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Local Contributors|

Jan Štěpán

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A Critique of Pragmatic Reasoning

Abstract | The contribution expresses the author's doubts concerning the standard role of meaning in communication. Information, when it finds its agent in communication, evokes an activity by the agent regardless of, for example truth/falsity of the information bearer. Semantic checking is consequently not particularly effective in the pragmatic dimension.

.....

Let us take a look at the standard definition of the validity of an argument: An argument is valid if and only if it is (logically) impossible for all the premises to be true yet the conclusion false. This definition is a semantic one. There are certain unpleasant consequences, however: reflexivity (*idem per idem*), necessary truth follows from anything, anything follows from inconsistent premises. (A more powerful condition demands true premises in the valid argument and is then called sound.)¹ There is thus a problem when we use a valid argument for persuasion, i.e. on the pragmatic level. It would seem that the validity (or even soundness) is then quite ineffective.

The pragmatic level demands a pragmatic (in the other sense) reason. A pragmatic „implication“ or „argument“ for a human agent has one of the following forms:

if a condition then a decision to an action, or briefly

if a condition then an action,

where a condition is the information (for that agent only and it can be obtained from any token – linguistic or nonlinguistic – but it can always be “reconstructed” as a linguistic one) and an action may even be an inactivity as it displays the former form. E.g. if prices increase then not to sell or if prices increase then not to buy, it depends on the situation of the agent.

When I need certain information I know (in general) that I have to look for it among data where it is hidden. This is the substantial difference between information and data.

In any communication tokens circulate between the disputants and although they are bearers of “pure” (lexical) meanings, the “pure” meanings are (sometime it seems) irrelevant for the result. I believe that the cause of the phenomenon consists of the informational content of the message. Data (tokens) are often interpreted through other ways on the semantic level (statically) and on the pragmatic one (dynamically).

The authentic problems can be demonstrated as follows. Let us look the traditional fallacy: *Socrates est homo et Homo est species, ergo Socrates est species*, as the problem of the argument has been solved by prominent philosophers in the Middle Ages.² The syntactic structure of this argument is quite correct as is a case of the syllogism *Barbara*. Rigorous semantic analysis will strictly reject such an evaluation, however. There are good reasons for this rejection. Firstly, the premises are true and the conclusion is false, with no place for any subjective poetics. Furthermore, the mediator *homo* seemingly interconnecting the premises is not “the only one”, because the first appearance of it is *de re* while the second one is *de dicto* and it is consequently a case of *quaternio terminorum* in the syllogism. The copula *est* additionally represents in each premise another

¹ Cf. e.g. M. Sainsbury, *Logical Forms. An Introduction to Philosophical Logic*, Oxford 1991, pp. 15–25.

² M. Hanke, *Jan Buridan a nominalistická teorie racionality. Studie k možnostem scholastické logiky*, Olomouc 2011, p. 27.

relation (a membership and an inclusion respectively) and does not allow the transition from the premises to the conclusion with the heredity of truth.

Such a complicated analysis plays no role, however, on the pragmatic level. Its pragmatic qualification will be without any substantial objections. Perhaps, someone will fortify the conclusion with an amplification (*sui generis*). And I would suggest that there is certain acceptable information.

The pragmatic level even admits empty concepts in arguments. In the classical classification of concepts by extension we differentiate between empty, singular and general concepts. A more subtle classification might offer empty singular concepts (e.g. Pegasus) and empty general concepts (e.g. a unicorn). Another classification is demonstrated by Pavel Materna³. He differentiates between strictly empty concepts (e.g. the greatest prime number), quasi-empty concepts (e.g. a round square, a number divisible by zero) and empirically empty concepts (e.g. a Hobbit, the present king of France). This is a purpose-built classification suggested according to the method used to an analysis of the concepts (transparent intensional logic⁴).

I would suggest another classification, perhaps more illustrative. Analytically empty concepts can be detected as empty without any experience. All the examples thereby represent this category apart from the third case. All of Materna's concepts belong to the mathematical sphere. They can also be used, however, in other fields. When a mathematician states to his partner: "My love for you is as great as the greatest number", then if the partner is a mathematician as well, he/she can see the ambiguity of the confession, if the partner is not a mathematician, however, then he/she will understand the confession inadequately. Other examples of this type could be: a partial pregnancy or a former Negro. Both were used in argumentations by Czech politicians⁵.

I would reserve the category of quasi-empty concepts for those concepts which can be fully understood only after an experience or a sensation. These would include a satori, a headache or an orgasm. At least satori is not accessible at least for most of people, thus it is a word for them not a concept. Without that experience they can only be used as a metaphor.

The category of empirically empty concepts is without objections but I would approach it through common life with the case of a truthful politician. I have the courage to add one scientific concept as an empirically empty one. It is the theory of evolution. I am afraid it is outside any human experience even if it is counter-experiential.

Even a senseless token can provide desirable information for a certain human agent. The sentence "love is greater than four", for example. Although the sentence is syntactically well formed, a semantic analysis reveals that there is a categorial shift which results in it not having any reasonable sense. It cannot be true or false so it cannot express a proposition. Nevertheless, we can find a model in which it causes an action. Let us imagine a family consisting of four members: *a* – father, *b* – mother, *c* – son and *d* – daughter. They love each other very much. Suddenly, however, another agent *e* appears and one of the fours falls in love with *e* (the sex of both them is not conclusive). Now one of the fours is in a difficult decision-making situation although the agent extracts the desirable information from the sentence and provides the impulse for a liberation.

The information need not be of a propositional character. It can be understood for the user as an item completing a question thus, not only a question of the type yes/no. If we concentrate, however, on the "propositional information" then we will come across the issue of truth of

³ P. Materna, *Conceptual Systems*, Berlin 2004, pp. 42–45.

⁴ M. Duží – B. Jespersen – P. Materna, *Procedural Semantics for Hyperintensional Logic. Foundations and Applications of Transparent Intensional Logic*, Dordrecht 2010, pp. 37–110.

⁵ Cf. e.g. <http://skramlik.blog.idnes.cz/c/172011/I-v-justici-plati-ze-byvaly-komunista-je-totez-co-byvaly-cer-noch.html>.

information. Even a false proposition can lead to a decision. The entry *Semantic Conceptions of Information* in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*⁶ differentiates false information from an intentional (disinformation – lie) one and an unintentional (misinformation – wishful thinking). This difference is important for the pragmatic level (it is meaningless for the semantic level). A lie as information can lead to a murder (e.g. Shakespeare’s Othello) or a war (e.g. Bush’s Iraq 2003). All advertisements, both commercial and political, are founded on false information but nevertheless inspire numerous agents to desirable activities.

Law philosopher Ota Weinberger in his *Alternative Theory of Behaviour* states: “The operations through their behaviour are determined are based partly on cognitive information and facts, partly on practical information.”⁷ For Weinberger here practical information is a law norm or a rule of behaviour. I believe we have to ascribe to the agent’s values as being of primary importance. The norms or rules conveyed by the values are of secondary importance and of less power.

We do not need any information about any other possible world than the actual one. I do not know any human agent in any possible world different from the actual one, thus I hope that any agent of my world demands information concerning my and his/her possible world, i.e. the actual world. We do not know our world sufficiently, however. This is why we often provide informational estimations, at times *bona fide*, at times *mala fide*.

All traditional fallacies known as *argumentum ad...*⁸ are of a pragmatic nature and their function in communication is only a persuasive one. The agent when using any of them is aware that his/her argumentation is not correct but is conformable with his/her goals. This is why this type of argumentation is frequent in political “advertisement”.

The secondary aim of my contribution is a rehabilitation of the term (expression) information. In numerous textbooks or encyclopedies one reads that information may be characterised on the syntactical, semantic and pragmatic level of semiotic inquiry. If we admit, however, that information is something desirable and useful (for somebody, for a subject, for an agent) then we are limited to the pragmatic dimension. And if information is something desirable and useful then we have to ask: for whom it is desirable, for whom it is useful. The attributes of information are thereby binary relations between a subject or better an agent and the information. It excludes any meaningful interpretation in both the lower dimensions of the semiotic inquiry.

As a former mathematician, I can express my criticism of one branch of information studies. Computer science brought a new specific concept of information as a dead entity. I am referring here to the mathematical theory of information. It consists of complicated computations – a game with entropy. It does not concern, however, the behaviour of information in communication. It is a formal work with data only. There is no difference between information and data. The misnaming of the information superhighway for the Internet also comes from here. The Internet is only a data superhighway. If we are interested in finding information on the Internet we usually have to pass through mountains of data.

For a mathematical theory of information the information is any alphanumeric string. For me such a string (token) can be a bearer of information but not information *an sich*. Such a string is only a syntactical structure and the mathematical methods of its processing are syntactical ones as well. It is data processing, not information processing.

Human behaviour in each moment is adapted to the state of the world. Any human agent arranges his/her behaviour in an order of accessible facts but often he/she only disposes information. The problems with information have been outlined above.

⁶ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/information-semantic/>

⁷ O. Weinberger, *Alternativní teorie jednání*, Prague 1997, p. 89.

⁸ Cf. e.g. extremely detailed: K. Szymanek, *Sztuka argumentacji. Słownik terminologiczny*, Warsaw 2001.

For myself then information is only such an entity which can evoke certain activity. It is only possible in communication and only there the information can find its agent. This is why I cannot identify information with any “dead” data. Even if the information has a propositional character and the proposition is false, i.e. a lie, it effectively behaves in the same way.

This reveals that any logical control is ineffective in the pragmatic dimension – in communication. When I assert this, however, I feel like a renegade. I thereby further assert that: language is a good servant but a bad lord. I should finally add a consequence of this – my transformation of the most famous sentence of Protagoras: Language is the measure of all things, of the things that are that they are and of the things that are not that they are not.

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To Be the Value Of a Bound Variable Is To Be Or Sometimes Also Not To Be¹

The dispute between W. V. O. Quine and A. N. Prior concerning the quantification of individuals

Abstract | The paper focuses on a comparison of Quine's and Prior's concepts of the quantification of individuals. The analysis is based on Quine's celebrated statement: 'To be is to be the value of a variable.'² Quine defends this but Prior does not agree with him. The ideas of both authors are introduced, and the reasons why they hold them. This paper shows what the difference between Quine's and Prior's logical systems is, and that there are also a number of similarities between them.

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1 Introduction

'To be is to be the value of a variable.'³ This statement which was expressed by W. V. O. Quine is one of the most influential descriptions of ontology in modern analytic philosophy. Quine connected logic and ontology very closely with the quantification in this statement.⁴ In contrast, Arthur Prior, who is regarded as the founder of modern temporal logic, disagreed with this close connection. Prior's temporal logic deals with an extremely different conception of individuals as well as a different ontology. Prior even asserts that Quine's statement '...is just a piece of unsupported dogma.'⁵

This paper, however, will try to point out that there is something in common in both of them. The wider philosophical backgrounds of both logicians, which influenced their logical and ontological systems, will also be briefly explained. The paper will initially deal with the theory of quantification which is fundamental for the conception of individuals in Quine's ontology. However, in the ontology of modal logics, temporal logic ranks among them and there has to be a different theory of quantification. On this account, the paper will cover the theory of individuals as well. Quine's critique of modal logic will also be discussed.

The basic texts which will serve for the analysis will be: Quine's paper *On what there is*, the book *Word and Object* and Prior's books *Past, Present and Future*, *Papers on Time and Tense*

¹ I would like to thank prof. RNDr. PHDr. Jan Štěpán, Csc for his helpful comments. I am also very grateful to Dr. Patrick Devine for correction of this paper. This paper is published as part of the IGA project "Informal Logic and Argumentation Theory" No. FF_2013_050.

² W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", in: W. V. O. Quine, *From the Logical Point of View*, 2003, p. 15.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ Cf. J. Peregrin, "Logika a Ontologie", in: J. Peregrin, *Logika 20. století: mezi filosofií a matematikou*, Prague 2006, pp. 51–52.

⁵ A. N. Prior, *Object of Thought*, Oxford 1971, p. 48.

and *Object of Thought*. Since Quine's thoughts are consistent, only a few pieces from his huge life work were chosen.⁶ Furthermore, these texts are the most relevant to the comparison with Arthur Prior because Prior died in the late sixties and hence could not respond to Quine's later texts. Prior's ideas in contrast, changed a great deal throughout his life.⁷ The texts which were chosen for this paper were published in the last years of Prior's life, the last one even after Prior's death.⁸ A number of them are reactions to Quine's work. The main differences and similarities between Quine and Prior will be introduced by way of the selected texts.

2 W. V. O. Quine

Quine is one of the most renowned analytic philosophers. Since he was a mathematician as well, his logical system is extremely coherent and accurate. Although his celebrated article *Two Dogmas of Empiricism* is written against logical empiricism, he values empirical science as well as the logical empiricists. This is also the reason why Quine sometimes uses 'theory' instead of 'ontology' when he describes ontology. He is not interested in creating a certain original ontological system, but instead tries to describe the world in terms of empirical science.⁹ These basic features of Quine's philosophy are visible in the theories that this paper will present.

2.1 Individuals and Quantification

The emphasis on science is considerable in Quine's paper *On what, there is*. He tries to mark the universe there. His ontological theory is built against two other logicians: Quine named them McX and Wyman. The differences are visible from the discussion which they lead. All these philosophers, one real and the two others imaginary, discuss the existence of non-existent individual and universals in Quine's paper. 'Pegasus' is the example of the non-existent individual in this paper.

McX asserts, however, while Pegasus is not perceptible by our senses, he must exist. If Pegasus does not exist, it is not possible to say *Pegasus does not exist*. There would be nothing to say about an entity which does not exist. Such a statement like *Pegasus does not exist* makes no sense when there is no Pegasus.

According to McX, however, Pegasus does not occur in the universe as a horse with wings. It is more the idea of a mythological horse. This idea is in people's minds and is visible in the art, films, etc. In order to refute this view, Quine compares the real Pegasus with the idea of Pegasus and declares that people are able to distinguish between the idea and the real horse. Finally, he observes that there is no similarity between the idea of Pegasus and the Pegasus which occurs in mythology. Pegasus can fly, can breath, can eat, etc., but this is not the case with the idea. These entities cannot be the same. If one states that the idea of Pegasus exists, one says nothing about the existence of Pegasus itself.

Wyman's concept is more sophisticated. According to him, Pegasus has an existence as an unactualized possible and as that kind of entity it has its own specific way of existence. One cannot

⁶ Cf. P. Hylton, "Wilard van Orman Quine", In: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford 2010, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/quine/> (3. 11. 2012).

⁷ Cf. J. Copeland, "Prior's life and legacy", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, Oxford 1996, pp. 8–25.

⁸ Cf. P. Geach – A. Kenny (eds.), "Editorial note", in: A. N. Prior, *Objects of Thought*, Oxford 1971, pp. vii–ix.

⁹ Cf. P. Hylton, "Wilard van Orman Quine".

find something like Pegasus in the world, although Pegasus can exist. If it is said that Pegasus is not, it is asserted that Pegasus lacks the special attribute of actuality. It does not actually exist.¹⁰

Quine refutes Wyman's ontology. There could be a serious problem with unactualized possibles in it because there can be an infinite number of unactualized possibles, and as Quine declares in this paper:

'Wyman's overpopulated universe is in many ways unlovely. It offends the aesthetic sense of us who have a taste for desert landscapes, but this is not the worst of it. Wyman's slums of possibles are a breeding ground for disorderly elements.'¹¹

This critique plays a certain role in Quine's disapproval of some systems of modal logic, as well.

