). By doing this, he deactivates the foundation of law, since there remains no action to be judged, no command or duty to be followed, no will to be obeyed—above all, there is no longer a substantial subjectivity at the root of action to bear responsibility, guilt, and will. Inoperosity dissolves the identity of subjectivity and shows that subjectivity is what is being performed by life in his digressions. Law as a machine to legitimate violence is cancelled when there is no action to be penalized, but only interruptions, gestures, attempts.

The second effect of inoperosity is the disarticulation of the substantiality of the human being. In *The Use of Bodies* (2017c [2014], 301) Agamben proposes that we understand ontology not as the science of being, but as the thought of the ways of being. Refusing an ontology that produces the distinction essence/existence, in which one of the terms is privileged and the other is made secondary, Agamben imagines their relation through the idea of mode and modification, so that essence is nothing else than its modifications (being is just the ways of being) and existence becomes the articulation of these modifications. Agamben puts the accent on the adverb and on the "how" and no longer on the verb or on the "what", and therefore he conceives an ontology without substance. If the modal verbs are essentially *must, can,* and *will,* Agamben privileges the second to deactivate the reduction of the human being to an autonomous will or to the obedience to a command (2017b, 108). He is announcing then a politics to come that consists in a lack of operativity, in gestures, in adverbs, and in pure means: in forms-of-life and happiness. In his own words about Pulcinella,

> Il lazzo non è un'azione imputabile, non prevede responsabilità – è un puro, irreparabile *come*, senza sostanza né persona morale. Se io sono soltanto un carattere, una segnatura, un *come,* allora questo carattere non può in alcun modo definirmi né essermi imputato: esso è ciò che incessantemente depongo nelle mani del diritto, senza per questo assumerlo né negarlo. [...] *Il lazzo fa ridere, perché l'azione in cui consiste è disdetta nell'atto stesso in cui si compie.*

> *L'azione che, secondo un' antica e venerabile tradizione, è il luogo della politica, qui non ha piú luogo, a perso il suo soggetto e la sua consistenza. Il comico non è solo un'impossibilità di dire esposta come tale nel linguaggio – è anche una impossibilità di agire esposta in un gesto. Ma Pulcinella non è, per questo, semplicemente impolitico, egli annuncia ed esige un'altra politica, che non ha piú luogo nell'azione, ma mostra che cosa può un corpo quando ogni azione è diventata impossibile. Di qui la sua attualità, ogni volta che la politica attraversa una crisi decisiva* [...] *Mettendo in questione il primato della prassi, Pulcinella ricorda che vi è ancora politica al di qua o al di là dell'azione.* (2016a, 70)

With the term *inoperosità* Agamben invokes a philosophical tradition that begins in Kojève's lessons and continues through Bataille, Blanchot, and Nancy. The expression *désœuvrement,* which in French refers to those who do not work or who do not practice any professional activity, and which Kojève underlines in his review of Queneau's *Le dimanche de la vie,* entitled "Les romans de la sagesse" (1952), was used by Bataille to disrupt the circular discourse of Hegel's Idealism. His aim was to find a negativity which would be excessive for any abstract synthesis, a negativity that could disrupt the self-sufficiency of logos as a process of self-completion (Sabot 2012, 7–8). It is a sort of "negativité sans emploi" that, in language, interrupts the progressive process of Absolute Knowledge and the accomplishment of mankind at the end of History. While Bataille finds this absolute negativity in the "expérience limite" of eroticism and literature, Blanchot tried to locate it in an experience of writing (*écriture*) that, instead of concluding in a Book, was oriented towards the absence of Book (Critchley 2007, 98–9), towards the production of a lack of work inside the work itself, thus deploying an exteriority to meaning and logos inside language itself. The Italian term *inoperosità,* meaning approximately the same in ordinary language as *désœuvrement,* redirects this debate to an Aristotelian terminology to show that, despite Bataille's reflections, inoperosity is not a sovereign negativity, but the negative potentialities that a work carries: the non-realized possibilities that show the work as unconcluded and stress not what in the work is executed, but rather the spaces of potential activity or communicability that the work opens. In Agamben's words,

> The theme of *désœuvrement*—inoperativeness as the figure of the fullness of man at the end of history—which first appears in Kojève's review of Queneau

> has been taken by Blanchot and by Nancy, who places it at the very center of his work *The Inoperative Community*. Everything depends on what is meant by "inoperativeness". It can be neither the simple absence of work nor (as in Bataille) a sovereign and useless form of negativity. The only coherent way to understand inoperativeness is to think of it as a generic mode of potentiality that is not exhausted (like individual action or collective action understood as the sum of individual actions) in a *transitus de potentia ad actum*. (1998, 61–2)

That is why Agamben pays attention to the concept of gesture. Gestures are neither an activity with a finality in itself (*praxis*), nor an activity with a finality outside itself (*poêisis*), but rather a sort of activity without finality and without operativity, a sort of pure means that consists in a process of opening to new uses and possibilities. According to Agamben, "the gesture then breaks with the false alternative between ends and means that paralyzes morality and presents instead means that, as such, evade the orbit of mediality without becoming, for this reason, ends." And he continues, later on: "If dance is gesture, it is so, rather, because it is nothing more than the endurance and the exhibition of the media character of corporal movements. The gesture is the exhibition of a mediality: it is the process of making a means visible as such" (2000, 56–7).

In this sense, by understanding politics and aesthetics as dimensions of gestures, Agamben is conceiving a human activity that does not produce a *karman*, that is, that is not the execution of a work and is not imputable to any subjectivity (2017a, 136). Gesture breaks the alternative between an action without operativity (and so meaningless, non-productive, useless, etc.) and an activity necessarily operative (which produces meaning, knowledge, historical progress, identity, etc. (2017a, 137–8)). Gestures are a way of acting that renders human activity itself inoperative and opens it to a new, possible use. Subjectivity, then, does not precede the *crime*, but is the result of a series of gestures, in the same way that there is not a bare life that has to be conformed politically or rejected, but rather a form-of-life, a life inseparable from its form, with a form immanent to itself.

Now we can understand Agamben's interest in Pulcinella, but also in Robert Walser, Franz Kafka, and Herman Melville. The resistance of their characters to power does not happen through action, but through the deactivation of action. If they are dissidents it is because they are "sitting apart" from the biopolitics of operosity. With their gestures and forms-of-life they are showing a resistance to the logics of power and to the ontology of action: they are opening a space where life, being insignificant, is not meaningless; where life, being inoperative, is not worthless or useless. It is the vindication of a kind of life that does not have to be judged from its productivity, a life that does not participate in the distinction correct/non-correct. Free from all semantic figures, it is a life that consists in a continuous projection of new possibilities and new uses, imagines new faces for the human and new ways of life. As Walser's Jakob von Gunten or the walker, as Melville's Bartleby, the question is how to make the functioning of the biopolitical machine impossible, how to stop the inertial movement of economics, politics, law, and ethics that produces unhappiness even though it is operative and meaningful. With their jokes, expressions, and gestures, they are not doing anything, but just opening the human body to new uses and communication to new dimensions of the sayable. This is what Agamben considers the key to a politics and aesthetics of inoperosity: "E ciò che la poesia compie per la potenza di dire, la politica e la filosofia devono compiere per la potenza di agire. Rendendo inoperose le operazioni economiche e sociali, esse mostrano che cosa può il corpo umano, lo aprono a un nuovo possibile uso" (2017b, 52). The case of Bartleby is clear: he performs a radical refusal of any command, he denies any act of will and shows a way of acting that, within the language of operativity, resists and refuses to be realized into a work or an activity: "I would prefer not to". Bartleby keeps silent through speaking, keeps inactive through acting, and then he shows new uses of language and action; he suggests that other structures of action and language—other forms of life—are possible.

What characterizes Kafka, then, is an "assoluta incapacità rispetto alla sua arte" (2017b, 43), in the same way that Gould is the performer that shows, while he is playing, "non la sua potenza di suonare, ma quella di non suonare" (idem). If biopolitics is the space of resistance to the restrictions of duty and command, the space where actions are being interrupted and transformed into gestures, the aesthetics of inoperosity is the space where the act of creation, instead of being translated into the execution of a work of art, into the expression of talent or ability, resists such accomplishment.

What we find in cinema, photography or painting is always pure gesturality, pure means, that is to say, the vision of a visibility, another way of understanding vision and perception.