Another difficulty arises with the possible beings which include some contradiction. Can they be assigned to the unactualized possible as well? It should not be. Wyman postulates a specific category for them. They are regarded as meaningless to him. In fact, this division between a meaningful and meaningless being is indistinguishable; there is no test for the exclusion of contradictory entities. Furthermore, according to Quine, Wyman's solution can lead to a rejection of *reductio ad absurdum*.¹²

Finally, Quine points out that it is not necessary to postulate some form of Pegasus' existence when it is required to create meaningful statements about it. There is a theory which copes with this problem without the necessity of establishing Pegasus' existence, the theory of descriptions which was built by Russell. The description is a short statement, or even a few words, which describe an entity in its uniqueness.¹³

The descriptions in Pegasus' case can read as follows: *The only one horse which was born from Medusa's blood* or *the horse with the wings that was captured by Bellerophon*. Since Greek mythology, in which Pegasus occurs, is not unified, Quine creates another system of descriptions. Pegasus' description can also be verbal, so Pegasus is the only one entity which 'is-Pegasus' or 'pegasizer'. The statement *Pegasus does not exist*. is meaningful according to the theory of description. Moreover, it is not necessary to have Pegasus in ontology to analyze this statement by the theory of descriptions.¹⁴

Another result is also allocated, when the theory of description is used. Two sentences are created from one.¹⁵ The transcription of the statement *Pegasus flies* will be $(\exists x)(x \text{ is Pegasus and } x \text{ flies})$. This statement is not true of course. There is no such entity which is both *Pegasus* and capable of flying, simply because there is no Pegasus. However, another statement, for example, *Prague is beautiful*. looks like $(\exists x)(x \text{ is Prague and } x \text{ is beautiful})$. This can be true.¹⁶

It refers to the first statement of this paper with a similar analysis. The theory of descriptions is important for Quine's analysis of individuals. When a statement is considered true, then it can be asserted that the individual to which the subject of the statement refers to actually exists.

It is this analysis which enables Quine to assert that 'To be is to be the value of a variable.'¹⁷ It also means that when a certain quantified statement is true the subject of this statement must be part of our theory. Quine entitles each part of such a theory a 'posit'. Posits are, according to

¹⁰ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", pp. 1–4.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹² Cf. Ibid., pp. 4–5.

¹³ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, Cambridge 1960, p. 107.

¹⁴ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", pp. 7–9.

¹⁵ Cf. E.D. Bruckner, *Existential Import*, <http://www.logicmuseum.com/cantor/Eximport.htm> (22. 6. 2009).

¹⁶ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 182.

¹⁷ W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", p. 15.

Quine, objects of an ontic commitment.¹⁸ And vice versa: everything which has an ontic commitment can be the value of a bound variable. Quantification is the only one criterion which distinguishes the entities of our theory from those which our theory does not include. If a certain entity is the value of a bound variable in some true statement, it is the entity of the universe, as well.

It is also useful when operating with entities to realise which ones are important for a theory but which cannot be found in the real world. Significant examples of such objects are molecules. They are necessary for most of the theories although they are not perceptible.¹⁹ It can also seem that entities such as dragons, unicorns or Pegasus can be accepted into ontology. Although they can, Quine also asserts that every ontology should be valued according to its utility for science. An ontology which is full of mythological creatures cannot have such utility. Quine, himself, chooses the physical conceptual scheme as the best ontology.²⁰

Bound variables and quantification are an important part of Quine's ontological theory as was shown in this chapter. This is primarily because of applying the theory of descriptions to the analysis of individuals. Such an analysis is useful for Quine when he does not want to multiply the entities of his universe and when he wants to only postulate that which exists. However, this theory can have certain problems in modal logic. Is this a problem with the theory of descriptions? Is there something wrong with modal logics? Quine in all probability agrees with the second question, and the reasons for his answers will be presented in the next chapter.

2.2 Quine's critique of modal logic

Quine refutes everything which is opaque in his *Word and Object*, and modal logic, as Quine shows, is full of opacities.²¹ It is not surprising that modal logic is not adopted by Quine without certain modifications. Quine's various objections and their solutions will be shown in this chapter. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that *Word and Object* was written at the beginning of the 1960s. When Quine criticizes modal logic, he primarily criticizes Lewis' and Carnap's modal logics, although he mentions Church's, Reichenbach's, and Prior's logic²², as well.²³ Quine does not treat Kripke's modal logic in this book.²⁴

Quine's first objection lies in the fact that the singular terms in modal logic are referentially opaque. This is incorrect when Quine's quantification theory is advocated. Bound variables have to be purely referential in it.²⁵ Quine admits the statement of modal logic which reads as follows $\Box(\exists x)(x > 5)$ but when modal operators are used this way $(\exists x)(x > 5)$ the bond of the variable is corrupted. In the second statement Quine's ontological conclusions are invalid because here he finds the problem with substitution. The value of variable 'x' could be number 9, but when it

¹⁸ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 22.

¹⁹ Cf. T. Marvan, "Konstanty Quinovy filosofie" in: W. V. O. Quine, *Vybrané články k ontologii a epistemologii*, Plzeň 2006, pp. 14–15.

²⁰ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", p. 16.

²¹ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 197.

²² In Prior's case is it still not the logical system K_t which is Prior's best known system of temporal logic. It is rather the first attempt to formalize temporal logic. However, certain important features of temporal logic are even embraced in his first logical systems. Cf. A. N. Prior, *Time and Modality*, Oxford 1957, pp. 13–18. and A. N. Prior, *Past, Present and Future*, Oxford 1967, pp. 176–177.

²³ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 197.

²⁴ Cf. O. Tomala, "Ke Quinově kritice modální logiky", in: V. Kolman (ed.), *Možnost, skutečnost, nutnost*, Prague 2005, p. 87.

²⁵ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, "Reference and Modality", in: W. V. O. Quine, *From the Logical Point of View*, pp. 139–140.

is replaced by the description ‘number of planets’ the second statement seems to be incorrect.²⁶ In order to save his theories Quine tries to formalize necessity as the semantically predicate.

This formalization does not include the difficulties with the quantification and singular terms, and does not admit to the multiplication of the modal operators as it is possible in modal and also temporal logic.²⁷ When modal logic is formalized in this way, the modal operators are part of meta-language and only one operator can be used. The other systems of modal logic are, according to Quine, more or less problematic.

Nevertheless, the concept of modal logic, which Quine refutes, is the most common in modal logics. Moreover, his restriction only confines to modal logics systems which are too weak to cover properly the entire area in which modal logics are used.²⁸ Kit Fine also demonstrates in his book that there is no problem with modal logics in this example but there is the failure of substitution.²⁹

Another problem which worries Quine is essentialism. Essentialism is, according to him, a theory which asserts that certain properties of the individual are essential and some accidental. This division is independent of language.³⁰ He demonstrates that this approach is problematic in the example of mathematicians and cyclists. Mathematicians are, according to Quine, necessarily rational, but are not necessarily two-legged, and cyclists are not necessarily rational, but they are necessarily two-legged.³¹ And what is a man who is both a mathematician and a cyclist like? Is he necessarily rational and not-necessarily two-legged or vice versa? It is hard to arbitrate on this. Quine admits that certain properties can be seen as more important than others, but it should not lead to create a universe which is divided like Aristotle’s one into ‘essences’ and ‘accidents’.³²

On the other hand, it is not true that all modal logicians make use of this division. In fact, there are only a few who can actually be called essentialist and none of them practise essentialism in a way like Quine does in his example.³³ The problem which arises from their systems does not influence the function of modal logic systems. Instead, it irritates Quine, who is a lover of waste land, of a universe which is not overfilled and an overpopulated universe brings problems, as well, as was mentioned in the previous chapter.

Finally, Quine values science, and scientists also use statements of modal logic, sometimes even statements which Quine’s restricted modal logic cannot cope with.³⁴ While modal logic cannot satisfy Quine’s wishes, it still must be aware of the troubles that Quine describes. This problem, focused on temporal logic, will be introduced in the next chapter.

3 A. N. Prior

Prior was one of those logicians who developed intensional logic at a time when it was refuted and when extensional logic flourished. He was in contact with Polish logicians from the Lvov-Warsaw School and was influenced by them. Moreover, he was in a lively debate with additional

²⁶ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, pp. 196–197.

²⁷ An example of this operation can be: $\diamond p \rightarrow \square \diamond p$.

²⁸ Cf. O. Tomala, “Ke Quinově kritice modální logiky”, pp. 100–103.

²⁹ Cf. K. Fine, *Modality and Tense*, Oxford 2005, pp. 113–115.

³⁰ Cf. O. Tomala, “Ke Quinově kritice modální logiky”, p. 109.

³¹ It is not necessary at present but in Quine’s days the prosthetic was not developed as it is today.

³² Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 199.

³³ Cf. O. Tomala, “Ke Quinově kritice modální logiky”, p. 108.

³⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 91–93 and p. 103.

logicians who developed intensional logic, the most important among them being Kripke.³⁵ Prior is also regarded as the founder of modern temporal logic.

Prior worked at developing a logical system³⁶ which could be useful in science. There are some cases in which he was successful, and his systems are used in science, although in areas such as artificial intelligence research which were not significantly developed during Prior's life.³⁷

Nonetheless, Prior did not struggle for such coherence, as Quine did. He was chiefly a philosopher, not a mathematician. It can be said that his temporal logic was developed during his research into determinism. In his opinion logic is about reality,³⁸ and it is primarily a reconstruction of natural language.³⁹

3.1 Temporal logic

Prior created not only one logical system but many as is usual in modal logic. However, Prior's temporal logic has some differences from systems of modal logic. Only the future is open in Prior's conception of time. Nevertheless, Prior also created logical calculus which describes linear or even circular time, the branching time topology corresponds best with Prior's indeterminism.⁴⁰ This chapter will introduce logical systems of temporal logic which are adequate for the analysis of individuals.

Since the past and present are determined and the future is not, individuals that exist or existed can be described better than those who will exist. The concept of statements is the other problem which Prior must solve. He does not assume Frege's concept of propositions which conceives statements as eternal sentences which were located in the universe. Nonetheless, he uses a concept which was held by ancient and medieval logicians that a statement can sometimes be true and at other times false. For example the statement *The King of Bohemia is brave*, can be true at the time of Vladislav II or Přemysl Otakar II, but not at present, although it is possible in the future. This analysis of statements is closer to natural language and as was mentioned natural language and intuitive grasp are important for Prior. On the other hand, the logical systems that depend on this analysis must be prepared to cope with non-permanent beings. Among Prior's logical systems, system Q is primarily designated to solve problems associated with non-permanent contingent beings in the branching structure of time. Prior introduced system Q in his book *Time and Modality*.⁴¹

This system was developed by Prior over the course of the remainder of his life. When he introduced it for the first time, the system was not part of classical logic, it did not have two truth values, but six. At a later point, however, two valued logical systems took precedence in his work. System Q was connected with the minimal system of temporal logic Kt and was named QKt. It was also changed into a two-valued system in this way, but $\Box p \rightarrow \neg \Diamond \neg p$ did not hold as in the first formalization of this system. In addition, the temporal logic operators *P*, *F*, *H*, and

³⁵ Cf. P. Øhrstørm – P. Hasle, *Temporal Logic: From Ancient Ideas to Artificial Intelligence*, Dordrecht 1995, pp. 170–173.

³⁶ In the Prior case may be better said systems. Unlike Quine, Prior developed a great deal of systems. Cf. M. Resnik, "Ought There to be but One Logic", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, p. 501.

³⁷ Cf. P. Øhrstørm – P. Hasle, *Temporal Logic: From Ancient Ideas to Artificial Intelligence*, pp. 344–347.

³⁸ Cf. A. N. Prior, "A Statement of Temporal Realism", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, p. 45.

³⁹ Cf. P. Øhrstørm – P. Hasle, *Temporal Logic: From Ancient Ideas to Artificial Intelligence*, p. 203.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 189–190.

⁴¹ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Time and Modality*, pp. 41–54.

G are part of this system. Nonetheless, the inferences $\vdash \alpha \rightarrow \vdash G\alpha$ and $\vdash \alpha \rightarrow \vdash H\alpha$ do not hold, but only the following: $\vdash \alpha \rightarrow \vdash \neg F\neg\alpha$ and $\vdash \alpha \rightarrow \vdash \neg P\neg\alpha$.

I am not prepared to demonstrate and analyse the complete system Q , so allow me mention certain features which will be useful for further analysis. Two of them were already mentioned. Variables p, q, r etc. stand for statements, which may be true or false at different times, and one of the most typical rules for modal logic $\Box p \rightarrow \neg \Diamond \neg p$ is not held in this system. There are temporal logic operators Pp (It has been the case that p), Fp (it will be the case that p), Hp (It has always been the case that p), and Gp (It will always be the case that p). There is also an operator Sp which means *In all possible worlds there is such a proposition as p* . It is used in order to define $\Box p$ as $Sp \wedge \neg \Diamond \neg p$. Variables 'x', 'y', 'z' etc. stand for names. These variables are bound with quantifiers.⁴² Problems can be found, while the bound variables also refer to beings that do not actually exist. To conclude system Q to be the value of a bound variable it is not the same thing as to be. Prior suggests that certain ordinary laws of quantification can be dropped.⁴³

System Q disagrees of course with Quine's conclusions. What is the concept of an individual's existence in temporal logic like? What is Prior's quantification theory like? Prior's answers to these questions will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

3.2 Individuals and Quantification

The problem of existence is, according to Prior, the most obscure area of temporal logic.⁴⁴ A number of problems arise⁴⁵ and Prior is able to solve only a few of them. It has been mentioned that Prior's temporal logic can be ranked among modal logics. Nevertheless, Prior's concept of the individual differs from Kripke's as well as from many other modal logicians in the past. In Prior's concept of time only the future is open in some way. Statements concerning the future are quite uncertain if Peirce's radical indeterministic way of thinking is adopted as is in Prior's philosophy. In this conception almost nothing about future events can be asserted.

In the case of the past there is a difference. There is no other possibility to be than the fact as it was. Prior perceives individuals as wholly determined in the past. As he shows in his paper *Identifiable Individuals* it can be maintained that it was logically possible that Caesar should have been the son of different parents from his own, but the statement *It was the case that Caesar had some other parents than his own* is not true. When it is spoken about modal logic and possible worlds, Prior admits that some possible world can be imagined where what happened was something different from reality, but temporal logic should deal with entities that actually exist, existed or will exist.

Allow me introduce an example. I have no child. So no individual can be identified as my child at present. On the other hand, it is possible that my child will be born in the future and will be named for instance 'Tobias'. Tobias is not an individual; it is a fictitious entity which may exist at some time in the future, so it is impossible for me to assert anything about him at present. Any statement which includes 'Tobias' would not be storable. I have a brother whose name is John, however. John was born to my parents in 1989. As soon as John was born, it was too late for him

⁴² Cf. A. N. Prior, *Papers on Time and Tense*, pp. 257–272.

⁴³ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Time and Modality*, pp. 53–70.

⁴⁴ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Past, Present and Future*, p. 173.

⁴⁵ Cf. R. Sylvan, "Other Withered Stump of Time", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, p. 111.

to have another mother than the one he has. In Prior's conception, John cannot have attended any other primary school than the one he attended when he was young, etc.⁴⁶

When Prior holds this conception of individuals in the past and future, it is dubious if his ontology is in some way essentialism as it is criticized by Quine. Certain authors are convinced that it was. According to Lopson, Prior admitted Platonistic ontology in much the same way that Church, Plantinga, Moore and Christholm assume. Lopson asserts that Prior's ontology is called 'existentialism' in Plantinga's works. According to Plantinga existentialism means that:

'...the properties, which make an essential or direct reference to an individual only exist (whether exemplified or not) in possible worlds in which that individual exists.'⁴⁷

Thus, in a possible world where Socrates is not, one cannot find such properties as being of Socrates. This concept is thought by Plantinga to be Prior's, although Prior did not formulate it. It is only Prior's system Q in which something like that can be found. However, this ontological view which Plantinga describes is not his own. Instead, Plantinga tries to refute it in his papers.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, I do not agree that the concept which Lopson describes in his paper is Prior's, but there is no place here for a deeper discussion.

The problem of reference was not solved by this restriction of the universe. Prior admits only beings who existed but also certain beings that do not actually exist. There is often nothing to which the terms of statement can refer to when it testifies to the past. Inspiration can be found in the theories of medieval logicians, while Prior holds the same concept of statement as they do. However, their solution, the theory of ampliation, is not valued by Prior. There are certain oddities and contra intuitive conclusions in this theory.⁴⁹

Prior, in contrast, is not prepared to create some non-actual beings. In order to solve this problem, he rejects the Russellian individual name variables and accepts Leśniewski's theory in which the reference is different from that in Russell's theory. The names in this theory are devices for referring to individuals obliquely. However, this theory can seem awkward while the operators stand for proper and common names.⁵⁰

Prior proposes that the reference of individuals that do not actually exist can be solved by a relationship with the things that actually exist e.g. *I am taller than my grandmother was*. It is obvious that a reference to past individuals is easier than one to future ones primarily because the future in Prior's conception is indeterministic.⁵¹

As was shown in the previous chapter, Prior asserts that quantification must occur within modality. He also does not agree with Quine in the case of bound variables. Prior works with an open future. Here the existence of individuals is uncertain. Another time period, the past, includes problems, as well, because its individuals did not exist in the present very often. Since Prior wants to quantify here, he must submit that something which does not exist now can also be the value of bound variables.

Prior mainly adopted Leśniewski's ontology which was popularized by Lejewski. This is a different theory of quantification. It is asserted that Lejewski distinguishes between two types of quantifications. Quine's one is entitled restricted quantification, while there is also unrestricted quantification, which was developed by Leśniewski. The differences between them can be shown in a fictitious example.

⁴⁶ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Papers on Time and Tense*, pp. 83–92.

⁴⁷ P. Lopson, "Prior, Plantinga, Heaccuity, and the Possible", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, p. 420.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 419–421.

⁴⁹ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Past, Present and Future*, pp. 136–140.

⁵⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁵¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–172.

‘...let us think of the universe as limited to two objects **a** and **b**. ... We may wish to have the noun-expression ‘*c*’ which would designate neither of the two objects, in other words which would be empty, and also the noun-expression ‘*d*’ which would designate either.’⁵²

When a restricted quantification is used, the statement $(\exists x)(x \text{ exists})$ is true, but the statement *c does not exist*. does not imply $(\exists x)(x \text{ does not exist.})$ and $(x)(x \text{ exists})$ is true because it does not imply that ‘*c*’ exists. The general noun ‘*d*’ must be changed into the predicate-expression ‘*D*’, and then it can be asserted that $(x)(Dx)$ is true. However, the first statement holds only for ‘*a*’ and ‘*b*’. To be the value of a bound variable is to subscribe to this theory of quantification.

In Leśniewski’s quantification theory the statement $(\exists x)(x \text{ does not exist})$ is true, because statement *C does not exist.*, which is also valid component of existential expansion. Nonetheless, the statement $(x)(x \text{ exists})$ is false while it contains the statement *C exists*. and this statement is false. The noun ‘*d*’ does not need to be changed in this interpretation into the predicate-expression ‘*D*’.⁵³ Here the variable also stands for the empty name.⁵⁴

Hence, the conception of the universe can differ in the way quantifiers are interpreted. The second interpretation seems to be the same as the one that Prior uses. The existential quantifications have no existential import and they are also closer to ordinary usage. Lejewski even suggests that the ‘existential’ quantifier should rather be entitled ‘particular’, while the current name is misleading. It is evident that there is no need to connect existence and quantification in Leśniewski’s ontology.⁵⁵ Prior even asserts that to be the value of bound variables is the only way in which the entities that do not actually exist can figure.⁵⁶

4 Conclusion

When Prior builds up his ontological system, he cannot follow Quine because his conceptions of time and proposition are entirely different. However, there is also a more essential difference. Prior proceeds from natural language and creates logic according to it. Quine, in contrast, proceeds from mathematics. This is also the reason why Prior prefers the formalization of his systems in so-called A-logic instead of B-logic. Natural language is closer to A-logic and it is tensed, although the language of physics, which Quine prefers, can be better described in B-logic. This language is merely mathematical and thus untensed.

On the other hand, Prior’s temporal logic may seem to be redundant to Quine. Quine analyzes tense statements in a different way from Prior. Quine’s theory of statements is close to Frege’s theory of propositions. However, Quine instead discourses on eternal sentences, which have the same truth value all the time but which, unlike propositions, are not located in the universe. The tensed statements are dealt with in a very specific way by him. He asserts that ‘Our language shows a tiresome bias in its treatment of time.’⁵⁷ Hence, he does not follow the natural language in his analysis, and rewrites tensed statements radically. The statement *George married Mary and Mary is a widow* is conceived by Quine as *George marries before now Mary and Mary is now a widow; therefore George marries before now one who is a widow now*. He adopts the view that

⁵² C. Lejewski, “Logic and Existence”, in: *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, vol. 5, Oxford 1954, p. 109.

⁵³ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 109–110.

⁵⁴ Cf. A.N. Prior: *Object of Thought*, p. 161.

⁵⁵ Cf. C. Lejewski, “Logic and Existence”, pp. 109–114.

⁵⁶ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Papers on Time and Tense*, pp. 220–221.

⁵⁷ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, *World and Object*, p. 170.

Prior calls the tapestry view of time.⁵⁸ Thus, he does not need to solve the problems with the individuals that existed but which do not actually exist and he does not need to postulate certain special logic systems that would cope with time.⁵⁹

However, this is not a particularly intuitive way of thinking. People do not work with time in this manner. Our everyday events are embedded in time. The question of how our language deals with time and how we understand time is not solved by Quine.⁶⁰ His analysis of temporal statements is at least affected. Indeed, it can be useful when it deals with scientific statements, and it is also Quine's main motivation, although this form is so distant from natural language. Quine's scientific approach is also visible in his argument that every entity, which is considered to be the value of a bound variable, is part of our ontic commitment. Such a strict requirement might be necessary for the sciences, but it is not held in natural language.

It is not surprising that the logicians who are close to natural language try to reformulate it. Their simpler formulation nevertheless compensates for the problems with the reference, although there is another problem, as well. At the same time, a logic that tries to describe natural language cannot be the only one. Instead there are plenty of systems, and each simulates some specific feature of natural language.⁶¹ Such diversity can be refuted, of course, but an effort to exploit some feature of language can be utilized as well. This is also Prior's ambition. He gives up the coherence of his systems in order to create a number of them. Logicians should be something like lawyers, according to him. They should provide numerous systems and offer them to metaphysicians, physicists and other scientists. They must also guarantee that the system they provide is consistent, also that it really works. It must be said that the customers are primarily computer scientists at present.⁶² Where there is a treatment of a 'human' conception of time and particularly where this conception is transcribed into computer programs, temporal logic is useful today.⁶³

Because of this utilization of Prior's logical systems, they cannot be refuted completely, even if there are certain oddities in them. The incompleteness of his ontological ideas is the clearest of them. Although Prior tries to solve the problems which arise from his temporal logic in the field of ontology, he is not successful, and after his death there are still a number of questions.⁶⁴

My paper is focused on the concept of individuals, and therein can be found two oddities in Prior's concept. The first is the problem of reference, the second is the case of essentialism. While Prior's tensed statements correspond better with our natural language than propositions, they create problems in the case of a reference. These statements cannot refer directly to the past or future, and Prior offers no satisfying solution to this problem. After Prior, a number of additional authors offered solutions which are very similar to Prior's, but which can be acceptable. Prior does not do this, however.⁶⁵

On the other hand, essentialism results in fewer problems. Here the main problem is if in fact Prior is an essentialist. It seems to me that he is not while he explicitly asserts that the tense

⁵⁸ The title of this view is based on the medieval theological view that God has time present all at once, that God sees time like a tapestry. Thus, the tapestry view of time is such a view, which asserts that all time is present in one instant. Cf. Arthur N. Prior, "Some Free Thinking about Time", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, pp. 48–49.

⁵⁹ Cf. D. M. Gabbay – F. Guenther (eds.), *Handbook of Philosophical Logic*, Dordrecht 2002, pp. 322.

⁶⁰ Cf. R. Rodriguez – F. Anger, "Temporal Legacy in the Computer Science", in: J. Copeland (ed.), *Logic and Reality: Essays on the Legacy of Arthur Prior*, p. 89.

⁶¹ Cf. D. M. Gabbay – F. Guenther (eds.), *Handbook of Philosophical Logic*, pp. 320–323.

⁶² Cf. R. Rodriguez – F. Anger, "Temporal Legacy in the Computer Science", pp. 89–91.

⁶³ Cf. P. Øhrstørm – P. Hasle, *Temporal Logic: From Ancient Ideas to Artificial Intelligence*, pp. 344–347.

⁶⁴ Cf. A. N. Prior, "Some Free Thinking about Time", pp. 48–49.

⁶⁵ Cf. D. M. Gabbay – F. Guenther (eds.), *Handbook of Philosophical Logic*, p. 267.

logicians are not amenable to accepting a solution in which mere possibilities are included.⁶⁶ Furthermore, if he is an essentialist, it is still a weak form of essentialism, and it does not cause the problems which trouble Quine.

Thus, some similarities can be found between Prior and Quine in their concepts of the universe. Prior does not want to multiply the number of entities in the universe to the same extent as Quine does. Prior's endeavour brings his universe closer to Quine's, but raises numerous problems in his logic, as well. Although Prior's universe does not seem to be overpopulated, the possibility of reference in it has not been solved satisfyingly.⁶⁷

Prior's temporal logic is created in his regard for Quine's critique, but he accepts Leśniewski's theory of quantification in which it is possible to be the value of a bound variable and at the same time not actually exist. It is also the only way in which non-existent entities can actually occur. Thus, he nearly overturns Quine's statement 'To be is to be the value of a variable.'⁶⁸ The quantifying of non-existent entities, though criticized by Quine, is important for Prior. He must quantify them in his temporal logic, though he is not prepared to admit some way of existence for them.⁶⁹

Quine is aware of Leśniewski's theory of quantification. He is aware that this theory does not imply the existence of entities for which bound variables stand. He calls this type of quantification substitutive quantification and refutes it precisely because it makes us avoid the conviction that ontology and quantification are in some way connected.⁷⁰

Although Quine's theory is consistent, it cannot be used in certain cases. Thus there is the question if Prior's solution can sometimes be more useful. It is apparent that it cannot be used in many cases in which modal logic is employed, simply because it differs from modal logic, and Prior actually tries to build a theory that does not need to multiply the entities of the universe. It is not very often the case in modal logic. Most modal logicians are realists. They maintain that the entities which they postulate might be necessary. Thus, they do not use Ockham's razor to eliminate such entities from the universe.⁷¹

There is the question whether modal logic is possible without the multiplication of entities in the universe. Another question is if it is possible to be both a modal logician and anti-realist. There are certain philosophers that create such systems but it is difficult to find someone who receives both, and who in addition hold the ancient and medieval concepts of a statement. The medieval nominalists could do that, but their logic differs a great deal from the modern one.⁷²

On the other hand, it is apparent that modal logics are extremely important in many fields of research that it cannot be rejected, as Quine wanted to do. It is quite common in modal logics that quantifiers also bound variables which stand for entities that do not actually exist. In other words, there is no way to preserve the assertion that to be the value of a bound variable is to be.

⁶⁶ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Past, Present and Future*, p. 160.

⁶⁷ Cf. R. Sylvan, "Other Withered Stump of Time", p. 111

⁶⁸ W. V. O. Quine, "On what, there is", p. 15.

⁶⁹ Cf. A. N. Prior, *Papers on Time and Tense*, pp. 220–221.

⁷⁰ Cf. W. V. O. Quine, "Existence a kvantifikace", in: J. Peregrin, *Logika 20. století: mezi filosofií a matematikou*, pp. 464–466.

⁷¹ Cf. P. Kolář, *Argumenty filosofické logiky*, Prague 1999, p. 90.

⁷² Cf. P. V. Spade, *Thoughts, Words and Things: An Introduction to Late Mediaeval Logic and Semantic Theory*, http://pvspade.com/Logic/docs/Thoughts,%20Words%20and%20Things1_2.pdf. pp. 3–4. (7. 10. 2010).

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The Religious Dimension of Jewish Political Thought

Abstract | This paper discusses the issue of the legitimacy of political power in the Jewish tradition, and the reflection of this traditional concept in the political practice of the State of Israel. In accordance with Orthodox Jewish rite, the concept of God as the sole and sovereign ruler of mankind and of the entire created universe persists in rabbinic Judaism. Therefore, the question of the distribution of political power between secular authorities is complicated and introduces tension into contemporary Israeli politics. On the one hand, there are the ultra-Orthodox, anti-Zionist groups which use theological arguments to justify their rejection of the existence of the modern State of Israel, which they consider to be a heresy. On the other hand, religious arguments are also used by the stream of religious Zionism to justify an expansive political strategy, which is based on the theological concept called the Whole Land of Israel. In Israel there is tension between the principles of liberal democracy, which Israel officially claims to follow, and the doctrine of Judaism, which is still an extremely important political factor. The consequences of this tension also have an impact on the course of the Middle East conflict.

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1 Introduction

The objective of this paper is to point out the influence of Jewish political thinking, which stems from Biblical tradition, on the nature of the current political policy of the modern State of Israel. For a long period of time, events in the Middle East and within Israel have been a closely watched phenomenon. The political culture of Israel as a Jewish state is influenced to a certain extent by the doctrine of Judaism. The secular concept of a liberal democracy meets the long tradition of the Jewish religion, which in itself bears the requirement for a certain model of the social and power structure which is the prerequisite for the ideologization of Judaism. The tension between religious and secular authority, between democracy and the doctrine of Judaism, provides the backdrop for the discussion of the nature and legitimacy of political power in the Jewish environment.

2 The Jewish Tradition and Political Power

Naturally, the Tanakh¹ and the Torah, respectively, are a key source for understanding the way in which the Jewish religious tradition grasps the concept of political power and the legitimacy of the governing structures. The texts of the Tanakh can be considered the source of the political history of the Jewish people because they describe the creation of a kingdom in Israel. This

¹ The Tanakh is a name used for the canon of the Hebrew Bible. The name is an acronym formed from the initial Hebrew letters of the three parts of this canon: The Torah (“Teaching”, also known as the Five Books of Moses), Nevi’im (“Prophets”) and Ketuvim (“Writings”).

description, despite its questionable historical accuracy, is highly valuable for a full comprehension of the issue under discussion. The fifth book of the Torah, generally known as Deuteronomy, the Book of Judges, the Book of Samuel, and the Books of Kings 1 and 2 bear witness of the tension brought into the Jewish community by the creation of the kingdom. The Old Testament texts demonstrate how God presents himself to the Jewish people as God the Creator, who is, naturally, understood by the community as the sole supreme and real ruler over men and the entire created universe. This tension is based on the question whether it is even possible for a nation which only recognises God as their only lord to be ruled by a secular authority such as a king. The creation of the kingdom could threaten the rule of God and the issue of the distribution of the political ruling power among the secular authorities would thus become a source of controversy.

The Book of Genesis describes the dialogue between God and Abraham: *“Then taking him outside, he (Yahweh) said, ‘Look up at the sky and count the stars if you can. Just so will your descendants be,’ he told him. Abram put his faith in Yahweh and this was reckoned to him as uprightness.”*² This defines the historic moment from which the Israeli people originated – the moment when Abraham believed God; for that reason, the political fate of the Israeli people is mainly defined by faith, which is also the foundation of the covenant.³ *“And I shall maintain my covenant between myself and you, and your descendants after you, generation after generation, as a covenant in perpetuity, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. And to you and to your descendants after you, I shall give the country where you are now immigrants, the entire land of Canaan, to own in perpetuity. And I shall be their God.”*⁴ God promised Abraham and his descendants land in exchange for them accepting Yahweh as their only God whose laws they would follow. By this they would also actively participate in the fulfilment of God’s plan involving the created world. If the Jews fulfil God’s commands, they have the right to seek God’s protection. However, if they sin against them, God punishes them.