The concept of inoperativity allows Agamben to think of art and politics in parallel as spheres of negative potentialities: every art, whenever it opens language to new uses and emancipates gestures from their structure as activity, is political: it is disrupting the realm of power through insignificance, non-identification, and the annulment of duty or command, and it resists will by expressing what for the artist is inexpressible. In the same way, politics is aesthetic whenever it tries to deactivate the mechanisms of power and subvert the established form of government or institutions. Agamben draws the connection in these terms:

> Si comprende allora la funzione essenziale che la tradizione della filosofia occidentale ha assegnato alla vita contemplativa e all'inoperosità: la prassi propriamente umana è quella che, rendendo inoperose le opere e funzioni specifiche del vivente, le fa, per così dire, girare a vuoto e, inquesto modo, le apre in possibilità. Contemplazione e inoperosità sono, in questo senso, gli operatori metafisici dell'antropogenesi, che, liberando il vivente uomo da ogni destino biológico o sociale e da ogni compito predeterminato, lo rendono disponibile per quella particolare assenza dio opera che siamo abituati a chiamare "política" e "arte". Politica e arte non sono compiti né semplicemente "opere": ese nominano, piuttosto, la dimensione in cui le operazioni linguistiche e corporee, materiali e immateriali, biologiche e social vengono disattivare e contemplate come tali (2017b, 50–1).

Final note: It's Time for Anarchy

> (L'anarchia mi è sempre parsa più interessante della democrazia, ma va da sé che ciascuno è qui libero di pensare come crede).
> Giorgio Agamben, *Creazione e anarchia*

In conclusion, we can read in Agamben's thought a particular expression of experimentation and dissidence consisting in a biopolitical turn from an ontology of action to a modal ontology. Through this turn, the very structure of power, which Agamben conceives as an operativity articulated by praxis, will, command, and guilt, becomes inoperative through an alternative reading of some Western traditions of thought that claims the empty space of *argos* for mankind. Politics and art are not the space of work and operation, but rather dimensions of gestures and improvisation where the human being continues his self-invention thanks to his essential lack of a specific activity or finality.

The strategy of Agamben lies in his resistance to this logics of power in which any action, even the most emancipatory one, invokes a structure of individualization and blaming and then conserves the production of the exception and the difference political/non-political (*bios/zoê*, etc.). That is why he proposes a new ontology, a modal one, in which life can only be understood as a form of life, and being as a mode of being; in which form is immanent to life and modification is immanent to being; in which there is no life that cannot be understood as a form of life, and no being that cannot be translated into ways of being. Life and being are moving, attempting, gesticulating: they do philosophy, art, politics. By being the most impolitic figures, Bartleby and von Gunten announce a politics to come for which power is inoperative. By being the most unproductive artist, Kafka—or several Kafkian characters such as the hunger artist or Josephine the singer—is developing a communication without communication, that is, a communication opened to pure communicability.

But I would like to add something else: Agamben regards his own philosophical position as "anarchic" (not democratic, not communist, not republican: anarchic). He observes, following Pasolini, that there is nothing more anarchic than power itself, and that "l'anarchia è ciò che diventa possibile solo nel punto in cui afferriamo l'anarchia del potere" (2017b, 132). According to Agamben, to grasp the anarchy of power is to see how language, praxis, and economy are separated from being: they do not have their origin in being, although they were indistinguishable from ontology in Antiquity. They are an-archic, then, because they have lost their bond with being. This anarchy appears in the term *arché*, which means at the same time "origin" and "command", and which explains, according to Agamben's reading of Heidegger, the whole history of being and its oblivion.

From this standpoint, we can understand Agamben's (bio)politics of inoperosity as an attempt to reject the identification of "origin" and "command" and to think of a "true anarchy" (2017b, 132) and a "pura origine"

(95), “un simple ‘venire alla presenza’ disgiunto da ogni comando” (idem). Redirecting everything to its lack of power, thinking life as a lack of activity, rendering all commands inoperative, this true anarchy, inseparable from a politics of inoperosity as a political ontology, is always coming, arriving, happening, just as the messianic kingdom does not belong to a future time, but to a time out of time that is taking place now. Its call depends on the ways in which we try to do the impossible: to simply live our life, beyond any activity and any operation, beyond any identity. To live our life in a single gesture the size of a whole life.

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APPENDIX

SYSTEMS OF REPRESENTATION, KNOWLEDGE AND DOMINATION: TOWARDS A TECHNOLOGICAL SALVATION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY? – MALICK AND HEIDEGGER

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Abstract

It is in *The New World* that Terrence Malick is for the first time in full possession of the thitherto merely outlined technological-artistic means, which henceforth made his cinema distinctive. In this film portraying the encounter, extermination and foundation of worlds, three horizons of interlocution overlap, which are both incompossible and necessary: the [post-cinematographic, post-Heideggerian and post-McLuhanian reconstitution of] life of the Powhatan tribe *in* the world, long before they became 'native Americans'; the existential phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, German philosopher of the ancient world; the mediology of McLuhan, Canadian of the 'new world'.

A few thesis on the exemplary Malickian image will be developed, intercrossed and made evident:

1) Malick – who, since the opening plan, breaks with the opticocentric and 'world-viewing' dominant feature of cinema (which is in tune with the perspectic and Cartesian tradition of the modern systems of representation that are in harmony with a techno-metaphysics of the subject) – builds a regime of revelational and de-subjectivated image corresponding to an ontological phenomenology of the being-in-the-world;

2) this analytic of Dasein – which is neither a representation nor an image of the world – when put into work in filmic terms, nevertheless assumes unexpected elements of a properly speaking *tribal* Dasein (in a new, unexpected encounter between two continents), making the aural and haptic space – pertaining to an ontological proximity and a-centric comprehensiveness – of the tribal humanity, according to Marshall McLuhan, *cinematographically coincide* with the always already present ek-sistential inherence *in* the world (not before the

world in a relation of intentionality) which the phenomenology of *Being and Time* explores;
3) meanwhile, its is only through the extreme technological mediation of a 'construction of immediateness' that a cinema such as this invents or recovers a paradise – its paradise or that of the Indians – in a neo-ocularity and neo-aurality of existence, which characterise the technologically advanced era we live in, theorised by McLuhan and posterior to the epoch of the 'images-of-the-world' (and, through them, also of that of their domination) which was the epoch of modernity and, up to Malick, respectively that of cinema.

The *new* world of Malick, America's only Indian film-maker, is the new world of his Heideggerian cinema – that of a phenomenology of the being-in-the-world, not that of an image-of-the-world – and the Algonquins are his 'Pre-Socratics'.

Keywords
Being-In-The-World, Image, Malick, Heidegger, Technology

E a orla branca foi de ilha em continente,
Clareou, correndo, até ao fim do mundo,
E viu-se a terra inteira, de repente,
Surgir, redonda, do azul profundo

O único imperador que tem, deveras,
O globo mundo em sua mão
(Fernando Pessoa, *Mensagem*)

1. Prelude

The two passages of this epigraph are extracted from the two poems dedicated in Pessoa's book to Infante D. Henrique. One should confront this image of an horizon of total objectification – or 'overview', to use Merleau-Ponty's expression related to Cartesian philosophy, which could be applied both to the perspectic system of representation of the Renaissance period and to the program of colonial acquisition and mapping of the earthly globe that follows it *more geometrico* in the context of effective history – with the following passage by Heidegger, now read both in a literal and in a translated sense: "The fundamental process of modernity is the conquest of the world as image. The world image now means the delineation [das Gebild] of the representing elaboration. In this elaboration, man *fights* for the position in which he can be the being which establishes the mesure and extends it to all beings" (Heidegger 2002: 117, our italics): "*man*", "the only emperor" – not merely Infante D. Henrique.