In order for the covenantal entitlement of the Jews for the Promised Land to be fulfilled, God led the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt and, during the journey through the Sinai desert, offered them a second covenant. This second, “Sinai” covenant not only reaffirmed the validity of the original covenant of Abraham but also established the Jewish national identity. *“So now, if you are really prepared to obey me and keep my covenant, you, out of all peoples, shall be my personal possession, for the whole world is mine. For me you shall be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.”* *Those are the words you are to say to the Israelites.*⁵ From this moment Jews become a certain political entity and, what is important, they became this entity voluntarily and by virtue of general consent. *“So Moses went and summoned the people’s elders and acquainted them with everything that Yahweh had bidden him, and the people all replied with one accord,”* *“Whatever Yahweh has said, we will do.”*⁶ This commitment gradually became significant for the Jewish community and for its state. Even though in Moses’ time Jews already existed as a nation, there was not a Jewish state in the real sense of the word. We can only talk about the fulfilment of the covenant and about the formation of a state after Joshua, following Moses’ death, crossed the Jordan and began to colonise the Promised Land.

² H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Derton 1985. <http://www.catholic.org/bible/> (09. 04. 2013), Gen 15:5-6.

³ K. Schubert, *Židovské náboženství v proměnách věků : Zdroje, teologie, filosofie, mystika*, Prague 1999, p. 50

⁴ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Gen 17:7-8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Ex 19:5-6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Ex 19:7-8.

Important figures of the Tanakh history who provide an interesting demonstration of the gradual changes in the traditional understanding of the term of political power and its legitimacy include Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon.

In the tradition, Moses appears as a leader of a religious community, which is already defined as a nation but does not yet inhabit the territory promised by God. Within the community, Moses, by God's authority, represents a generally recognised leader who controls the narrative. The law received from God on the Mount of Sinai is passed on orally to all the people by Moses. "These laws will constitute the foundation through which individuals, and tribes, are to grow into a community and nation ..."⁷ Moses holds the position of the community leader while acting as judge and at the same time overseeing observance of the Law. However, being a leader of an emerging political formation, Moses cannot hold all these positions himself over the long term. "The emerging polity cannot be governed by one man, alone; a political infrastructure is required. Laws need to be applied, and enforced, if they are to be more than 'simply' religious obligations. ... Moses concluded that he needed an administrative and judicial structure to rule effectively."⁸ He therefore asks God to divide the competences and leadership roles among the Jews. The institutions of Levites and Kohens (priests) are then set up – the tribe of Levi was designated for the special role of Divine service. Aaron and his descendants were chosen to be priests and serve in the Temple.⁹ Moses remained in the position of an authority regarding the Law. The specific relationship between Moses and God plays an extremely important role. "Deuteronomy's political infrastructure places greater emphasis on Moses' individual and covenantal importance, and his selection by God, instead of on an office..."¹⁰ The figure of Moses and the way he relates to God is fundamental. It is also important to mention that the individual tribes were invited to themselves propose their potential tribal representatives so that the authority within the community could be divided as requested by Moses. This is thus the practical application of the principle of equality. The equality concept in ancient Judaism is naturally based on the assumption of the equal sanctification of each man during creation. Despite this practice of majority-based decision-making (this method of decision-making already played an important part in the decision to accept the covenant with God in Abraham's time), God remains the one who finally decides about appointing a tribe or individual in a certain position. It is this acceptance of God's absolute power and majesty, which transcends human beings, that complicates the adoption of the secular form of authority, one of man over man, for religious Jews. As we will demonstrate below, this attitude also causes problems in the contemporary Jewish state.

At the end of Moses' life, Joshua is called upon to become the new head of the Jewish people. Led by Joshua, the Jews would enter the Promised Land to take control of the territories which belong to them according to God's will. Under Joshua's leadership, the opportunity finally offered itself to establish a genuine Jewish state formation within which the free Jewish nation could exist in its own territory. It was Moses that publicly spoke to, instructed, and motivated Joshua to take over the leadership of the Israelites. It was also Moses that wrote down and passed to Joshua and all the people God's Law which he heard directly from God – the Torah. Formally, Joshua was to carry this law to the Promised Land as a living constitution for all generations.

There is an interesting philosophical level to the issue of following laws based on the Torah. God, being the giver of the Torah, asks from the Israelites to fulfil the mitzvot – its

⁷ H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", in: *Jewish Political Studies Review* 3,3-4 (1991), pp. 23-58, p. 27.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁹ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Num 11:13; Num 18:1-7.

¹⁰ H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", p. 29.

commandments. We find no theoretical discussion about the concept of freedom or ethics in the book of Deuteronomy even though the promise of the free existence in the Promised Land is one of the determining aspects of the covenant. The concern for liberation emerges in deeds, not in theory. The figure of Moses itself is not introduced as that of a philosopher engaged in the world of ideas, but as a legislator, concerned with man's actions.¹¹ Faith cannot be separated from practical actions. Since the Torah reflects God's intent and the overall order of the world, this order must be in congruence with the specific actions of a human being. This concept was adopted by the renowned Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, who summarised his opinions on the specific spiritual phenomenon of Jewishness in his 1918 work "The Holy Way", in which he says: "Doing good means to fill the world with God; to serve God truly means to entirely embrace him in one's life. True Jewishness knows no morality or faith as separate spheres. The mission of the Jewish people is not the truth as an idea or the truth as a figure but the truth as a deed..."¹² This perception of the Law through the prism of practical conduct has a fundamental impact in the Jewish tradition, even in the context of political events. Actions against the Torah are interpreted as actions taken both against God's will and as those against the covenant and, as such, they carry along fatal consequences.

After Moses' death, his authority to lead the community and nation, respectively, was fully vested in Joshua. The legitimacy of Joshua's position was again confirmed by God: "*That day, Yahweh made Joshua great in the eyes of all Israel, who respected him as they had respected Moses, as long as he lived.*"¹³ With God's help, he captures the territory that belongs to the Israelites according to the covenant. At the same time, he thoroughly follows the observance of the Torah, as instructed by Moses. However, when Joshua dies, chaos ensues in the Jewish nation. The new generation has forgotten the Law and the people are thus in danger because they no longer live in accordance with the Torah, which is primarily in evidence in many Jews resorting to idolatry. "*...another generation followed it which knew neither Yahweh nor the deeds which he had done for the sake of Israel.*"¹⁴

Despite the fact that Jews deviated from the Torah, God eventually sent them judges: "*Yahweh then appointed them judges, who rescued them from the hands of their plunderers.*"¹⁵ The period of judges was a time by which Israel had settled down in the promised land of Canaan but did not yet have a king. Anytime an Israeli tribe fell under attack by an enemy at that time, the so-called "judges" appeared in each generation, i.e. people who headed the nation and led it into battle against the enemy. At the end of the second century BCE, the Jewish nation is described in the Book of Judges as a tribal society further divided into lineages and families, without a central government. The judges thus fulfil an important task. Their mission is both to turn the people back to the Torah and to God and to ensure unity if it is necessary to defend the territory. In case of a threat, the judges head the nation, focusing around them volunteers – warriors who are touched by God's spirit. This in fact means that the course of battles is controlled by God and that these Jewish warriors are only his instruments. In this arrangement, everything depends on faith. The Jews were so estranged from the Torah, however, that not even the deeds of the judges could prevent the people from breaking the Covenant. This divergence from the Torah,

¹¹ H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", p. 31.

¹² Translated by the author from Czech: „Činit dobro znamená naplnit svět Bohem; Bohu opravdově sloužit znamená ho cele vtáhnout do života. Pravé židovství nezná ani mravnost, ani víru jako oddělené sféry. Úkolem židovstva není pravda jako idea, ani pravda jako postava, nýbrž pravda jako čin...“ in: M. Krupp, *Sionismus a stát Izrael: Historický nástin*, Prague 1999, p. 92.

¹³ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Jos 4:14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Judges 2:10.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Judges 2:16.

and mainly the idolatry, resulted in God's decision to no longer side with the Jews and expose them to the trial of having to fight other nations. "...in future I shall not drive before them any one of those nations which Joshua left when he died, in order, by means of them, to put Israel to the test, to see whether or not they would tread the paths of Yahweh as once their ancestors had trodden them."¹⁶ Jews are thus left to face the peril of their enemies, which would then fully become apparent in Samuel's time.

A turning point in the political history of Israel occurred at the time of the last of the judges, Samuel. The Jews openly asked for a king: "...They said, 'No! We are determined to have a king, so that we can be like the other nations, with our own king to rule us and lead us and fight our battles.'¹⁷ In the era of the judges, the Israeli tribes formed a free alliance around the sanctuary in Shiloh. This was also from where the impulses for the arrangement of the religious and secular life and state organisation came from. The imminent danger represented by the other nations in the region, who had a king and showed a higher degree of the organised infrastructure of the state and power, was an important impulse towards a change. Despite the fact that the judges represented a certain form of authority in Israel, their powers and influence differed significantly from those of kings. In Samuel's time, the Jews began to actively demand an authority that would be a king to them and rule over them as the kings ruled over "the other nations". The fact that the request for a king was "so we can be like all the nations" was a clear indication that something was wrong. The role of the Jews is not to be "like all the nations" but to be the nation of God. The demand for the establishment of a kingdom is therefore problematic as far as the relationship between the Jews and God is concerned. In 1 Samuel we therefore read: "...But today you have rejected your God, him who saves you from all your difficulties and troubles; and you have said, 'No, you must set a king over us.'¹⁸

Despite all this, God decided to grant the Jews' request. The Judge and Prophet Samuel was an important figure during the transition from the time of the judges to that of the kings. He played a key part in the creation of the kingdom because it was he who anointed the first two Kings of Israel chosen by God, practically starting a new era in the political history of the Jewish state. In addition to the request for a kingdom, the community was exposed to the effects of numerous changes. Prior to this, Jews had only known representatives such as prophets, judges, deputies of the individual tribes, priests or Levites. All the important decisions had been adopted in the presence and with the consent of the majority or of all. The kingdom, being a state formation headed by the strong authority of the king, could cause a problem in this regard.

However, the understanding of the royal post and the view of the king was very specific in the Jewish tradition. The Jews welcomed the creation of the kingdom because its establishment bore great significance for the future. The person of the king, chosen by God himself, becomes the guarantee of God's help. The Jewish king is therefore king by the will of God. His legitimacy does not stem from his social status or even from any success on the battlefield. On the contrary, the legitimacy of the Jewish king is directly derived from his being chosen by God. Specific requirements therefore apply to the king: "He will be an Israelite, obligated to maintain his national independence, of modest means, committed to an exemplary private life and, above all, he must, with guidance from the priests, transcribe a copy of the law, read it continually, and abide by its injunctions."¹⁹ These special requirements naturally originate from the subordination of the king to God's Law. The kingdom is not only a new political arrangement in which only such

¹⁶ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Judges 2:21-22.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 Sam 8:19-20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1 Sam 10:19.

¹⁹ H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", p. 39.

powers are vested in the king in the exercise of which there will be no violation of the covenantal relationship with God. The king enters into a special relationship with God, and the importance of the kingdom therefore does not disappear together with the cessation of the kingdom. The idea of the kingdom continues in the expectation of a new king – the Messiah. This close bond between the king and God also resonated in the history of European culture and politics. Namely, the concept of the legitimacy of political power, which the ruler receives from God, makes any attempts to make politics a sphere with the absolute competence of human beings problematic. Because of God's involvement in political affairs, no person may, as a secular authority, assume the right of unlimited power over others.

On the one hand, God's decision to establish a kingdom may be understood as a gift that would help Jews govern the state more efficiently and better counter the pressure from the surrounding nations. On the other hand, this gift may also be associated with a certain risk and temptation of the king, who is to hold the recently centralised political power in his hands. God himself even warned the Israelites against the negatives brought about by the kingdom when he told Samuel: "*So, do what they ask; only, you must give them a solemn warning, and must tell them what the king who is to reign over them will do.*"²⁰ Samuel then interpreted to the people all the injustice they would be exposed to under the king's rule.²¹ However, the Jews still insisted on the appointment of a king, which eventually occurred. The Biblical tradition represents two lines of the interpretation of the emergence of the kingdom. This dual attitude to the establishment of the kingdom becomes the backdrop for the discussion regarding loyalty to the secular authority of a sovereign, which, as we shall explain below, is still reflected in the current politics of the modern State of Israel.

The tradition of the Jewish political thinking essentially knows no concept of the sovereignty of the state as such. No state formation, being the creation of humans, can claim sovereignty because that is only reserved for God. "Classically, only God is sovereign and He entrusts the exercise of His sovereign powers mediated through His Torah-as-constitution to the people as a whole."²² When describing the nature of the ancient state of Israel, Daniel J. Elazar speaks about the so-called "theo-political" community that is headed by the king, who is, however, bound by the covenantal obligation to God.²³

The period of the transition from the free alliance of Israeli tribes to the kingdom is best reflected by the figure of the first Jewish king Saul. Saul²⁴ was anointed upon the request of the people and initially appeared to be a capable sovereign who could unite his people and defend them from the pressure of the Philistines. The turning point came when Saul began to act at will and violated God's command concerning the timing and method of sacrifice. "*Samuel said to Saul, 'You have acted like a fool. You have not obeyed the order which Yahweh your God gave you. Otherwise, Yahweh would have confirmed your sovereignty over Israel for ever.'*"²⁵ Through his wantonness Saul fell from God's grace, losing also his claim for the confirmation of his position, in contrast with the second king – David, who would succeed him and become the prototype of the ideal king.

²⁰ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), 1 Sam 8:9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1 Sam 8:11–18.

²² H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", p. 40.

²³ D. J. Elazar, "Covenant as the Basis of the Jewish Political Tradition", in: *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Volume XX, No. 1 (June 1978), p. 5–37.

²⁴ Shaul – "asked for" in Hebrew.

²⁵ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), 1 Sam 13:13.

In David, the Jews found a king who was different than those in the surrounding countries. David professed God's Law and God's Covenant. Since he tried not to rule at will but in God's name, he could truly protect and deliver the people. In his time it became apparent that the establishment of the kingdom had indeed stabilised the situation in the Jewish state. According to tradition, David ruled a united empire in Jerusalem, which he made the capital city. "...he reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years."²⁶ The most important moment in King David's story, however, was the confirmation of the legitimacy of the king's power and the promise of the hereditary passing of the mandate to David's descendants. "And when your days are over and you fall asleep with your ancestors, I shall appoint your heir, your own son to succeed you and I shall make his sovereignty secure. He will build me a temple for my name and I shall make his royal throne secure for ever."²⁷ Here God fully confirms the royal title. The kingdom is promised to a certain family: i.e. a hereditary monarchy. Succession is no longer to be determined through new choice (as it was in Saul and David) because God's decision in fact established a hereditary monarchy. From this moment on, the Covenant with God would forever be associated with David's descendants because every new king would be a sign of the renewal of the covenant. This idea is fundamental for the messianic expectation of the coming of a new Jewish king – the Messiah²⁸, who will come from David's lineage. Because of his descent he can be the only legitimate sovereign of Israel. Only he can restore the Jewish state.

The reign of King David is conventionally dated to c. 1010–1002 BCE.²⁹ David's dynasty held its position in the region until 586 BCE, when the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar brought an end to the rule of the royal house of David.³⁰

David's son Solomon was the last sovereign of the house of David to rule a united Jewish Kingdom. Solomon's reign was mainly characterised by the construction of the Bet HaMikdash, or the First Temple, in Jerusalem, which was of fundamental importance. Again, Solomon did not build the Temple at will but upon God's request. This step was highly significant because the Temple would become a fundamental spiritual centre of the community. The Temple would become the symbol of God's lasting presence among His chosen people.³¹ According to tradition, Solomon managed to keep the people united by building the Temple. However, Solomon's relationship with God was also rather problematic: on the one hand there is the depiction of Solomon as a wise king who tries to respect God's will; on the other hand, diplomatic success and the development of the empire required significant compromises on Solomon's part. Solomon's political success was paid for by adopting foreign models and culture and by a marital policy resulting in religious inconsistency, God's wrath³² and, eventually, the disintegration of the united Jewish kingdom. Solomon's time thus may have been a period of prosperity but it also foreshadowed a further shift in the issue of political power in the Jewish environment.³³

After Solomon's death, the monarchy was divided in the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah. This split foreshadowed the complete disintegration of the Jewish state. The Kingdom of Israel in the North ceased to exist around 722 BCE as a consequence of the Assyrian expansion; the Kingdom of Judah in the South was destroyed after the invasion of the Babylonian King

²⁶ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), 2 Sam 5:5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2 Sam 7:12-13.