The 'pragmatic or performative' character, as I called it, of representation (a 'combative and conquering' representation, says Malick, and Malick shows this in the Jamestown meeting) – non-'representationist', precisely, and in an essential sense which is much earlier than the supposed polemic that the Marx of the *First Thesis against Feuerbach* throws against it, without noticing that his 'praxis' comes from the very 'representation of the world' which he thinks he is opposed to – such a characteristic of ontic modern knowledge is concentrated in this Ge- of the *Gebild*, of the effectuation of the global framework. The precedence of the essence of technology in relation to the essence of modern science (Heidegger 1958: 29ff.) is also involved in this; or, in other terms, of

(α) a previous demand (by a *subjectum* of demand – which is itself already historically demanded!, not a self-positioning and originary one) that gives rise to

(β) an anticipatory research (by a *subjectum* of philosophy and science), served by

(γ) a territorialisation enterprise, which is the condition that makes possible the systematically enterprising character of the image of the world: "It is where the world becomes image that the system attains its dominance" (Heidegger 2002: 124–5). This is an enterprise that will be lead by a *subjectum* of the appropriating discovery(ies) of the world; the three former instances were announced and preceded by

(δ) a 'pictorial' 'representation technique' which, insofar as it is a 'symbolic form' (Panofsky), prefiguratively consubstantiates, in the open spatiality of the new orthogonal city of the Renaissance and before the horizontal space of the natural world apprehended by the exactness of oil painting, (1) the spatial, globalizing *subjectum*, the sailor (the perspective appropriates, within the sphere of representation, the infinite space of represented objects, and the painter, the scientist-researcher and the sailor globalise the world together), (2) the scientific *subjectum* (the perspective amounts to a geometry, not to an optical transcription of natural perception) and (3) the philosophical *subjectum* (the monocular *subjectum* of the perspectic pyramid, geometrically projected towards the infinite: and it should be demonstrated how the rules of this pyramid are the four Cartesian rules of the Method; but its very self-positioning is already that of the Cogito). The same is to say that, in modernity, image of the world and *Discovery(ies)*, representation and conquest, science and enterprise, *subjectum* and colonization, *a priori* and industrialisation, belong to just one historial cycle.

By way of a necessarily very succinct and sectorial delimitation, this brief introductory essay proposes to enunciate only a few main lines of the hermeneutical context involved in the internal structure of Malick's work and required by it for its interpretation. Such a structure shows itself as a broad relational network; to go through it functions as a clarifying articulation of the horizon at issue here. The problematic knots of this contextual network will be pointed out right from the beginning, thus anticipating that the true theme of the present study lies in the compulsory intricacy of such a non-unitarian and non-harmonious[1] referential system, which is evoked by the intrinsic problematic of Malick's cinema at the temporal crossroad of three epochs. To designate them in an incisive fashion: the Pre-Columbian, Indian age, the modern, European age and the age of time-cinema, fundamental ontology and 'Marconi Galaxy'. But they are distributed, not directly from themselves, but from the very fact of the crossroad itself (which therefore reveals itself as being first in its own terms): the Indian fable is a late technological reconstruction, its parity with a 'Heideggerian' cinematic is doubly problematic and its overcoming is uncertain, both by virtue of Heideggerian philosophy and Malick's cinema, of the world the 'image' and 'era' of which seem, on the other hand, to grow overwhelmingly and not to allow for any alternative or exception.

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[1] Enumerating by characters: the Algonquins, Giotto, Brunelleschi, Alberti, Copernicus, Colombus, 'John Smith', Descartes, Galileo, Newton, Kant, Panofsky, Benjamin, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, McLuhan, Deleuze, Malick.
Enumerating by topics: the tribal world; the perspectic system as 'symbolic form', i.e., translating and operationalising the metaphysical signification of a general pattern that configures the relationship man-world; the 'Copernican revolution', which is connectable with the one that denominated it, the Kantian; the metaphysics of the Subject (Cartesian, but already Copernican, already Giottian in character); modern science as objectivating, appropriative representation; the (anticipatory) technological essence of science itself; the apogee and the crisis of the Subject in its Kantian paradox (Heidegger 2002: 116, 136); the dialectic of a technological overcoming of technology retrievable as a 'blue flower [in that] reign', characteristically patent in cinema (Benjamin) and authorising the reversion of modernity in Malick's work of image and world – which, in this connection, is analogous to the Heideggerian meditation on modernity (Heidegger 2002: 120–1, Supplement (1)); the approach between Descartes and the perspectic system, critically indicated by Merleau-Ponty; the decisive phenomenological overcoming, in Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze (and Malick), of the 'subject-object correlation', present from Descartes to Husserl; McLuhan's techno-anthropological theory and its applicability to the reading of modernity as being a 'Guttenberg Galaxy' (partially overlapping with the Heideggerian reading and productively irreconcilable with it in capital aspects) and to the Malickian filmosophy, not simply that 'of the Indians' (aural, tribal world) but itself '*Indian*' (neo-aural, 'Marconi Galaxy'); the fertile hypothesis of an equivalence

Therefore, if we privilege – as being a methodology among other possible methodologies, but an especially acute one – the articulation between Malick's movie and the aforementioned Heideggerian opuscule, a fundamental moment, through which an approach to the above-mentioned contextual, internal network of *The New World* is unleashed, can be untimely formulated as follows: in the list of 'five essential phenomena of Modernity' (Heidegger 2002: 97) how to inscribe a sixth, the enterprise of the Discoveries as a globalizing colonization? (An enterprise which the passage from the eye to the map, and from the objectivisation carried out by the map to the Hand – from the beach to the globe to possession – so resonantly testifies in Pessoa's verses).

Conversely, how should one understand this enterprise in terms, not of the moral humanism or the post-colonial politicisation – which condemn the predatory, Western subjects, possessed by an *auri sacra fames* moving towards its primitive capitalist accumulation – but of a *subjectum* (of science and 'christianisation of the world image', the first and the fifth phenomena, the pillars of this sixth one) perhaps still more unforgivably 'historial' – and of which those two critical positions are mere derived modalities, which negatively operate within the same circle to which they belong and which

between the regime of the image-movement (Deleuze) and the perspectic-Cartesian system of the subject/object correlation in the 'sensory-motor scheme', and the hypothesis of the image-time (in which Malick's cinema exemplary fits) as being a regime of 'technological overcoming of technology' and of 'analytic' exploration of the phenomenon of 'being-in-the-world', parallel to the Heideggerian, philosophical step of neither escaping the epoch nor surrending oneself to it.

they presuppose, and not originary interpellations magically exempt from the epoch itself that they antagonise?

And lastly, how should one *see* Malick's movie Heideggerianly watching its epochal 'prequel', the Time of the World Image – i.e., simultaneously

(I) showing (as its dominant content) the advancing of the objectivating representation, which beforehand annexes the territory *already contained* in the image-one-*has*-of-the-world and within the figuration of which the world itself is contained as *itself* (here, this image, which constantly *orientates* and therefore 'guides' Smith – towards the mythical 'Northwestern passage' – it is this mirage of the arrival to the Indies, the accomplishment of the possible circumnavigation in a heliocentric universe, the globalization calculatively established by the 'researching plan' that *a priori* guides Columbus' discovering work by sailing across the already-un-covered beforehand, namely: a geo-graphic ocean, that is to say, a '*pre*-navigated' one insofar as it is 'objectively' 'reframed' in the representationist framework of a pragmatic or performative image (the course in the see chart) to which it belongs – in the same way as the phenomena will Kantianly belong to the representational and imagetic field opened by its transcendental conditions of onticity – to whose topography of localisations the ocean itself belongs ("why does the earth have colours?", the princess asks to Rolfe [TNW 2.7'00"], thus putting to a stop, with such a disarming sapiential naivety, the 'enlightened' encyclopedia recitation with which the husband educated and cultivated her towards the realm of reason). Such an image, which already was perspectic, which will be cogitative, and later on, transcendental, is 'the image of the world', here in the eponymous sense of an earthly globe, of a world map, of an anticipated and ordinating *a priori* totalization of the places, modes and acts of the accomplished reality; and consequently, Smith, Newport, the expeditionaries, the Crown, already *map* and *geographise* the concrete territory lying before them*, 'Virginia'*, as being the territory-value *interposed* in the total map-image in which the planet is taken as being beforehand open to the enterprise of its integral exploration, of which the fixation in a colonised region is merely an immediate and not final aspect; and Newport will discourse as follows [TNW, 10'30"]: 'once we're established here, we may go up the river and seek a route to the other see' [which will take us to 'India', v. g. to the *globe*]);

(II) but subtracting the demonstrative modality itself of his cinema from the dominant regency of the *demonstrated* epoch (no matter how much such a preterit, Modernity, extends, confirms and amplifies itself in the current contemporary times). That is to say, and answering with a cinematographic image which, as a technological heir – and apparently, destined to figure as an epitome – of the Epoch of the World Image (= epoch of cinema, of the world finally as image) nevertheless encounters an irreducible way of making-images, capable of unfolding three gestures in just one:

(α) To restore Modernity in a non-modern glance, that is to say, to slantwise exhibit the essence of the latter and not so much to stage for the hundredth time the empirical guide of its patent drama: let's say, to 'eidetically' manifest the ineluctable, conquering character of the European colonial enterprise (whatever the intentions and the human and moral nature of the many interveners may be, and independently of the diversity and orientation of the individual or collective agency) and not so much to exhibit the factual, flagrant episodes of the conquest, based on a narrative – and there is no example of such a personal involuntariness more relentless than the tragic error sentence pronounced by Captain Newport: "We are not here to pillage and raid; we are here to establish a colony" [TNW, 12'50"]: for Captain Newport and numerous benevolent and God-fearing souls, they are two opposite paths, the path of the Good and that of Evil: for the *subjectum* of the enterprise of Modernity, they are nevertheless *the same* path, as we well know: but they are *the same* by means of opposite procedures and intentions, and it is in this significant paradox that lies the terrible ascendant of this Same in which they are grounded, and the grounding and self-grounding nature of such a ground, the *subjectum*;

(β) To follow, in an 'elective affinity'[2] of the camera, montage, cinematography (the Heidegger-Malick tandem), its own faithful historiographical reconstitution of the Algonquin world[3] (in such a way that it

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[2] Technically, Deleuze would provide us with approximate image typologies: the 'free indirect-subjective' (Deleuze 1985: 194), semiotic designation theorised by Pasolini corresponding to a free stylisation of the authorial camera that should illuminate, through an affinity between the gesture and the meaning, the behaviour of a 'guide-of-the-world' protagonist, thus already avoiding the 'subject-object correlation': (1.) neither the camera is objective – it does not show, focuses, has in/in the view occurrences or characters, but rather *behaves-itself-as* these characters, and allows these occurrences and characters to appear in it (more than it focuses or objectivises them), thus making possible this parity of modes of conduct, of... 'world-views', its modalities and those of the character-guide –; (2.) nor subjective, for it does not seek to represent a psychology, give it voice or expression, coincide or have to do with it,

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identify it: instead of the perpendicularity of this sub-objective axis, which is the axis of representation, in its true or false logical alternative or in its subjective/objective epistemic one, there is another obliquity and a 'dance of monads', which is mastered by the 'sovereignty of the plan' of an Antonioni (if it does not worry about the character, it is because the character does not worry about it either – and all this is seen in the image, and in the image is also seen the way in which what is seen, as well as the seeing image, proceed side by side, as if both outside and inside).

Other solution would be the identity permutation by means of a joint fabulation between the camera, which fabulatorily becomes the world of the characters by way of an 'intercession' of a few of them that makes them change their world, and these, which are the characters of characters transculturalising themselves in their own fabulatory reinvention, the African young-men simulating an imitation of James Dean, or the 'crazy masters' assimilating and devouring, in their own rituals, the rituals of the colonisers – again a way of escaping, in this case that of Jean Rouch according to Deleuze (Deleuze 1985: 196–7), the twofold epistemological and ethical of any ethnocinematography: to be irretrievably ethnocentric in its parallactic view or, which is still worse, to believe in an unattainable and registrable objectuality (a reification of the aimed-at object, not less ethnocentric).

To sum up, Malick neither *behaves-himself-as* (unlike Antonioni) nor fabulates (unlike Rouch); he rather does three similar things: he *makes Algonquins* (in the work of the camera and the montage – with Lubetzki, the multi-Oscar winning director of cinematography, and with the edition team – he presents a repertoire of the signs of the tribal archaic, thus making them the style traits that reduplicate the demonstrated content itself); he *makes Malick* (with a film-maker's freedom and affiliation); and he *'makes Heidegger'*. The fact that these three kinds of extravagancy have a meeting place and belong to each other beyond the three epochs in question, is what constitutes a historial sign: in the final sedimentation of the accumulated Modernity, and by means of its technological peak – cinema – the image comes from everywhere, to revert the *Image*, that operating, delivering framework, which goes from easel painting to the geographical chart, and from the philosophy research center meeting the internationally regulated production goals to the electronic panel command, be it that of a personal computer with thirteen open windows (image of images), or that of an air traffic system, or that of a termonuclear war as an inevitable algorithm or a fatal mirror-neurone.

[3] We are aware of the apparent contradiction between Malick before the shooting and the post-production of the movie on the one hand and Malick during the shooting of the film and its post-production on the other. Let us say that the former had to put one tribe there and one is 'exact', taking into account even the illusion and fictionality of such an exactness, to make them live afterwards at the only place in which they could recover their freedom: in cinema; the primeval freedom (one deliberately romanticised through a second-degree approach to history and myth on Malick's part, in order to disarm them both), as well as the endangered and ultimate freedom of their initial exile and holocaust. So, a vast team of documental experts and manufacturers was recruited to reconstitute and present: the Algonquin language; the learning of the English accent from the Algonquin by an American English

re-historialises [Geschichte] the historiography [Historie] by incommensurably imagining the *non-historical* of a tribal world in this documented historical, which belongs to the scientific objectivity of the documentable, thus conducting its stylistic imagination and its ontological image towards the *geschichtlich*, and not the *historisch*, of such a pro-filmic).

In order to attest as follows a triple correspondence: (a) the correspondence of a Heideggerian image 'In-der-Welt-sein' (always-already in the midst of the world, not seeing-it-from) with the pre-modern / pre-classical / 'pre-Socratic' of the 'tribal Dasein'; (b) the correspondence of the advanced technological possibilities of an immersive type (Marconi Galaxy) with the circle of the archaic experience integrated by the aural comprehensiveness; (c) finally, the correspondence that amounts to taking cinema to going back to its Modern *source* of a techno-scientific reconstitution of ontic reality through the dominating system of its fragmenting image, and to reconnecting with a still earlier one, but which, at the same time, now decisively appears as *future*: a future simultaneously deriving from such an archaic originarity (the *time*

speaker (K'orianka Kilcher, of Quechua and Swiss-German descendancy) who had to learn those three idioms in order to be able to mix them well; the tools; the gestures; the houses; the tattoos; the wood fortification of the invaders, etc., etc.. Heidegger says of scientific historiography: "Research disposes beings when it can previously calculate them [*vorausberechnen*: to compute – to digitalise – to softwareise] in their future course, or when it can verify them [*nachrechnen*] as past beings. In pre-calculation, nature is intercepted; in historiographic verification, history [is intercepted]. Nature and history become the objects of an explaining representation. Only that which thus becomes object *is* or is taken as being." (Heidegger 2002: 109, our emphasis; see also ibid. 105]. In this sense, historiographic objectification, to which Malick's (techno-scientific) production system submitted the Algonquins (in addition, by printing it for the second time in a native casting) is of the same character as the modern enterprise that previously disposes the being of things and persons, that previously disposes that which is admitted in the legitimate circle of what demonstratedly *is*, because it follows the dominant understanding of beings; or, in our view, it is of the same character as the enterprise of the territorialising and therefore colonising discovery. By offering them science as if exchanging a pot for a princess, Malick's production would cinematographically colonise their ghosts and those who incorporate them. During the shooting of the film, however, images do not 'take the departure from that' faithful historiographic 'basis': they immediately capture the 'world rays' (MERLEAU-PONTY 1986: 294–5) of life in their formation, those non-objective co-existences sorbed in an experiential, perceptive continuous axis without any measure of distances – disdaining to focus and present the objectual collection acquired by a reconstituting historiography, as it happens in 'vintage movies'. Let us say that objectualities – these and not others – are there to produce a kind of image other than that of objectuality. Two contrary forms of tribute, or the elevation of historiography to the status of an elegy.

[as] *lost*), from the technological movement of modernity itself, and from the overcoming creativity that the very exhaustion of modernity gives rise to;

(γ) But, above all, and in opposition to what we could call Heidegger's 'determinist' epochal historialism, which does not allow any alternative or contingency for its *Seinsgeschichte* in general, it is this challenge of turning the movie (very much by means of the theme in F # m of the Adagio in Mozart's Concert in A Major...) into an elegy of a possibility inscribed in the essence of Modernity; but in such a way that it is inscribed *between* Modernity and an effective '*new*'[4] in relation to its New, to this main category with which it establishes itself (in the same inaugural gesture as that of the Cogito).[5]

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[4] In symmetry with the much repeated motto of the 'New World' – pronounced by all Europeans, both with a spirit and connotations of liberation; of colony and reinvention; pillage and annihilation – only once do we hear the Indian princess thus referring to England. But the irony of such an easy, ocean-crossing relativism should not deceive us: on Malick's part, who avoids a conventionally Edenic and self-complacent representation of the Algonquin world that would instrumentalise Indian memory to its colonised folklore, that which nevertheless emerges is a multiple sensorial vivacity (similar to the montage by way of world flashes, of a touching vision that is always ahead of itself, brief and *uninterrupted*, bouncy and *present*, always far from becoming self-centred or fixed upon an object or a vanishing point, a montage carried out by the director himself as being an 'ontological' revisitation of the 'ontic' plans, which are subtracted from their weight and are now levitating through a passing of time that, insofar as it is a river, travels across them); a sensorial vivacity which is very much awaken to a kind of 'novelty' that is very different from that of the advancement of science, that is to say, of its acquired territorialisation. The character of the 'innocent, curious' Indian, for example, what it does is to surrender to a poetic and ludic meaning of ontic proximity to things, which, far from establishing an intentional, Husserlian bond of the *ego cogito cogitata mea* (our emphasis), testifies, on the contrary, to the existential, 'ek-statical' character of Dasein as a 'staying-with' [Sichaufhalten-*bei*] and a 'going-with' [Mitgehen-*mit*] that which it is 'intentionally directed-to' [gerichtet-auf] (and therefore is not the object of its 'aiming at') (Heidegger 1975: 229; and cf. §15; and Heidegger 1978: §64) – and from which it receives, 'by means of a mirror reflection' [*Widerschein*] and not by means of a meditation [*Reflexion*], as Heidegger says, its own Self. It is the phenomenon of *In-Sein*, which recalls the old meaning of cultivation, that which dwells-in (Heidegger 1978: §12). But in the case of that Indian and in that of the princess such a proximity is not a dim but a renovated everydayness.