²⁸ Mashiakh standing for "the anointed" in Hebrew.

²⁹ D. M. Carr – C. M. Conway, *An Introduction to the Bible: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts*, Chichester 2010, p. 58.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³¹ B. Lancaster, *Judaizmus*, Bratislava 2000, p. 51.

³² H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), 1 Kings 11:1-13.

³³ R. Rendtorff, *Hebrejská bible a dějiny. Úvod do starozákonní literatury*. Prague 2003, pp. 59–62.

Nebuchadnezzar II, who seized Jerusalem in 587 BCE, had the Temple demolished and dragged a major part of the Jewish population to Babylon. Even though there is a historical explanation for the destruction of the Jewish monarchy, God's wrath and decision to destroy this formation because of the disobedience of the community are the crucial factors behind this event from the perspective of Jewish tradition and based on the eschatological interpretation of the history of deliverance.³⁴ The fall of the monarchy and the Babylonian galut is of fundamental importance in the history of the Jewish people. This event formed the Jewish society and Judaism in the Second Temple period. It is also likely that only after the return from Babylon were the different traditions within the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, the Torah, finally canonised.³⁵

In 539 BCE, Babylon was conquered by the Persian King Cyrus II who issued a decree enabling the return of the Jews from Babylon to Judea. This step was pivotal because it practically enabled the rebuilding of the Temple. The Second Temple was built by those who returned from Babylonian captivity approximately seventy years after the First Temple was destroyed. The Jews who returned from Babylon were led by Zerubbabel. Even though a descendant of David, he only acted as the governor of Judea under the Persians after the disintegration of the Jewish monarchy. It was therefore no longer a king from David's lineage but an appointed governor who played the key role. These events are also reflected by Judaism – the history of the Jewish Kingdom is considered the history of descent. The fall of the Jewish Kingdom and the exile were the retribution for the sins of the people and the deeds of the sinful kings.

The rite was instituted and consolidated at the time of the construction of the Second Temple. The transformation of the role of priests was a highly important change at this time. Now that the people were lacking a king, the level of the priests of the Second Temple in Jerusalem fulfilled the role of an authority. The Temple is a constant reminder of the covenantal relationship between God and the Jews, and the priests thus held great influence and respect among the people through the religious rites.³⁶ The Temple also hosted the Sanhedrin – a religious court, which represented the executive and judiciary at the time. The bond between the Jews and the Temple was thus reinforced. In the Second Temple period the nation was practically led by the High Priest and the caste of priests reached a position where it could become crucial at a time of uncertainty. Important figures of this period include the priest Ezra and the governor Nehemiah, who strove to establish a Temple theocracy. During their time in office, respect for the Shabbat was strictly enforced and the laws of the Torah were operational as a certain form of constitution. The Temple and the cult enjoyed a privileged position. However, the Second Temple period was marked by numerous problems. Jewish society was not unified – Judea and Jerusalem stood against Samaria, Judaism was incoherent, and there were internal ideological and power disputes between the hierocracy (i.e. the class of the priests) and the aristocracy.

In addition, the internal political events in the region were not favourable and brought about multiple changes. The Persians, who had allowed the Jews significant autonomy in religious matters, were replaced by Hellenisation. According to tradition, the Temple was desecrated during the reign of the Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Vast numbers of the population joined in the resistance, resulting in a major uprising headed by the Maccabees. Led by Simon Maccabaeus, they managed to gain control over Jerusalem and rededicate the Temple in 164 BCE. The Maccabees achieved Judean independence of the Seleucids. Simon Maccabaeus established

³⁴ Galut standing for "exile" in Hebrew.

³⁵ P. Sláma, "Zákon Boha tvého a zákon krále' (Ezd 7,26): Mojžíšova Tóra jako akreditační dokument židovského společenství doby Ezdrášovy?", in: *Tesáno do kamene – Psáno na pregamen – Tištěno na papír: Studie ke staro-zákonní hermeneutice*, Prague 2008, pp. 112–127.

³⁶ I. Finkelstein – A. N. Silberman, *Objevování Bible: Svatá Písma Izraele ve světle moderní archeologie*, Prague 2007, pp. 267–275.

the Hasmonean dynasty, gained both the title of High Priest and kingship. After 423 years, the Jewish state in Judea was restored. According to the Biblical narrative, the legitimacy of the restoration of the Jewish kingdom was confirmed by God through the miracle of the Hanukkah. Tradition has it, though, that the Hasmoneans betrayed God, deviating from the original ideals of the Maccabean revolt and inclining to Hellenisation as they were gaining power. In line with the eschatological interpretation of these historical events, stern punishment by God followed. Jewish society was split internally into four conflicting lines: the Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots, and Essenes.³⁷ This disunion and internal ideological and political disputes eventually resulted in the inability to defend the kingdom against the Romans. When the Roman forces led by Vespasian and Titus invaded the region in 66 CE, they easily conquered Galilee and laid siege to Jerusalem, where a civil war subsequently broke out. In 70 CE the Romans finally captured Jerusalem and laid the city including the Temple to the ground. The Temple would never be restored.³⁸

The fall of the Second Temple is a milestone in Jewish history, leading to the final disintegration of Jewish statehood, the life of the Jews in the diaspora for nearly 2000 years, and the comprehensive transformation of Jewish religious system and society. The nature of Judaism changed: without the Temple, it was impossible to perform sacrifices, formerly the core of the cult. Where there was no Temple, there was no need for the Levites and priests with sacrificial duties. It was no longer possible for the Sanhedrin to operate on the Temple ground. The original social and political structures were no longer possible to maintain, and the role of the judges was gradually assigned to the newly established institution of the rabbis. Rabbis became the new experts in halakhic³⁹ legal standards, began to specialise in their further development, while also supervising their application and observance within the diaspora community.⁴⁰ The Sanhedrin was replaced by the beth din – a rabbinical court which operates in Israel to date, and rabbis gained significant influence in the Jewish community. This influence is still present today in the attitude of religious Jews to authority. Religious Jews tend to be obedient to rabbis, who are experts in Halakha and spiritual leaders. They have less respect for secular authority, which is of little interest to them.

3 The influence of the religious political tradition on the current politics of the modern State of Israel

Judaism represents a religious system while reflecting a certain cultural tradition, a national concept, way of life as well as a social organisation. The doctrine of Judaism, i.e. that of monotheism, thus implicitly contains in its core a set of prerequisites which help create suitable conditions for the potential process of the transformation of religion into an ideology.⁴¹

How closely contemporary politics in the modern State of Israel is linked to the ancient tradition of Jewish thinking is reflected by the clause “Israel as a Jewish and democratic state”⁴², which is one of the pivotal principles of the country’s constitutional law. This definition of Israel

³⁷ S. Segert, *Synové světla a synové tmy: Svědectví nejstarších biblických rukopisů*, Prague 1970, pp. 163–167.

³⁸ P. Schäffer, *Dějiny židů v antice od Alexandra Velikého po arabskou nadvládu*. Prague 2003, pp. 30–138.

³⁹ Halakha is the canon of Jewish religious laws.

⁴⁰ M. Mendel, *Náboženství v boji o Palestinu: Judaismus, islám a křesťanství jako ideologie etnického konfliktu*, Brno 2000, p. 16.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴² “The purpose of this Basic Law is to protect human dignity and liberty, in order to establish in a Basic Law the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.” Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3_eng.htm (09.04.2013).

can help comprehend the religious and ideological influences present in Israeli politics and its association with Judaism. The current Israeli politics can thus be understood as the product of the interaction between realistic ideas and the influence of the religious ideology based on the tradition of Orthodox Rabbinic Judaism, the text of the Torah and its interpretation in the Talmud.⁴³

Judaism inherently contains a certain design of the social order. This particular religious requirement for the nature of the social structure of the Jewish community has its meaning, inherently associated with the interpretation of the Torah. Rabbi ben Becalel has said about this topic: “The Torah is God’s order given to man (SEDER HAADAM), which states how man should act and behave. As it is the order for man, the Torah is also the order for the entire world (SEDER HAOLAM).”⁴⁴ The Torah thus carries in itself an order, which, in the transferred sense, becomes the theoretical model for the functioning of the entire society. The society appears as an important factor in the relationship between man and God because a properly functioning society helps carry out God’s work. Since the Jewish nation holds an important mission from God, the fundamental religious principles consider a theocracy, i.e. a halakhic state, the ideal social structure.⁴⁵ For the religious Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews, the Torah is the sole and supreme “constitution”. The absence of an actual constitutional document in Israel is one of the consequences of this fact. Partially out of respect for tradition and partially for pragmatic reasons, the Zionists therefore had to make a number of concessions in religious affairs when establishing Israel. For this reason, the full and explicit separation of religion from the state never occurred and the religious community subsequently went on to achieve political influence by setting up rabbinical institutions.⁴⁶ Religion and the political practice in Israel are thus more interwoven than in any other democratic country.

The reflection of these ideas can be observed at present in the form of the efforts by a group of non-Zionist Haredim⁴⁷, which, although a minority in Israel, continues to grow rapidly in number because of high natality and gain political influence. The political parties representing Haredim are adamant in matters concerning religious legislation and continue to strongly promote the scope of competence of the halakhic code. Their final objective is to transform the currently secular Israel into a Jewish theocracy. The population growth in this group therefore plays a major part in the question regarding the future direction of Israel.⁴⁸ These Haredim activities have resulted in the polarisation of two conflicting lines in Israeli society: the secular (majority) line and the religious (minority but highly influential) line. This polarity is best described as a dispute between Israelis who see democracy and its institutions positively and Israelis who are more or less skeptical about democracy. It can also be expressed as the contrast of democracy and theocracy.⁴⁹

In addition to the above-mentioned theocratic efforts of part of the religious community, Israeli democracy also faces another highly controversial political project. This is the ideologically loaded concept of Greater Israel, called “Eretz Yisra’el Ha-Shlema” in Hebrew – “the Whole Land

⁴³ The Talmud is a collection of rabbinical commentaries on the Tanakh.

⁴⁴ Translated by the author from Czech: “Tóra je Boží řád daný člověku (SEDER HAADAM), v němž se uvádí, jak má člověk konat a jak se má chovat. A jako je Tóra řádem pro člověka, je také řádem pro celý svět (SEDER HAOLAM).” in: J. L. Ben Becalel, *Stežka Tóry : Výběr z knihy Netivot olam*, Prague 2008, p. 20–21.

⁴⁵ M. Mendel, *Náboženství v boji o Palestinu*, p. 13.

⁴⁶ M. Čejka, “Právní řád Státu Izrael a Common Law”, in: *Common Law Review*, http://review.society.cz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=61&Itemid=2 (09.04.2013).

⁴⁷ The social group of Haredim represents the most conservative form of Orthodox Judaism.

⁴⁸ M. Čejka, *Judaismus a politika v Izraeli*, Brno 2009, p. 68.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

of Israel". In this idea we can see a religious doctrine entering the discourse on the territorial arrangement of the Middle East and the Israeli imperialistic strategy.

In the modern Jewish state, the vision of Greater Israel is associated with part of the Orthodox Jews promoting religious Zionism. Even though part of the Orthodox Jews seek to merge the Jewish faith with a modern way of life, another part strongly tends towards nationalism, which is further reinforced with religious dogmatism. The ideology of Greater Israel builds on the dogma of the Promised Land as found in the Old Testament: "*And to you and to your descendants after you, I shall give the country where you are now immigrants, the entire land of Canaan, to own in perpetuity. And I shall be their God.*"⁵⁰ In addition to the current official territory of Israel, the Old-Testament borders also comprise Lebanon, the West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip and a small part of Syria.

The two principal theses the religious Zionists use to ideologically justify their vision of Israeli statehood can be concisely expressed as follows: (1) Jews as God's chosen people, and (2) the development of the Jewish nation in the territory of the Promised Land. Processed by contemporary religious Zionism, these ideas have resulted in a persuasion that "...a land which was in ancient times ruled by any of the Jewish sovereigns or which was promised to the Jews by God either according to the Bible or according to the rabbinic interpretation of the Bible and the Talmud should belong to Israel because it is a Jewish state."⁵¹ This doctrinal background and arguments based on faith can justify the building of Jewish settlements which do not belong to the State of Israel according to international law. In order to officially justify these activities, the political representatives of the state use the argument of security, which, without doubt, is of great significance. However, we must not omit the importance of ideology, which plays a considerable part in this matter.

The activities of the religious settlers and the disapproving attitude of the right-wing political parties concerning negotiations with the Arab population (the Palestinians) about any territorial concessions in exchange for the peaceful resolution of the Israeli – Palestinian conflict – all those are undemocratic tendencies.⁵² In the attempts to justify or explain political steps by using arguments based on religious persuasion, which renders these arguments irrational by principle, we can see to what extent religious aspects have become a dynamic political factor in Israel.

4 Conclusion

Using several examples, it is apparent how the Jewish political tradition of the past is reflected in our time. Harvey Shulman notes that "*Jewish political thought cannot be separated from man's reflections about his past.*"⁵³ Even though we cannot speak of a direct causality, it is possible to identify certain schemes and therefore a certain type of link to the traditional concept of Jewish political thinking in contemporary Israeli politics. Examining this link can contribute to a better and more comprehensive understanding of the principles of Israeli politics, and thus also the events in the Middle East.

⁵⁰ H. Wansbrough (ed.), *New Jerusalem Bible* (Regular ed.), Gen 17:8.

⁵¹ Translated by the author from Czech: "... země, které ve starověku vládl některý ze židovských vládců, nebo která byla Bohem zaslíbena Židům buď podle Bible nebo podle rabínské interpretace Bible a Talmudu, taková země by měla náležet Izraeli, protože je to židovský stát." in: I. Shahak, *Historie a náboženství Židů : Tíha tří tisíc let předsudků, pokrytectví a náboženské nesnášenlivosti*, Olomouc 2005, p. 25.

⁵² M. Čejka, *Judaismus a politika v Izraeli*, p. 70.

⁵³ H. Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred: Political Obligation and the Book of Deuteronomy", p. 37.

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The Republican Concept of Liberty in the Context of Locke's Second Treatise of Government

Abstract | This article examines the republican concept of liberty and compares the classic liberal vision of liberty expressed, above all, in Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* with the republican approach. The most influential republican theorists of liberty, Q. Skinner and P. Pettit, remain close to the negative concept of liberty. Nevertheless, they try to formulate specific conditions that can justify negative liberty better than Berlin's concept. According to Skinner and Pettit, liberty is not merely the enjoyment of a sphere of non-interference but the enjoyment of certain conditions in which such non-interference is guaranteed. Even though the republican concept of liberty is exceptionally inspiring, it can be subjected to criticism. One question, for instance, is whether their strategy is not too similar to the position of classic liberalism, in particular to the position of John Locke.

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Proponents of republicanism follow up on the ideas of Berlin's distinction of negative and positive liberty and are convinced that they introduce their own, third concept. The objective of this paper is to justify the opinion that the republican concept of liberty is no different in its foundations from the interpretation of liberty as formulated by John Locke in his *Second Treatise of Government* and that it is therefore inadequate to introduce an additional term.

On the other hand, the significant contribution of the republican view of liberty should be emphasised, consisting of a sophisticated and precise justification of the existence of democratic institutions and civic virtues as the prerequisite for individual liberty. This concept is also clearly echoed in matters related to political practice, for example as far as the issue of corruption is concerned. A useful theoretical basis is thus formed to provide support for political decision-making.

In this text I shall first summarise the main premises of negative and republican liberty and shall proceed to compare them and point out the similarities and differences. Then I shall summarise the main ideas of the *Second Treatise of Government* in relation to the republican interpretation of liberty and shall seek to defend my sceptical attitude toward the introduction of a third – republican – concept of liberty. Among other sources, this paper draws from two representative collections of republican political theory: *Republicanism: History, Theory and Practice* and *Republicanism and Political Theory*.¹

Berlin's interpretation of negative liberty

I would like to open this paper by referring to one particular idea of Isaiah Berlin, which provides the relevant meaning and purpose to the efforts of many contemporary philosophers and political scientists: If we are to truly understand the conflicts of ideas and the political movements which

¹ D. Weinstock – Ch. Nadeau (eds.), *Republicanism: History, Theory and Practice*, London 2004; C. Laborde – J. Maynor (eds.), *Republicanism and Political Theory*, Oxford 2008.

are, to a certain degree, the manifestations of such ideas, we must also understand the ideas and basic life attitudes contained therein. This also applies vice versa: Unless we understand the prominent questions of our world, our own political attitudes may remain unclear or even hidden to us. Even though Berlin formulated this idea during the Cold War, referring to the attitudes of the two camps which provided contrasting answers to the question of obedience and coercion, his observation still holds true. For example, if we fail to understand the fundamental questions of modern democracy, our own attitudes may remain obscured, and vice versa. I would like to note that it is the question of liberty; more specifically, that of the freedom of an individual within a society, that is considered the pivotal issue of democracy in this context.

In order to adequately understand Berlin's interpretation of liberty, it will be useful to mention the three basic sources which, albeit not obviously, are the significant determinants of his approach. Firstly, the understanding of liberty as representing a separate political value which is not a consequence but a premise. Secondly, suspiciousness of the close link between political and non-political values, in particular those that place perfectionist aspirations upon an individual. And thirdly, the conviction that the political programmes which contain these above-mentioned aspirations are historically related to the deeds of the political elites, which tried to impose their interpretation of their "real" interests upon the people. Berlin's approach as a whole is thus formulated not only within the context of the liberal tradition but also as a response to actual political developments, in particular the Russian revolution.

Isaiah Berlin made a distinction between two basic types of liberty: negative and positive. Negative liberty is mainly defined by the area in which I can do without limitation whatever I deem suitable. Protecting liberty in this sense means defence against the violation of this area. In contrast, positive liberty can be described by answering the question as to what or who is the source of control over spontaneous human activity.

As the purpose of this paper is also to compare the negative and the republican concepts of liberty, let us now leave the positive liberty aside and focus on the negative liberty. In order to grasp and understand the difference between the negative and the republican approach, and to understand the very core of the republican critique of negative liberty, it will be useful to focus on the three attributes of negative liberty as explained by Berlin in *Two Concepts of Liberty*.²

The unifying principle of these attributes is the concept of an individual and of individual liberty formulated by John Stuart Mill. Mill's vision is derived from the belief that in a sphere of actions which only concerns an individual the individual should live without limitation even though there may be other requirements placed upon the individual by social conventions or by what Mill refers to as the tyranny of prevailing opinion and feeling. Defending liberty in this sense represents a negative objective, i.e. to prevent interference with the privacy of each individual.

The first attribute is related to Berlin's opinion that Mill combines two ideas in his concept. First, *coercion* frustrates human desires and is therefore bad, while *non-interference* (being the opposite of coercion) in itself is good. Second, people should seek to develop a character that is spontaneous, critical, independent, and unique.³ However, both of these ideas can only be

² I. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty", in: I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford 1991, pp. 128–131.

³ Mill's requirement was captured by Karel Čapek in his *Letters from England*: "When I saw my first gentleman roaming across a lawn in Hampton Court I thought he was some fairy-tale figure [...]. I expected [...] some gardener to come after him and scold him bitterly. But nothing happened. Finally, even I found the courage to set off straight across the meadow [...]. Again nothing happened; but I have never had a feeling of such boundless freedom as at that moment. It is very odd: here obviously man isn't thought of as a verminous beast. Here

implemented under the conditions of liberty. According to Berlin: "Both these are liberal views, but they are not identical, and the connexion between them is, at best, empirical."⁴

The second attribute of negative liberty refers to the fact that this concept of liberty is relatively new. Individual rights were not embedded only in the legal systems of the Greeks and Romans but they were also absent in all ancient civilisations known to us. The recognition of the private sphere as something untouchable only appears with the advent of the Reformation and the Renaissance. The inviolability of privacy appears to be one of the constitutive elements of Western civilisation, and its presence can be understood as a kind of test of the existence of a certain moral perspective.

The third attribute expresses Berlin's persuasion that liberty in this context is not principally incompatible with certain forms of autocracy, in particular because it concerns an area rather than a source of control. As much as a citizen in a democracy can suffer injustice and be deprived of certain freedoms, a subject in an autocracy may come across an enlightened sovereign who does not interfere with the subject's privacy. In addition, historical experience shows that an enlightened ruler may even establish more favourable conditions for the development of the individual character of selected individuals than a democratic system.⁵ According to Berlin, an autocrat who allows certain freedom to his/her subjects may, at the same time, be unjust, support inequality among people, disrespect order, etc. Liberty as understood in this context is unrelated to the form of government, or: "...there is no necessary connexion between individual liberty and democratic rule. The answer to the question 'Who governs me?' is logically distinct from the question 'How far does government interfere with me?'"⁶

In this context, the main consequence of Berlin's analysis is a proposition that individual liberty is not necessarily related to the type of government. If there could still be any kind of connection between liberty and the type of government, it could only be empirical, not principal ("logical").

The Republican interpretation of liberty

Within the framework of republicanism, I shall primarily focus on the argumentation of Philip Pettit because his view is more focused on the problem itself and on its philosophical implications, unlike the equally inspiring and influential approach of Quentin Skinner, who mainly accentuates the historical context. Nevertheless, at times the opinions and arguments of both authors overlap and it would be at the expense of the clarity of this text to explain in detail every distinction or similarity. Moreover, in certain aspects Pettit's arguments can also be understood as an attempt to summarise and clarify the theoretical foundations and relations of republicanism as a whole.⁷

there is no gloomy opinion of him that the grass won't grow beneath his hooves. Here it is his prerogative to cross a meadow as if he were a water nymph or lord of the manor. I think that this has a marked influence on his nature and view of the world. It opens up the miraculous possibility of going another way than by the path and in doing so not having to consider oneself vermin, a lout or an anarchist." See. K.Čapek, *Letters from England*, London 2001, p. 30.

⁴ I. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty", p. 128.

⁵ For example, Frederick the Great in Prussia or Joseph II in Austria. See I. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty", p. 129.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁷ M. Znoj – J. Bíba, (eds.), *Machiavelli mezi republikanismem a demokracií*, Prague 2011, p. 45

As close to negative liberty as the views of Pettit and Skinner may be, their interpretation goes beyond this framework because they formulate the theoretical prerequisites for liberty differently: Being free does not only mean to have around oneself an area where nobody can interfere; it also suggests the existence of certain conditions that guarantee this individual area. These conditions are primarily comprised of a democratic constitution and a set of guarantees which prevent the government from wilfully interfering with this free area, i.e. with privacy. These guarantees also include the so-called “civic virtues”.⁸

As I have suggested, one can be free from the perspective of negative liberty even in an auto-cracy (until the ruler starts to wilfully interfere with one’s privacy), or – in other words – there is no necessary link between negative liberty and the type of government. With a view to the objective, this wording needs to be further specified: There is no necessary connection between negative liberty and democracy.

However, from the perspective of the republican concept of liberty, one is only free if one lives in a political arrangement which guarantees that the government cannot interfere with one’s privacy with impunity.⁹ Therefore certain democratic institutions guarantee one’s liberty. However, the institutions themselves do not suffice. In order for one to be free in the republican sense, there needs to be something extra: something that can be summed up as the civic status, i.e. holding the rights and privileges arising from citizenship. Unless there are democratic institutions in the above-mentioned sense in place and unless one holds citizenship status, one finds oneself in permanent danger that the ruler may limit or abolish a person’s (negative) liberty anytime they please, for example, by putting one in prison. The status of one’s permanent exposure to the ruler’s potential discretionary decision is referred to by Pettit as “domination” and its prototype image is that of slaves, who are permanently exposed to their master’s discretion. Republican liberty is thus not determined by non-interference but rather by “non-domination”. From the republican point of view, there is indeed a necessary connection between the type of government and negative liberty. Non-domination, i.e. the presence of both democratic institutions and the civic status, is a prerequisite of negative liberty.

This concept and, respectively, the way it was justified, was contested by several authors, in particular Ian Carter. His arguments, firstly, admit Berlin’s premise of the absence of the necessary connection between democratic government and negative liberty and, secondly, they are based on the assumption that the level of individual (negative) liberty depends on the probability of coercion by the government in power. There is therefore a strong empirical correlation rather than a necessary connection between negative liberty and democratic government. The republican concept of liberty is thus better justified empirically than principally, i.e. logically.

However, Pettit and Skinner insist on their position. In their response to the criticism they formulated a common argument which it is crucial for individual liberty that nobody (including the government) interfere with the privacy of the citizens with impunity. What therefore defines liberty in the negative sense is thus not the improbability of interference with privacy but rather the principal impossibility to do so arbitrarily (with impunity).¹⁰

⁸ For details, see P. Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*, Oxford 1997, pp. 171–205. Chapter “Republican Forms: Constitutionalism and Democracy”.

⁹ Q. Skinner calls this concept “neo-Roman”, thus referring to the tradition originating in ancient Rome, re-emerging during the Renaissance and in the early modern era. P. Pettit denotes this idea as “republican”. See Q. Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, Cambridge 1998; P. Pettit, *A Theory of Freedom. From the Psychology to the Politics of Agency*, Cambridge 2001.

¹⁰ C. Laborde – J. Maynor (eds.), *Republicanism and Political Theory*, pp. 83–130.

Berlin and the republicans

Let us now focus on what negative liberty and republican liberty have in common and how they differ. I believe the two concepts are *de facto* identical as far as their background and fundamental requirements are concerned: they both interpret liberty as the freedom of an individual within a society; it does not occur in isolation but rather within a context. Both concepts also place at the forefront the requirement for individual liberty, i.e. not liberty in the broader sense, where the society would be given priority. In particular, both concepts raise the same requirement for the inviolability of privacy, i.e. the requirement for the untouchable individual area of absolute freedom, which was described and justified by J. S. Mill in *On Liberty*. Being free thus means having one's free area.

In contrast, there are two circumstances that separate negative liberty and republican liberty. Firstly, the method of the justification of this type of liberty and, specifically, the conditions which enable it. Secondly, the view of the part played by political institutions.

As concerns the method of justification, Berlin's interpretation of negative liberty makes do with non-interference. As I have suggested above, it is not important what society one lives in and who governs one. What matters is whether or not privacy is interfered with. In theory, it is possible that the privacy of a (selected) individual may not be interfered with within their lifetime in an autocracy.

The republican perspective is different: In order for one to be free, there must be certain circumstances and conditions in place to guarantee one's (negative) liberty; specifically, democratic institutions and civic status. If these two requirements are fulfilled, one can declare that one lives as a free citizen, not as a subject exposed to potential interference by the government in power. Pettit calls this status "non-domination". From the Berlinian perspective, negative liberty can be random to a great extent. In the republican understanding, however, it must be guaranteed because otherwise it cannot be referred to as "liberty".

Nevertheless, there is one more circumstance related to the method of justification. Berlin admits that there may be a certain link between negative liberty and the type of government but this link is empirical at best. As mentioned above, this idea was further developed by Ian Carter, who prefers referring to the empirical correlation between negative liberty and type of government instead of the principal ("logical") justification of negative liberty, as promoted mainly by Philip Pettit.

The second circumstance which divides the strategies under examination is the perspective of the role of institutions. However, the language term of "institutions" acquires a broader meaning in this context. Rather than a defined office, it is a sum of relations regulated by rules. From Berlin's point of view, institutions are not crucial for negative liberty itself because, as I have attempted to explain, individual liberty may be *de facto* random, i.e. dependent on the discretion of the government. From the republican angle, institutions are crucial for individual liberty because only their presence can ensure liberty. In other words, individual liberty is the consequence of the existence of democratic institutions. Without them it makes no sense to contemplate such liberty.

Locke and the republicans

At this point I would like to bring forth the arguments for my disagreement with the eligibility of a third concept of liberty, as it would be promoted by republican liberals. My arguments are based on my persuasion that the basis of their interpretation of individual liberty is not different

from the concept formulated by John Locke in the *Second Treatise of Government*. My sceptical attitude to the postulation of a third concept of liberty rests on Ockham's razor, which should lead as to parsimony with regard to the terminological as well as methodological universe.

What then lies at the core of Locke's theory in relation to the republican interpretation of liberty? I shall first attempt to outline the basic ideas of the *Second Treatise of Government* and shall proceed to point out the above-mentioned similarities.

In order to explain his approach, Locke uses the idea of a hypothetical state of nature, which allows him to postulate the basic notions and the relations among them. The state of nature is subject to the law of nature, which is reason. It is reason that, being an instrument of political-philosophical theory in this case, tells us two basic things: 1. All men are, by nature, equal, with equality – as the context of the *Second Treatise of Government* suggests – referring to equality before the law and – in the more general sense – to equal conditions for all citizens. 2. People have natural rights to life, liberty, and possession.¹¹

Even though the state of nature is subject to rules, it is not chaotic, and “works”, we can still find certain deficiencies the nature of which makes it beneficial for an individual to make a transition from the state of nature to another type of arrangement of relations among people. What Locke considers the main deficiency of the state of nature is the possibility of an individual to become a judge in their own case. Being an empiricist, Locke does not expect a common individual to sentence themselves for breaking the law of nature¹² Under the authority of the social contract, people therefore create so-called civil society based on civil government. The civil society principally begins to exist with the emergence of institutions, which stand beside citizens. The purpose of their existence is to eliminate the deficiencies of the state of nature and serve the citizens, which means that institutions are there for the citizens, not the other way round. At its very core, this concept rests upon the idea of power that is limited in two ways: 1. The power that each individual had in the state of nature is limited through the creation of institutions. 2. The institutions are distributed so that power as a whole is limited within a state. Locke introduces the concept of the separation of the legislative power (in this power, however, Locke also includes the judicial) from the executive and federative (i.e. executive power exercised abroad) powers. The fact that this concept of Locke is far from ideal changes nothing about its main idea or motivation.

Nevertheless, here comes the trick of Locke's strategy: The law of nature is not invalidated by the emergence of institutions. This simple idea has far-reaching consequences. Since the law of nature exists both beside citizens and beside institutions (i.e. the currently governing citizens), the citizens have the right to not only criticise but also remove the government if they are convinced that the government proceeds in contradiction with the law of nature. It is therefore not true that a citizen is merely a voter who has no right to interfere with the government during its term in office.¹³

How shall we summarise the core of Locke's theory? I believe that Locke's objective is to formulate the conditions necessary to ensure an individual's liberty within society. His goal is a free individual and, consequently, a free society. The way to achieve this state is to limit power: “For liberty is to be free from restraint and violence of others, which cannot be where there is no law; and is not, as we are told, ‘a liberty for every man to do what he lists’”¹⁴ We believe that this formulation also points both to the negative concept of liberty and to the republican one, even

¹¹ J. Locke, “Second Treatise of Government”, in: J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Cambridge 1991, § 6.

¹² *Ibid.* § 13.

¹³ *Ibid.*, §222, § 243.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, § 57.

though only to its basic form. According to Locke, one can be free if one lives in a civil society, i.e. if there are institutions in place that guarantee one's freedom. One's liberty, therefore, cannot be random, as suggested by Berlin, but should be guaranteed – as the republican liberals believe.