[5] "The era (...) is new not simply in terms of a retrospective consideration with respect to the past; it is rather the era that properly places itself as a new one". "But that which is new in this process is not at all in the fact that the position of man in the midst of beings is now merely different from that of man in ancient or medieval times. The decisive aspect is that man explicitly occupies this position as having been constituted by man himself" (Heidegger 2002: 115). In other words, the new epoch is new not simply in terms of its relation to the ancient, but it is the first and only epoch that brings with it the new, which is grounded as new

It is not only, precisely, a *love story* like the Mozartian sorrow in F # m of a lost love (as an answer to the flowing-without-end of the *Gold of the Rhein* Prelude, that story about the abdication of love in favour of power, which opens and closes the movie), but also a story about an encounter of different worlds in which a unique and irretrievable possibility is approached, touched, an unheard contact that is capable of engendering its own novelty – a lost contact, not only in terms of the economy of survival pertaining to the eternal human dynamics of population, but also in terms of a movement as yet unheard in the context of world history and which is the first global movement itself. Now, it is this possibility that its contemporary demonstration, in Malick's work, not so much retrospectively cries or engenders by means of poetic licence, as it nevertheless *actualises* as a *might-have-been*, which – in its historical, mythical or fictional character – *exists now* in 2005 and from 2005 on (including Malick's subsequent movies).

This 'anachronism' will not at all be ignored or rejected by Heidegger, who will rather shape its contours differently: by means of an 'invisible shadow' (that of the excess of the Euro-American gigantism, nowadays *even more westernised* – reaching China... –, such a quantity became quality and this became a measure in such a way always to be calculated that it becomes incalculable), which "points to another thing, the knowledge of which is refused to us moderns" – that which Malick's "creative questioning and configuring" (Heidegger 1978: 119) "preserves in its truth" by keeping veiled the helpless, ontological search of (Pocahontas) – Rebecca or the one to whom her name is not given and who has no name for the one for Whom she is.

And by means of 'meditation' (Heidegger 1978: 120–1, Supplement 1): "First of all, one needs to conceive of the essence of the era on the basis of the truth of being that dominates it, because only thus is also experimented that which is more questionable, that which, on the basis of the ground

and as being the supremacy of the form of the new (of the investigative, appropriative total and 'incalculable' advancement in relation to the world understood as the domination of the represented-object) over all things (and first of all over the *Seinssinn*). The epoch brings with it the new as being its own self-positioning criterium; and it is new only because it is it, and no other, that establishes the new as that which it itself is: the new time is new not because it inscribes itself as new, but because it inscribes the new – in which it then inscribes itself as a new time. Similarly as to the (world) 'image': it is 'modern' (understood as next to the medieval and ancient one) because it is modernity that is image in the first place (and therefore the ancient and medieval image are not placed beside it).

itself, leads and binds an act of creation, beyond that which we have before us, to that which is to come, and allows man's transformation to emerge in a necessity that sprouts from being itself". These two attitudes in relation to Modernity sum up very well the expecting thought with which the philosopher says farewell, aware that "No era lets itself be eliminated by negation's authoritarian decree" [ibid], a sentence which is repeatedly reasserted throughout the text against the mere moral condemnation that does not know of what it is a condemnation because it sticks to the effects without glimpsing at the essence nor the radicality of the grounding, Heidegger situates himself between (a) waiting that the swelling of the 'invisible shadow' of the incalculable (of which the exponential growing of all the planetary signs is the visible ontic translation) reveals its direction (which today is impenetrable to all of us), and (b) an in-depth re-peat of the epoch, so that what derives from the epoch may wave to a to-come (the meditation). Malick's deed was that he referred the whole of his movie to a possible counter-essence of modernity in the dawn of modernity, and by means of the very purpose of an extreme westernisation, thus being visited by another Stranger from outside the Greco-German matrix (in Heideggerian terms, a cluster of heresies), and also that he has actualised it in an entirely contemporary *cinematographic manner*: his way of filming as a whole, which was already searching for this solution before, became *Algonquin* after this encounter, and transformed itself in an aqueous medium, like *The New World*, bearer and transfiguring, no matter the intramundane theme that, filming in such a way, it may follow and re-situate in a 'Malickian world' that is no other than a change of aspect from the partial phenomenon 'world' to the unitary phenomena 'being-in-the-world'.

2. Overture

In a second step of this essay, let us follow, as rigorously as possible, the overture of the Malickian other-image in the element of primordial or even amniotic waters – also in order for us to soon realize its double character, its Rhenish commitment, provided by Wagner's German music in an encounter of two waters which complicatedly doubles that of two Continents.

In the first chronometric second of the movie, at 0'17", 'before everything else', and above all before vision and the optical command in the access to the world ('new' or any other world), not the light but a night of the sound, a *Naturlaut* [sound/tone of nature], opens itself off-screen while the screen is black – water, frogs and birds – pure, indeterminate space of surrounding acoustic immersion (in which, precisely, space, sound and its 'respective' acoustic sensation do not distinguish themselves: *there is* a sound-space, I do not *hear* a sound 'in' space). The fact that, meanwhile, it is the analytical and technological decomposition of cinema that rebuilds the 'immediate' and the existent of such a delicate "*blue flower* in the realm of Technology", is the paradox of a 'mechanical perception' of the 'kino-eye' (Vertov), more human than the human and more natural than nature, which Walter Benjamin already recognised in that famous passage of his opusculum on the Work of Art, and which offers a broad challenge and field for the constitution of a phenomenology of the 'technological perception' and, conversely and complementarily, of a historical theory of the mediological character of the human perception of the *homo faber*.

Meanwhile, this Nature, as a referential "apparently well-known and therefore unknown" (to use the ironic Hegelian expression), combines, in Malick's work, two autochthonous sources – the indigenous and the American Transcendentalist one (that of Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott), which is the former's heir – with the Heideggerian meditation on the world and the Earth, in a point of problematising conjunction of worlds, peoples and eras. The astonishment, sometimes unbearably overwhelming, with which Emmanuel Lubezki's / Terrence Malick's images remind us of a pure vision of nature and the 'wonder' of the world that we have forgotten but which we recognise it is presented in its proper luminosity to the eyes of those who can see it [increasingly in the case of Malick's subsequent movies: *The Tree of Life* (2011), *To the Wonder* (2012), *Knight of Cups* (2015) – and, as one may guess by the title, *Weightless*, in post-production] unsays its supposedly romantic nostalgia in the technologically advanced construct itself (which is also 'aesthetically' an ostensive positioning of the filmic world on the being-in-the-world) through which his cinema became an *imitatio naturæ naturans*.

And just as in the miracle movies we necessarily merely watch the miracles of the movies, so also in the return to nature we watch the opposed technology of such a return. This position – nor distant nor coincident – from the flagrant filmic virtuosity to the unperturbed nature, this modality of visual enunciation of knowledge that does not come neither from an objective camera (universal narration of truth in a totally given world: typical world-image) nor from a subjective camera (the 'merely subjective' counterpart of a partial vision *of that same world,* one that belongs to it) is approachable through four of the instances of cinematographic creation of an image-time, successively considered in the context of Deleuze's philosophy of cinema:

α) the 'free indirect [camera]' (theoretical concept deriving from Pasolini); β) the triggering of the power of the false; γ) the fabulation; and δ) the notion and practice of the image as an audio/visual com-position.