Conclusion

If we interpret Locke's political theory put forth in the *Second Treatise of Government* as the underlying basis of a free society that is based on the idea of limited power and individual liberty guaranteed through independent institutions, there is apparently no principal difference between this concept and that of the republicans. On the other hand, their contribution is undeniable but I believe that it primarily consists in their refinement and particularisation of Locke's vision. Moreover, the discussion concerning the republican variant of liberalism is far from over. Additional relevant contributions to this appealing topic can therefore be expected.

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Similarities in the Approaches of J. S. Mill and T. G. Masaryk to a Free Society

Abstract | In spite of the fact that Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk criticized liberalism, certain similarities can be identified when comparing his thoughts about society with those of John Stuart Mill, the spiritual father of liberalism. These parallels include the criticism of conforming to majority opinion, the importance of individuality to society and the significance of the inner attitude of individuals constituting society. In this article I will focus on the aforementioned three points.

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In *Philosopher T. G. Masaryk: Problematic Sketches*¹, Lubomír Nový makes mention of the influence of John Stuart Mill's thinking on Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk; this theme was also briefly addressed by Miloslav Bednář in *Czech Thinking*², as well as by Marie L. Neudorfllová in *T. G. Masaryk – Political Thinker*³. In his writings, Masaryk himself has a preference for dealing with liberalism in general, rarely commenting directly on Mill's thinking. In the aforementioned book, Lubomír Nový refers to Mill as an important influence on Masaryk's works, *Suicide as a Mass Phenomenon of Modern Civilization* and *Fundamentals of Concrete Logic*. He states that Masaryk's concepts of Science and Philosophy are based on Mill's ideas in many respects⁴, but does not discuss the details. Miloslav Bednář states that Masaryk's interpretation of *The Czech Question* corresponds to the concept of democracy as discussed by E. Burke, G. W. F. Hegel, A. de Tocqueville, J. S. Mill and M. Weber. At the same time, he reminds us of Masaryk's criticism of the morally religious indifference of liberalism.⁵ Indeed, Masaryk actually expressed himself rather critically about liberalism, of which Mill is regarded as the spiritual father, often adopting a similarly decidedly negative stand as that of his attitude towards the Church and Clericalism. Nevertheless, certain similarities can be identified in both Mill and Masaryk in terms of their thinking about society. The following three chapters are consequently devoted to three similarities: the criticism of conforming to majority opinion, the importance of individuality to society and the significance of the inner attitude of individuals constituting society.

¹ L. Nový, *Filosof T. G. Masaryk: problémové skici (The Philosopher T. G. Masaryk: Problematic Sketches)*, Brno 1994.

² M. Bednář, *České myšlení (Czech Thinking)*, Prague 1996.

³ M. Neudorfllová, *T. G. Masaryk – politický myslitel (T. G. Masaryk – Political Thinker)*, Prague 2011.

⁴ L. Nový, *Filosof T. G. Masaryk: problémové skici (The Philosopher T. G. Masaryk: Problematic Sketches)*, pp. 77–78.

⁵ M. Bednář, *České myšlení (Czech Thinking)*, pp. 175–176.

1 Majority opinion

Mill, in his treatise *On Liberty*⁶, discusses the tyranny of reigning opinion and beliefs which is paradoxically becoming widespread after society abandoned the arrangement in which the Monarch was the potential tyrant: “Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the Magistrate is not enough: there needs also to be protection against the tyranny of prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by means other than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and to compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own.”⁷ Mill claims that, in order to prevent a democratic society from emerging out of an environment which is hostile to diverse, minority opinions and ways of life, certain rules need to be established and enforced. The boundaries of society’s interference in the life of an individual must be defined, as well as the obligations of citizens towards society, to ensure space for free thought and free discussion. Why is freedom of thought and discussion in society so important to Mill? One reason involves cognition, while another reason brings us to the theme of individualism, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Mill emphasizes that no one, no man or belief system is infallible or has universal cognition. However, people often tend to consider as correct the first opinion which they hear or that they wish to be correct. They often yield to the deceptive impression that a certain “truth”, especially if held by a majority in society, is already sufficiently proven and therefore there is no option but to regard it as indisputable and absolutely valid. Firstly, this attitude implies a totality of cognition and, secondly, it does not take human fallibility into account. Nevertheless, because no one is infallible, it is always necessary to allow the opinion, which is different from the opinion held by us at the moment (albeit with the support of the majority) to be expressed. There is always the certain probability that the voice which contradicts our belief can project an entirely different perspective on the matter. It may conceal within itself a grain of truth and we would be impoverished if that contrary voice was to be silenced. Mill states that to suppress minority views is an evil committed both on the silenced and the silencing, and even on future generations. If the progress of knowledge in society is to be effective, it is necessary that all voices, even peripheral, are heard, according to Mill. He demonstrates this, amongst other things, by the example of J. J. Rousseau and his radical viewpoint on the progress of civilization, which was contrary to the popular belief of the time: Rousseau’s radically different, critical attitude could have disrupted the overly one-sided focus of the time – the unquestioned belief that the rational-scientific approach to the world was the only correct one – and could have caused the contemporary mindset to consider other connections... If, of course, the contemporary times had been willing to deal with it seriously. If such a willingness is absent, the possibility of a more comprehensive understanding of anything diminishes. Mill reminds us that to confront one’s view with a differing opinion does not mean denying one’s own view: “Not that the current opinions were on the whole farther from the truth than Rousseau’s were; on the contrary, they were nearer to it; they contained more of positive truth, and very much less of error.”⁸

⁶ J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Kitchener 2001.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

According to Mill, the idea of the existence of undeniable “truths” in general (that is, not only the conviction of some individual or group about its own truth, but also the idea that some “owner of the truth” exists, and the consequent belief that it is useless to deal with the issue as it has already been solved by somebody) leads to the deadening of intellectual movement. If such an approach is preferred in society (whether officially or just due to the fact that this attitude is internally rooted in people and a rebellion against deeply rooted establishments is a priori considered undesirable), the development of knowledge is hampered. It is important that every opinion, even if it has over the long term been rightly regarded as true, remains open to possible revision and is constantly “refreshed” by confrontation with other views. Otherwise, it becomes a dead dogma, a formality, and a genuine understanding of any given thought based on one’s own experience will be diminished.

In a clash between two opposite opinions, it frequently often occurs that both are somehow true.⁹ This follows from the above-mentioned two features of human cognition, that is, fallibility and incompleteness. Only an infallible person could confidently refute the opinion of another, but it is apparent that such a person does not exist. At the same time, it is a common phenomenon that people with limited knowledge and experience tend to consider themselves infallible and present their opinion as the only possible and indisputable one. When confronting a different opinion, the person who wishes to seek the truth and not merely demonstrate to others, that he already know it, will be inevitably cautious. Before rejecting a different opinion (if at all), he will attempt to understand it, because even if is eventually concluded that he disagrees, the different opinion can broaden his understanding.

However, the fact that our belief may be wrong (or only partially true), or that it may prove to be so in the future, does not mean that we should give up a priori forming any opinions. The target of Mill’s criticism is the *acquisition of infallibility*, when a person is convinced of his “truth” which he forces on to others to the extent that he tries to prevent by various means the space for different beliefs to be heard. In this manner, numerous historically revolutionary ideas were suppressed throughout history (often with the verdict that they were immoral, godless or otherwise socially harmful), although later turning out to be extremely fruitful, or true, despite the majority of society having been convinced otherwise.

As an example, Mill refers, among others, to the aforementioned Rousseau. However, it is particularly interesting to us that the “scenario” described corresponds to the situation in which Masaryk found himself during the Hilsneriada or in the dispute over the Manuscript of Dvůr Králové and the Manuscript of Zelená Hora. In these disputes, the majority of the Czech public was against Masaryk; in the case of the manuscripts, Masaryk, as an opponent of their authenticity, was accused of undermining the foundations of Czech national pride. In principle, therefore, the same thing happened in this country as was described by Mill: representatives of the majority opinion refused to listen to a fringe opinion, claiming that its proponents were harmful to society. A large part of the public did not want to admit that something could be different from what had been believed as unambiguous for several previous decades.¹⁰ It seems that the thinking of

⁹ Ibid, p. 45: “Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners.”

¹⁰ The manuscripts were “discovered” in 1817 and 1819. Their authenticity began to be questioned from the end of the 1850s and T. G. Masaryk was engaged in the dispute from the second half of the 1880s.

most people was far removed from that which would correspond to Mill's ideal of a free society. On the contrary, the tyranny of reigning opinion against which Mill warned can be readily recognised in this case. In the case of certain people, it was a conscious advocacy of lies, in others it was, in a way, an understandable patriotic attitude which did not admit that the symbols of our national history could have been forged. However, whatever the motivations to tackle any suspicions about the authenticity of the manuscripts were, this unwillingness to hear a contrary minority view and to admit one's own fallibility led to a situation in which the truth "pushed itself out into the world" over a longer period and in a more complicated way.

Why did Masaryk insist so adamantly on his viewpoint? Why did he not instead capitulate from his, at that time, so unpopular position of objector to the authenticity of the manuscripts? This is naturally only a rhetorical question, because we know the reason well from the classroom why Masaryk supported Jan Gebauer (a former supporter of the manuscripts, who later became a convinced opponent of their authenticity) – this being the pursuit of genuine knowledge. In Masaryk's eyes, this has a higher value. If anything is built on lies (national self-esteem, in the case of the manuscripts), it loses its value.

In addition to the fact that Masaryk clearly demonstrates by his attitude that he is a philosopher¹¹, his attitude manifests the same values as those behind Mill's efforts towards a free society – to achieve the greatest, truest understanding and the determination to seek (and find) it, even through unpopular standpoints, unacknowledged by the majority of society. With some exaggeration, I dare say that the approach which I have described here theoretically in Mill's words, can be observed in practice in the deeds of the first Czechoslovakian President. As Jan Patočka says: "Masaryk is not a democrat in the sense of the very common 'majority is true', (...) his entire life is a struggle against majority opinion, against the treacherously emerging moods of Czech society, against popular uncritically accepted views, traditions, collective myths."¹²

2 Individuality

I have already mentioned that Mill emphasizes the need to establish limits to the interference of society in the life of an individual, to prevent the tyranny of the majority. The purpose is to guarantee the preservation of space both for free discussion, and for a diversity of views that are closely connected to the values held by individual people and how they want to live their lives. However, if we consider the application of the well-known liberal rule expressed by Mill in these words: "To individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society."¹³, we reach the conclusion that it is not possible to determine exactly when our actions do not concern only us, but affect others, or even the whole of society. No man is an isolated being, thus his conduct always has an impact at least on his closest surroundings, but also often on a wider circle of people.¹⁴

¹¹ This is sometimes disputed, pointing to the fact that he did not create any original philosophical teaching. However, if one understands a philosopher as a man seeking wisdom (as the Greek words *philia* and *sophia* suggest) which inherently includes the desire for genuine knowledge, there can be no doubt about understanding Masaryk as a philosopher.

¹² J. Patočka, *Tři studie o Masarykovi (Three Studies on Masaryk)*, Prague 1991, p. 38.

¹³ J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

¹⁴ J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 74: "If he injures his property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes, by a greater or less amount, the general resource of the community. If he deteriorates his bodily or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any

For example, if we recognize that alcoholism and gambling have such an adverse effect, would it not be appropriate to penalize the extremely problematic behaviour and activities that support it (the sale of alcohol, operation of casinos) and try to eradicate them from society? Mill replies in the negative. Although, it is almost certain that these problematic tendencies will somehow harm the individual as well as entire society by their consequences, it is not desirable to penalize or prohibit them. Then it would be hard to find the borderline for such interference and the freedom of the individual would be endangered.

According to Mill, the progress of society is to a large extent determined by its diversity and the freedom of individuals who do not blend in with the crowd, and who, by their views and ways of life, deviate and contribute to society something which could not come from an ordinary way of life. If each person lived according to his own specific wishes and talents, he might consequently enrich the whole of society and, at the same time, personally endow his own life with greater meaning and value. Mill categorically rejects government officials or the majority opinion in society which act from a position of authority, knowing what is good for individual citizens, and by their regulations and prohibitions protecting them from what is identified as harmful. Such an approach is a “breeding ground” for the promotion of the interests of those self-appointed protectors. State power should be limited to guarding the fulfilment of commitments and prosecuting and punishing those who do not respect them. By this liberal concept, it is assumed that every citizen knows best what is good for him, and is able to take care of himself. This, of course, puts certain demands on the members of a liberal society and deprives them of the certainty that someone (the State) will take care of them. On the other hand, it is a guarantee of protection against restrictive intervention on the part of the State.

As was stated in the introduction, Masaryk's attitude to liberalism and utilitarianism was rather critical. In *The Czech Question*¹⁵, he makes mention of liberalism several times, and every time in some unflattering context: He writes e.g. about “motherland-eroding liberalism”¹⁶, about “our current liberalism”, which “is entirely lacking genuineness”¹⁷. He criticizes the liberal indifference which treats ideals only as resources – without personal concern and without inner conviction about their correctness.

Regarding utilitarianism, we read in *Humanistic Ideals*¹⁸ that the ethics, which urges each person to pursue his own happiness, faces, for example, these two problems: firstly, it is not as easy as it seems to discover what really makes one happy. Secondly, the good of the whole does not arise from the individual “good” of specific people, without mutual selfless love. Masaryk sympathizes with Mill's more moderate stance, resulting from the division of pleasure according to quality – not every pleasure (e.g. a thief's loot) is a priori good. We can also find an interesting comment to the usual objection against utilitarianism, that it is the ethics based on egoism and calculations, when one “computes” one's possible future benefits and based on the “result” decides, for example, to do or not do something for another person. This is why utilitarianists are accused of only pursuing their own benefit and therefore cannot be beneficial to society. Masaryk recalls, however, that the authors of these ethics actually lived extremely exemplary lives: “Bentham was consistent

portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering the services which he owes to his fellow creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burden on their affection or benevolence (...).”

¹⁵ T. G. Masaryk, *Česká otázka (The Czech Question)*, Prague 1948.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 207.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 190.

¹⁸ T. G. Masaryk, *Ideály humanitní (Humanistic Ideals)*, Prague 1919.

in his theory of egoism, yet he never stopped working for the general good and his name is held in great esteem all over the world and especially in England. He wanted to be useful also after death – he bequeathed his body to an autopsy. Mill is perhaps even more ideal.”¹⁹ According to Masaryk, on closer examination, romanticism and sentimentalism, which often seem to be full of feeling and empathy towards others, are more egoistical than honestly confessed egoism.

In *Humanistic Ideals*, Masaryk describes such approaches for which the value of community is significantly greater than the value of the individual. This is, for example, the case of Marx’s historical materialism: “(...) proletarian mass is the man itself, not an individual, or a proletarian individual, but whole proletarian masses, not only of an individual nation but of all mankind. Thence the international motto: ‘Proletarians of all countries, unite.’ This means: the individual, personal ‘self’ loses its meaning before the mass, or, as Engels says, the individual is not worth anything. Socialism on this basis of historical materialism is consciously anti-individualistic. Thence consciousness as well as the conscience of an individual does not mean anything, only the consciousness and conscience of the collective mass, is understood as the proletarian mass. Because there are many more proletarians than capitalists and therefore, according to the majority generally recognized principle, man, humanity, mankind is represented by a proletarian mass.”²⁰ Masaryk points out that ecclesiasticism and nationalism are equally anti-individualistic, because both are asserted by something that is reputedly of higher value than an individual (nation, church) and this is usually willingly accepted: “Every political speaker is successful when he thunders against inconvenient individuals or parties in the name of a nation, and no one asks him if he was authorized in any way by the nation and how he knows what the nation thinks about the matter. And what is a church to the equally believing? Everything, while an individual is nothing.”²¹ Masaryk rejects the extreme overvaluing of the whole above the individual, stating that, under the assumption that the individual has a negligible value, it is not clear how a presumed significantly higher value could emerge from any large group of people.