This mediation will prevent

(I) every obstacle and nonsense of some 'authenticism' of historiographic reconstitution the movie would aspire to (by incautiously importing the typically modernist matrix of representation – the historiographic, faithful research and the explanatory presentation by means of images – to overcome precisely that same modernist matrix as such, thus being redundant in this respect); and at the same time it will unravel

(II) the affinity content that in this apparently impossible convergency point may be established between disparate and apparently irreconcilable horizons such as (1) 'the Indian being-in-the-world' ('objectively' irretrievable, unknown), (2) the Heideggerian being-in-the-world (hypothetically unfilmable), (3) Malick's ecstatic image (but which, as an image, and as technological image, would fairly belong to, and would extend, that same cycle of representational modernity, which is foreign to those two first aforementioned ones, and which is unable to film *them* or '*according to them*'); and finally (4) its technological and *par excellence* mediological character as a construct, in the framework of a fundamental consideration of technology as an originary mediating and transhistorical condition of the correlate constitution of the anthropos figure and of that of its world, such as Benjamin's and above all McLuhan's theorisations, apparently in the antipodes of a transcendental phenomenology or an ontological phenomenology, amply carried out (if it is certain that, from a Heideggerian point of view, the essence of technology extends itself and sharpens, or perhaps underlies, the essence of science as the domination of the world by means of the essence of representation, which makes it available as an object, and by means of the essence of modern technology, which makes it available as something regimentable).

Here, we will only briefly point to that Deleuzian direction, which has come to our help.

First, by starting to register the parallel between (or even the unconfessed derivation from) the post-metaphysical background of Deleuze's thought and Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's ontological-phenomenological task of overcoming metaphysics. And it should right from the beginning be incidentally and significantly borne in mind that if the exceptionality of the Heideggerian meditation – exempted from the very cycle of the 'sub-objectivist' Modern representationalism that it clarifies – is not a personal deed by the thinker but (and it is claimed as such) an historial event indicating an ongoing mutation, then perhaps also the destiny of current techno-science does not take its orientation only from its belonging to Modernity's closed epochal sphere, such as it was defined in the opuscule at issue here ("The time of the world image"), which by girdling it overcomes it, and instead enters in a much more complex regime of coexistence. Coexistence, precisely, with image determinations other than the modern representationalist one, and also with other determinations of the technological, perhaps something unthought but already deriving from the historial coexistence with its thought (and therefore recovered by other thinkers). And this will be precisely our thesis (or, in the framework of this circumstantial writing, our presupposition).

The aforementioned parallelism aligns with one another (a) the Heideggerian effort of overcoming metaphysics (the modern stage of which the above-mentioned essay refers to), (b) The Merleau-Pontian crusade against Cartesianism, and (c) the Deleuzian turn from an *image-movement* regime (rigorously corresponding to the characterisation of Modernity that we find among the phenomenologists: the predominantly perceptive and optical projection of a totalised-objectified world, representable through the nexus of a logical-causal chain and enunciable in the respective schemes of narrativity as an acquisitive certification of truth) to an *image-time* regime.

It is in the framework of this second regime of the cinematographic image that we find (among others, and perhaps Malick requires the thematisation of a modality of his own, an hypothesis that we leave in suspense) those four above-enumerated, which allow us to make an approach to this director's cineastic. So:

(*α*) as we have seen above, the 'free subjective indirect camera' overturns the alternative between objective vision ('indirect discourse' of the camera and of the image, correctly representing 'that which is': reconstituting the pre-Colombian, Indian world 'such as it "authentically" is in itself') and subjective vision ('direct discourse': the coefficient of distortion from the individual perspective to the objective truth pattern of the representation of things). That which one should renounce in a 'free subjective indirect cinematographic image' is, to say it in just a few words, the truth-adequation pattern, the correspondence of the representation to reality, which in Modernity will be converted to this same correspondence *according to the representation itself* (self-certificated in the dubitative Cartesian cogito or 'deduced' in the content of the Kantian transcendental critique), by inverting the still medieval primacy between knowledge and beings – the famous 'Copernican revolution' which, we should not forget, before being a Kantian revolution was that of... Copernicus. The way in which such a 'freedom of the indirect' of a cinematic vision is that of a 'subjective' one which now, far from positioning itself as being the ground before an object that is totally determined in its objectivity by itself (thus establishing the truth bond of such a representation), sails again without certainties, but by way of free affinity, around a reality that remains hidden and evasive in front of such an emerged surrounding (which beforehand refused to 'know it', to 'determine it', to 'objectify it', to 'represent it', to 'appropriate it' in an innocent 'representation' that in the final analysis is profoundly pragmatic, operatory and acquisitive). For this reason, the axis of articulation movement / positioning of the camera tends to pass, in this case, from objectivating frontal perspectives – distantly optic to better dominate the panorama and conquer its territory, in the tradition of perspectic Renaissance and Cartesian opticism – to a preference for circular or similar movements: surrounding, approaching, 'disorientating' movements, but also encompassing or conglobating movements of the participatory-indirect-free camera itself in the dancing sphere of reality it is related with. A spin that we find transposed from the legacy of an Antonioni, for example, to its intensification in the idiosyncratically Malickian planes of the thrilling ascent spiral paths, which come out near the grassy soil to rise in a fleshy direction of light gleaming in the tall tops, into the open. From this renunciation of truth, a truth is distilled.

(β) By "powers of the false" it should be understood, not the replacement of a cinema of truth (or "straight representation") by a false cinema or a cinema of the false, but rather only the indeterminate suspension of some sure claim to the acquisition and certification of truth (the suspension of the Cartesian and modern, scientific, model of knowledge). Such a triggering does not leave a post or position to be occupied, and above all and from the outset the 'primum' of such a chain: in such a cinema in general, not only the characters and the links that bind them are lost in drifts and offer no guarantees, but also the way the traditionally narrative or authorial camera behaves is no longer that of the narrative or authorial holder of the ultimate and 'true point of view' on this constant 'false potentiality' or that elusive one. In a world of vertigo, the vertigo of a world. The interrogations (the echoing *offs*) of Malick's whirling characters, which cancel their positivity, are in line with the emphatic defrontalisation of his camera, which can be attested in these two prodigious opening plans that frame the opening credits of *The New World*, respectively a mirror image of water and sky, and an intentional immersion – lustral or amniotic – of the camera at the heart of the diegetic world, occupying in it an uncommonly *underwater* and *low-angle* 'In-Sein' position, not that of what Merleau-Ponty has called the typically Cartesian *survol* vision: the place outside the world that would ensure its full objectification by its submissive restraint within the visual field that captures it from the outside and from above; and this is also precisely the 'symbolic form' of the key device of modern representationalism, the Renaissance pictorial system of perspective.[6]

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[6] It is due to Erwin Panofsky the classic key work on the subject: 'Perspective as a Symbolic Form' (Berlin, 1927). Merleau-Ponty would return to some of these fundamental analyses in the framework of his phenomenology, in various writings other than *L'œil et l'esprit* (1961). The strict parity between Cartesian philosophy and the perspectic system, perfectly demonstrable, still needs, however, to be properly explored in the existing literature. For example, in his monumental *L'origine de la Perspective* (Paris, 1987), Hubert Damish completely ignores this fundamental nexus, with the inherent restrictive consequences. The complete absence, in this work, of a reference to Heidegger, and even to Kant and Merleau-Ponty (minimal), severely curtails the fundamental scope of a title of cyclopean pretensions. It is not possible to understand the essentials of the perspectic system without ascertaining the integral significance of the cycle of the philosophy of modern subjectivity, including German Idealism. On the other hand, the nexus between this line of approach and the important Mcluhanian

γ) In the accentuation of this same line, we now find a convergence of two fabulations of itself raised to a confabulation, whereas in the first two cases we would be faced with an elective fluctuation of the camera towards the uncertain diegetic world. In situations like that of the interventionist documentary, for example, on the part of the director, an experimental type of image enters into the game of self-fictionalisation, and even into that of exchanging roles, to better (or, preferably, *worse*) accompany 'in the same spirit', on the part of the reality filmed, an ethnographic identity in transit of loss and reinvention of itself, which in another conceptual line Deleuze would call deterritorialisation / re-territorialization. The often critically raised aspect of the strange hybridity between the 'incongruously' simultaneous mythical and historical approach in this Malickian film would testify to such a self-fictionality: the question whether the primitive Americans as 'good savages' are now a non-objectifiable historical fiction (Sinnerbrink 2011: 185 ff.),[7] it is in the first place this fabulation that the pre-production

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theorising of the 'Guttenberg Galaxy', in another aspect of the attention to the properly 'transcendental-historical' effects of the technological induction of the dominant optics in the civilisational cycles, is not elaborated or even sketched. In the case of the relationship between this ocular-centric tradition and cinema, authors as diverse as Juhani Pallasmaa (*The Architecture of Image*, 2007) or Paul Virilio (*Guerre et Cinéma: logistique de la perception*, 1991) drew important pictures of joint consideration, but without minimally attending to the internal differentiation of image regimes within the cinematographic field, such as Deleuze classically established them. This distinction is crucial in the film in question, which opposes 'two visions' and two worlds – the 'Indian' and the premodern one, which is also 'postmodern' and 'Heideggerianising'; and the modern, conquering one – by means of two modes of seeing: the 'world-viewing', one of Cartesian cinema or motion picture, and that of an 'In-der-Welt' camera, which in later films will want to install itself seamlessly in the integral Phenomena 'In-der-Welt-sein' (*Being and Time*, § 12). Also the modes of image constitution in the image-time regime are non-representationist, which simultaneously means that they do not detach themselves from the filed they inhabit.

[7] The populous production teams and art department of this Malickian film have mastered the *manufacturing* of the objects of that time, producing the objects and buildings, and at the same time reinventing the "authenticist" coeval techniques that would help them carry out such a production and construction, and also relying on remaining Indian knowledge, which was largely recruited for this (up to now) typical Americanist reenactment of the past. However, not only did this meticulous reconstitution oscillate between a set of tentative experiments (postures, gestures, gutturalities, sensorialism) and an 'objective' historiographic investigation of sources (to the point of meticulousness of making the leading actress replace her perfect American diction with what would result from her learning English from the phonetics and articulation of the Algonquin in the seventeenth century, which she also assimilated!),

of the film engenders, under the impotent eyes of the expert consultants – and then, on the other side of the camera lens, a Malickian fabulation responds to this, which not only *mythologizes the history* of the arrival to the new world by adding to it the sound of Wagner's *The Gold of the Rhine* (1869), as it critically opposes the historical, reader of the mythical, which in the latter will perceive its own conquering essence, already born of the twilight, dominated the 'thirst of treasures' of capitalist accumulation: far from romanticising history through myth (and what a powerful siren song results from the exponential combination of the American fictionalisation of the Indian fable and from the European fictionalisation of the darkly northern archetypes of the crepuscular, i.e. 'Western' gods!), it demystifies, in addition, the archaic-symbolic sorcery of the latter through the lucidity of contemporary history, that of the Wagnerian ambivalence deriving from the will to power, not only in Central Europe, but also in expansive, extreme-Western and planetary translation. The Faustian theme of the renunciation of love as a condition of power, which dominates Smith *qua* the epitome of modernity, thus confabulatorily entwines the Wagnerianism (and the sweet sad Mozartism of helpless introspective sorrow) brought from Europe, with the imaginary idyll of Pocahontas in the very short, and soon old, lands of the new world. Manager of the two fabulations on their way to each other, that of the pre-production of a 'virgin' tribal world, and that of the shooting and set-up of a world coming already haloing from its own shadowy *Abendland*, that of the Ring cycle, Malick also adds a new cycle: by creating, with its rhythmic linking of plans that sometimes sonorously, sometimes visually extend themselves towards each other, a floating and flowing accompaniment, without precise timelines, of the course of events, the film world installs itself, so to speak, in the Wagnerian stasis of the perpetual river (leitmotiv that from time to time returns on the image and renews the sorcery of this region permanently de-realized by the contemplation of the cut scenes, by the slowness without time, by the aurality of the voices) and arches, from

but also this fantasy of a tribe in paradise (which Malick knew to be 'historically' false and politically paternalistic, not 'correct') was only intended to set up a pro-filmic reality that only the shooting and the editing would then determine in its 'truth'. But the image that creates the world in which, without being aware of it, it is lodged, had already given up being the place and mode of capturing being, as was the case in modernity: it has become, in time, *excessively* an image, and it is no longer enough for it to be seen: it requires the thought to think it.

the cinematographic late modernity and the post-phenomenological suggestion of an ever-already-in-the-world ek-sistence rather than of a settlement in a subject of perception or of living, to what one could imagine to be its primitive-native counterpart. The confabulation of the post-metaphysical and pre-modern, with the 'Algonquins becoming the Pre-Socratics', is thus realised in cinematic terms.

δ) The 'indirect free / in a potential of falsehood / confabulatory' play, raised also to that 'second-degree synchrony' that Malick builds between the visual track (unsteady images running across the world, near the ground, describing 'natural' organic curves, intersected up to the moment when its montage reaches not the scene but its direct sensation) and the sound track (the Naturlaut, the Wagnerian recurrence and the inconsolable Mozart, but also the opening of spaces of absence, and above all the voices, loose either from any 'consciousness' or from any 'psychological inwardness', from any moment of some of its internal silent utterance – from any occurrence as such!, and suspended from being a fact), the notion that cinema can compose with elements (before 'reproducing the external audiovisual reality') and make a new content of unprecedented reality result from this, allows Malick not only to avoid the trap of anachronistic fidelity to an (old: New) world alien to a similar sense of (modern: that of the Old World) 'epistemological acuity'; as well as the difficulty in reconciling immeasurable references such as the tribal, the modern, the phenomenological and the technological. Precisely, it is not by measurement, but by a truly 'free and indeterminate' play such as the one Kant proposed, that the ontology of the aesthetic is possible.

3. The archaic tones of the 'music of the future'

Let us draw our attention to the musical track, which allows us to ambivalently unify the two worlds in that sequence, according to a deep truth and falsity (thus repeating, at their level, the alternations of the visual regimes put into play in the opening sequence). In fact, if the fluent, fluvial, watery nature of the music heard can for a moment participate in the primitiveness of the waters 'still to be separated' from the tribal world, it is because in the nineteenth century its compositional character had anticipated the intention (of a mythical, foundational pre-Germany, in the context of the Wagnerian invention of an ultra-historical past at the height of the triumph of total 'mythical reason' in the Gesamtkunstwerk, in parity with the power of total techno-scientific reason that saw the light of day in this same Ottocento) retrieved (by means of the return of this same music and of this same archaic gesture) by Malick to archaise a pre-Columbian America through the advanced technical means of cinematographic reason.

Thus, what is heard on the sound surface rhymes in various ways with the aquatic world of primordial tribal immersion: (I) it rhymes sonorously, by virtue of the very 'onomatopoeic' character of a 'river music'; (II), but it also rhymes thematically, by virtue of the ideological character of a Wagnerian invention of an originary mythical ground for the triumphal history of Germany, here the invention of a song of the primeval river, a music of the origins, which serves as an atmospheric descriptor to any 'former' river, be it European or an American estuary; (III) finally, it rhymes in the sense that a music, *European* among all musics, thus promotes in the film, in a metaleptic parallel, the same as the respective, filmed intradiegetics once offered: the colonial encounter of Europe arrived in America – and if it is the natives who receive the English, it is Malick's Wagnerism *après la lettre* that in the film welcomes such a welcoming. Any Indian, as a figure of historical reconstitution and of cinematic reenactment, is immediately caught up in the triple precession, on him, (a) of cinematography, (b) modern science as a world image (the episteme of which reconstitutes the investigated object according to canons of the strictest *adæquatio,* be it in the sciences of nature or in the sciences of the spirit), and (c) the musical mediation of the scene, heir to the ideal of the total work of art that passes from opera to cinema. Coherently: for it is in the West that one carries out this retrospection of a history that meanwhile had become Western: that had become science, Wagnerian music, rationality, technology and cinema, to name but a few of its hermeneutical suppositions.

Now, by itself, the Wagner of *The Gold of the Rhine* co-signifies three things:

(I) he brings a symbolic and script rhyme (from scriptwriter to scriptwriter) to Malick's films, a story of a love betrayed and deprecated by hunger for glory (or *mutatis mutandis* for gold), being both the Faustian self-consciousness of the fate of technological modernity's power and the critical and ethical uselessness of that unhappy consciousness in the face of impotence in front of such an evidence;

(II) Wagner is also the mouth of another river of Western rationality that traverses its musical history up to an ambivalent self-consumption: the fate of the tonal system, from its Bachian promise contained in an equal temperament and demonstrated in the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, is that it will gain such a fluidity in Romanticism (with the hyperbolisation of development, Journey, philosophical and political processualism), that the former systemic guarantee of a confirming 'double return' both to the tonic (the Logical Universal, the social whole) and the theme (the Logical Singular, the free individual), in the paradigmatic sonata form of classicism, is lost in favor of an infinite modulation by all the tonalities which lost the thread of its return, the closing of the system, now hypertrophic, and which lost the tonal reference frame, thus transforming itself into... pure musical flow, the limit of the tonal system in a Heraclitian river in which it became henceforth impossible to bathe twice.

It is this other sense of fluvial fluency and liquid medium – now a deep logical and structural sense and not merely onomatopoeic on the surface – which belongs to Wagnerism: in it (proving the Adornian theorem of a 'Dialectic of the Enlightenment') the most advanced reason, that of the accomplishment of the tonal system, coincides with the more regressive, mythical one, that of the atavism of an era *in illo tempor*e, and the sound of the draining waters is the same in all registers, the European and the American, the advanced, rational and the former, mythical. The *European sound of reason* is in harmony with *mythical American reality* because, both for Malick and Wagner, there remains only the maculate, late gesture of a 'Benjaminian' construction of the famous "blue flower in the realm of technology", of a rational construction (through film or music) of an unreachable 'realm of the beginnings': reason, which is itself mythical among all others, forges the best of myths. In other words: the rationality of the tonal system results in the mythical fluency of a system devoid of the limits of its own fulfilled logic – and this is the perfectly adequate sound to bring to bear as an audible and complex sign within the film.

(III) Not by chance, this ambiguity of a musical totalism elevated to the irrational delirium associates Wagner's destiny with that of the coming Nazi will to power: in its appearance of a music that begins by being the music of nature, Wagnerism attests, to the past as to the future, how Western (musical) reason is colonial, colonising: its arrival in Malick's film colonially precedes that of the colonisers themselves and has already taken over the native world even before those pioneers found it. The film, under the tutelage of Europe from Bayreuth, was already waiting for them.

Still in the context of musical consideration, it should be noted that this score, capable of returning to an archaic or primordial time, shares in the movie the function of infusing the temporal character of the past with another song, that of the Adagio in F # m of the Concerto for Piano No. 23 by Mozart. The two moments of the destiny of tonality are thus present, that of its classic balanced establishment and that of its immanent logical consummation in the late-romantic excess.

The two temporalities put into play here, the 'ante-temporal' or primordial, Wagnerian, and that of a delicate Mozartian sorrow of the past, are of very different quality. But both carry out a necessarily ambiguous movement which, therefore, cannot be simply twofold but threefold – as many as the three epochs or worlds that here converge: the pre-Columbian of the Indians, the modern of the Europeans, and the 'post- metaphysical' of Heidegger / Malick, who review the relation of the previous ones in relation to this relation.

We have already seen that Wagner returns, for a total artistic (and technical) reason, to myth, and that Malick does not ignore that it is only through history – emblematically summoning a nodal summit point of the events that took place between the 17th and the 21st century, the Wagnerian apogee of the colonising rationality of space and of the mythical past itself – that he can have access to his own 'ante-historical' and simulate a moment of paradisiacal disintegration of history, indicating the possibility of the advent of 'another history'. Mozart serves to signal the anticipated grief for this lost possibility (lost by our contemporariness while re-examining its past). Indeed, in addition to the nexus, inherent to the history of tonalism, that links Mozart to Wagner, and so significantly conjugates them in Malick's movie – which thus implicitly comments on Western history taking place and mediating between (the 18th and and 19th centuries) diegetic epoch (17th century) and his own movie (21st century) – the former composer provides the appropriate emotional sign to the story of ‘the death of love’ among the protagonists, which is also the ‘moral’ motto in Wagner’s opera: mourning foreshadowing of a lost love between lovers and, in parallel, of a possible lost history between cultures, conveying the sorrow for an event that bears the stamp of an ‘ah, how could this have been possible, only once and only then’: namely, that the advent of an effective new world had been possible for all in the free encounter between those of the old world and those of the ‘new’. Now, if the veil of grief in Mozart’s music is premonitory, it is because this effect puts *the image in its own past*, makes it already a lost past, already a virtuality of a dream memory in the co-presence of its own event: the image is experienced in a crystal of virtualisation (the suspended reality which the inner voice onirically reinforces), as if remembering the present during its own course. Malick’s coherence once again: because it is retrospectively that we watch such a dreaming present, and this is for us since 2005 actually past history and nostalgia for a failure; and both the music and the verbal tense of John Smith’s account in his Memoirs seal and sound that few times a gift was as *spent with itself* as that of this idyll.

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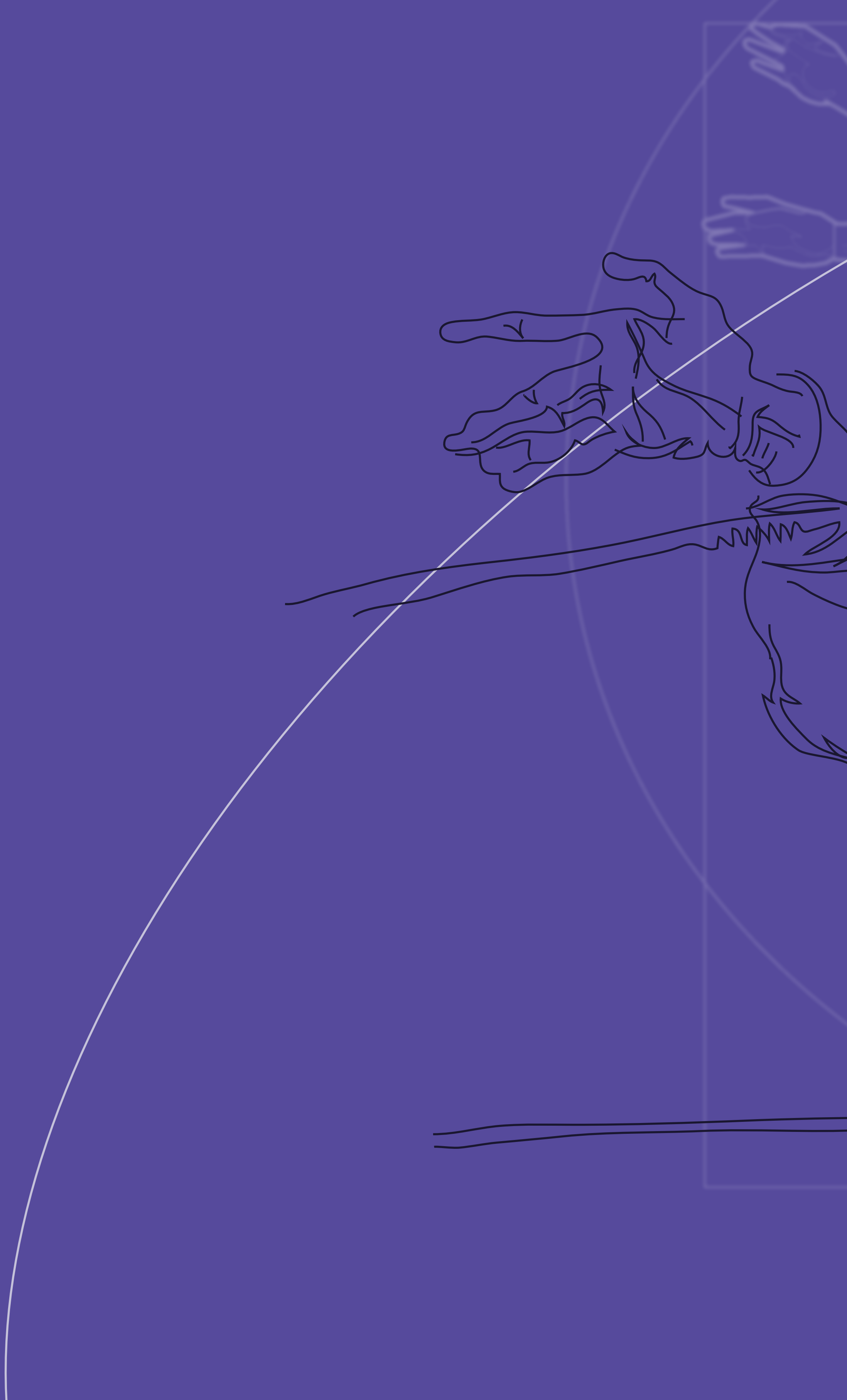PUBLICATION ORGANIZED WITHIN THE PROJECT **EXPERIMENTATION AND DISSIDENCE** FINANCED BY FUNDAÇÃO PARA A CIÊNCIA E A TECNOLOGIA