Masaryk also deals with the opposite pole – extreme individualism (where he also ranks anarchism) – where, in contrast, an individual is more important than the whole. He also rejects this approach, because it attributes an exaggerated value to an individual, to be respected above everything. However, every person lives in some bond with others and is necessarily part of some community. Therefore it is not possible to think about an individual apart from this connection, and only with the emphasis on his individuality.

Masaryk advocates a balanced approach: “Individualism which is moderate, really philosophical and ethical, encourages the emergence of certain types, characters, personalities in society through mutual effort based on love.”²² It can be seen that Mill’s ideal was similar – a free society facilitating the conditions for the development of individualism. According to Mill, however, individualism also has no absolute value – its freedom is limited by the freedom of others. Mill, like Masaryk, comments that people in society are mutually interconnected by relationships and do not live independently of each other. Therefore Mill only circles around the question as to where the border lies in determining what concerns only an individual and what is also influencing his surroundings. He provides various examples, but ultimately leaves the question open. It is also

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 33–34.

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 11–12.

²¹ Ibid, p. 12.

²² Ibid, pp. 30–31.

characteristic that he wishes people to be less indifferent to each other and, within their personal relationships, to respond at the very outset to any behaviour or life direction which could lead to the decadence of the respective person, harm to his surroundings and, in consequence, to the whole of society. Masaryk therefore could not accuse Mill of the moral indifference which he associated with liberalism. Mill describes a society whose citizens have their moral principles in compliance with what they actively express themselves towards others; excessive intervention is forbidden only on the part of State authorities towards citizens. Such an attitude corresponds with Masaryk's "really philosophical individualism" described above.

3 Inner attitude

We have seen that Mill not only deals with political freedom, which can to some extent be anchored in laws. Minimally to the same extent, he devotes himself to the more difficult-to-define freedom of the spirit, which can be never created merely by laws if the inner attitude of people is contrary to the spirit of the laws. Mill points out that it is not possible to precisely define the rules of conduct that should apply in a free society. There is a need to behave with regard to the values that correspond to the principles of a free society in every situation.

Masaryk expressed himself in a similar spirit. He also pointed out that it is not enough to build a truly free society from the outside, and it is also not all that important which political party is in power. "I do not expect salvation from any party; but we will be invincible if there are more real and thinking men in all parties and classes, who, without excuses or visible connections, each in his own circle, works for the same objective. (...) unless this invisible party of real and thinking people increases, who are also not afraid in the case of necessity to bear testimony publicly to the truth, no visible organization will suffice."²³ Masaryk recalls that democracy is a self-government and, due to several hundred years of monarchist past, there is a need to learn to be democrats. If democracy were merely a State form, we would not have been faced with so many problems after its introduction. But democracy is also a "method of all public and private life, an outlook on life."²⁴

Both thinkers thus recall the importance of the inner attitudes of people, which is nothing to be pondered on philosophically at great length. Nevertheless, it seems to be an extremely important point to consider, because this inner attitude is closely related to the values held by individual people. It is also emphasized by both Mill and Masaryk, it is these intimate affairs of individual people – the area into which no law, no social rule or established political system can ever penetrate – which determine how individual members of society behave and to what extent they respect the spirit of the Law, or conversely try to find loopholes in the Law to apply their own values. It can be assumed that it is this "detail" – the invisible inner attitude of each one of us – by which the possibility of making real any promising-sounding visions about society stands or falls.

²³ T. G. Masaryk, *Česká otázka (The Czech Question)*, p. 207.

²⁴ T. G. Masaryk, *Projev v Národním shromáždění k 10. výročí republiky 1928* (Speech at the National Assembly on the 10th anniversary of the Republic in 1928), In: J. Brabec (ed.), *T. G. Masaryk. Cesta demokracie III: projevy, články, rozhovory 1924–1928. (T. G. Masaryk. Path of Democracy III: speeches, articles, interviews, 1924–1928)*, Prague 1994, p. 334.

Conclusion

To summarise I would argue that in spite of the fact that Masaryk criticized liberalism at least three common points can be identified when comparing his thoughts concerning society with those of Mill, the spiritual father of liberalism. These consist of the criticism of conforming to majority opinion, the importance of individuality to society and the significance of the inner attitude of individuals constituting society. The last one is less treatable in theory, but it seems that its significance in practice is actually underestimated.

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Death and Philosophy from the Pre-Socratics to Heidegger

Abstract | The text of this study outlines basic philosophical approaches to the question of death. The experience of mortality is often considered one of the starting points for philosophising. In a certain sense the experience of mortality cessation stands at the very beginning of philosophical questioning and answering. The effort of the Pre-Socratic thinkers to grasp the beginning of things as something that resists change and cessation can be understood as the rejection of the claims of all-swallowing Hades. The concept of the permanent was brought to perfection by Parmenides. Democritus' and Leucippus' atomism gave rise to the Epicurean assurance that we do not need to fear death because it is nothing to us. In contrast in Plato's *Phaedo*, death is not perceived as evil but as a mere separation of the soul from the body. Plato's concept of the immortality of the soul was adopted by Christianity with minor changes and its religious form went on to become the most influential interpretation of what death means to an individual. The Christian Middle Ages transformed the philosophical question regarding the nature of death into the theological issue of the immortality of the soul. Renaissance brought a new ideas into thinking about death. Certain half-forgotten ancient concepts find their way back into use, and the Christian "Memento mori" is replaced by "Memento vivere". Arthur Schopenhauer introduced fundamental contributions to the issue of the death in the nineteenth century. Max Scheler and Martin Heidegger contemplate death in the twentieth century. The ideas of these thinkers are presented in this study.

.....

"I am afraid that other people do not realize that the one aim of those who practice philosophy in the proper manner is to practice for dying and death."

Plato, *Phaedo* 64a¹

What is death?² The text below clearly outlines the basic philosophical approaches to this question. The experience of mortality, together with the wonderment arising from this experience, is often mentioned as one of the starting points for philosophising. Death itself, however, seems to be something which, despite its omnipresence, avoids any experience. Because of this inexperience and its nearly speculative nature, death may appear as significantly ambivalent. Death can be both good and bad, both present and absent, and even both existing and non-existing. What else is belief in the afterlife but the denial of death's existence? It is mortality rather than

¹ Plato, *Phaedo* 64a. See Plato. *Complete Works*, J. M. Cooper – D. S. Hutschinson (eds.), Indianapolis/ Cambridge 1997, p. 55.

² The most important literature on this philosophical topic are the following books: V. Barry, *Philosophical Thinking About Death and Dying*, Belmont 2007; *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Death*, B. Bradley – F. Feldman – J. Johansson (eds.), New York 2013; S. Kagan, *Death*, New Haven 2012; G. Scherer, *Das Problem des Todes in der Philosophie*, Darmstadt 1979; B. N. Schumacher, *Death and Mortality in Contemporary Philosophy*, Cambridge 2011.

death which can become the subject of philosophy. In this paper we shall respect the following definition of death: death is a condition that occurs after irreversible changes that rule out the further continuation of living or are in contradiction with life having taken place.

There were not many moments in the history of philosophy when a thinker made the concept of death or mortality the pivotal interest of his/her thinking. In a certain sense, however, the experience of mortality or rather the experience of cessation stands at the very beginning of philosophical questioning and answering. The effort of the Pre-Socratic thinkers to grasp the beginning of things as something which resists change and cessation can be understood as the rejection of the claims of all-swallowing Hades. The celebrated Anaximander fragment B1 from Simplicius, “out of which come to be all the heavens and the worlds in them. The things that are perish into the things from which they come to be, according to necessity, for they pay penalty and retribution to each other for their injustice in accordance with the ordering of time”³ can be understood as the identification of being with what is permanent and undying. The concept of the permanent and undying was brought to perfection by Parmenides: for being is and nothing is not. We can add: only being is, it is without change, it is immortal and undying.

Similarly, Plato’s Forms, as well as Aristotelian substances, are eternal because there is no life, no process in them. They are existences without being. Perhaps this is where we uncover the root of the reluctance of the Ancient Greeks to think about the non-existent. What is non-existing is, or, more likely, has been subject to cessation and death. We could also argue, however, that death only concerns that which lives. If the Pre-Socratics deny existence the possibility of cessation, they thereby also deny it life, fully confirming Heidegger’s claim that all the metaphysical systems preceding his philosophy were marked by insufficient respect for the concept of being.⁴ We shall have an opportunity to revisit and discuss Heidegger’s association of being and mortality in more detail.

We have seen that the Pre-Socratics discuss death metaphysically and, at the same time, indirectly. For the pre-Socratics, mortality is a determination which does not belong to being as a whole. Only the individual forms of being cease. Being itself neither perishes nor ceases.

The question of death as such can be introduced where there is a philosophy of man. The first and fundamental statement on the issue of human mortality was stated by Plato in his dialogue *Phaedo*. In this dialogue, death is discussed as the death of a human. Through the image of Socrates awaiting death, Plato emphasises that death is something that specifically concerns a human. In *Phaedo*, Socrates is primarily a human who experiences mortality and bears witness to this heroic experience. The heroic dimension is chiefly provided by the calm manifested by Socrates when facing approaching death. Socrates also offers solace with great calm to his disciples who grieve over his death: “What is this (...), you strange fellows! It is mainly for this reason that I sent women away, to avoid such unseemliness, for I am told that one should die in good omened silence. So keep quiet and control yourself!”⁵

Socrates’ calm before death stems from his strong faith in the existence of the afterlife and from a persuasion that the immortal soul continues to live in the afterlife. Death is not perceived as evil but as a mere separation of the soul from the body.⁶ According to Plato, the soul is immortal because its substance participates in the undying unity of what is. The separation of the soul and the body may even be perceived as the separation of the godly from the impure, as the liberation of the soul from its bodily prison. Death is thus actually good. If a person has lived a

³ P. Curd, *A Presocratics Reader. Selected Fragments and Testimonia*, Indianapolis 2011², pp.16–17.

⁴ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Albany 2010, p. 22.

⁵ Plato, *Phaedo* 117d–e; *Plato. Complete Works*, p. 99.

⁶ Plato, *Phaedo* 64c; *Plato. Complete Works*, p. 56.

good life in this world and cared for their soul, their soul will live in communion with good Gods in the afterlife. A philosophical way of life is the best preparation for a good death.⁷ What makes Plato's concept of the immortal soul so fundamentally different from the Pre-Socratic concept of the undying unity of being is the fact that what Plato finds of importance is the survival and eternity of the soul. Plato's concept of the immortal human soul can later be found not only in the significantly widespread dualism of the soul and the body but also in all the subsequent theological concepts of immortality. No one will in all probability be surprised by the claim that Plato's solution of the issue of death is more theological and philosophical in its core.

Plato's concept of human mortality or of the immortality of the soul, respectively, was adopted by Christianity with minor changes and its religious form went on to become the most influential interpretation of what death means to an individual. Christianity also cares about the survival of each and every human, and it is the way of life of each individual that decides about eternal life or damnation. Only the requirement for practicing philosophy was replaced by that for piety. For Christianity, death is also the transition of a good soul to eternal dwelling with a good God. However, immortality as promised by Christianity is not achieved through the nature of existence, as it is for Plato, but through the death and resurrection of Christ, who "by death conquered death"⁸.

Christianity-clad Platonism became influential enough to overshadow other, less theological and more philosophical, ancient approaches to human mortality. The atomism of Democritus and Leucippus gave rise to the currently highly popular Epicurean assurance that we do not need to fear death because it is nothing to us. In his letter to Menoeceus, Epicurus states: "Death, therefore, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are, death is not come, and, when death is come, we are not. It is nothing, then, either to the living or to the dead, for with the living it is not and the dead exist no longer."⁹ Through physical death, which is nothing but the disintegration of the atomic structure of our body, our conscience also ceases, and thus we cannot experience death.

In addition to this particularly contemporary approach to death, the teachings of Hegesias of Cyrene, surnamed "Peisithanatos" (Death-persuader) should be mentioned. This member of the Cyrene school claimed that pleasures could not be fully achieved in life, and that it was therefore not necessary to dwell on life. Death is better than life in suffering. Hegeias' writing had such an impact on the suicide rate that his teachings were officially banned in Alexandria by King Ptolemy II. Epicurus' and Hegesias' teachings are mainly recalled here in order to clearly illustrate that the view of death and mortality is directly linked to how life is perceived. At the same time, it is apparent that at least Epicurus' attitude to death is fundamentally different from that of Plato. Epicurus denies what is holy to both Plato and Christianity, i.e. that individual immortality is desirable and good.

It has been previously said that there was not much that Christianity added to the preceding Platonic concept of mortality and immortality, respectively, from the philosophical perspective. The Christian Middle Ages transformed the philosophical question regarding the nature of death into the theological issue of the immortality of the soul. A fundamental part in this was played by the adoption of Aristotelianism. Thomas Aquinas was the greatest of all mediaeval Aristotelians. After Aristotle's hylemorphism overcame the limited nature of the Platonic dualism of body and soul, Thomas introduced "unio substantialis", the unity of body and soul. A human being does not consist of two substances, body and soul. A human being is a substance of two parts, soul

⁷ Plato, *Phaedo* 81a; *Plato. Complete Works*, p. 71.

⁸ A passage from the Easter Liturgy, "Mortem nostro moriendo destruxit!"

⁹ R. D. Hicks, *Diogenes Laertius. Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. II. vol., London/ New York 1925, p. 651.

and body. For Thomas, the soul is “*unica forma corporis*”, the only form of the body. We cannot say that the soul is in the body but that the soul is embodied.

Within the framework of mediaeval Aristotelianism, it is difficult to imagine a soul separated from the body, a soul surviving the death of the body. Being a Christian theologian, Thomas had to necessarily defend the immortality of the soul. In this regard he had to deal with the prevailing Averroistic interpretation of Aristotle, according to which the collective active reason is the only eternal part of the human soul. He thus defends the unique value of each human individual and their predetermination for immortality.

For Thomas, death can no longer be the separation of the soul from the body, the liberation of the soul from the bodily prison. The immortal soul does not leave its mortal shell behind. A human being dies by the separation of the body and the soul. The immortal soul forms a bridge between death and resurrection at the end of days. It provides an identity between the dead and the resurrected. A human being also enters eternity, as a unity of body and soul rather than as a mere soul. This only occurs at the end of time upon the second coming of Christ. Until then a dead human being is in a kind of intermediate state, with the body being dead but the soul lasting through the grace of God as the promise of future resurrection.

Among the Renaissance authors, we must not omit Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who summarised the issue of the immortality of the soul from the Aristotelian perspective in his *De animae immortalitate*. Despite the fact that Pico attempts to philosophically discuss all the possible interpretations of Aristotle’s teachings regarding soul, he eventually leans toward Thomas Aquinas’ theological solution, which, according to Pico, best corresponds to the doctrine of the church.

Unlike Mirandola, his contemporary Marsilio Ficino holds Neoplatonic positions. In his *Platonica Theologia de immortalitate animorum*, Ficino also advocates the immortality of the soul. According to Ficino, the purpose of a human being is to behold God. This is only achieved in life, however, by a few gifted and chosen individuals and usually only for a limited time. The soul must be immortal in order to provide every human being time to fulfil their contemplative mission. Beholding God is to be accessible for all and forever.

The Renaissance brought a certain breath of fresh air into thinking about death. Certain half-forgotten ancient concepts find their way back into play, and the Christian “*Memento mori*” is replaced by “*Memento vivere*”. Let us recall in this context at least the early modern scepticism of Michel de Montaigne, who, in a later edition of his *Essays* rejected the Christian concept of death, which he had actually previously advocated. Montaigne claims that excessive preparation for death results in life being swallowed by death and in the enslavement of an individual. Preparing for death and awaiting death results in greater suffering than death itself. Montaigne emphasises the fact that death is not the goal but merely the end of life. In addition, death does not devalue life in any manner. The value of life rests in life itself, in how it is being lived. This value is not lowered by the fact that life is finite. Montaigne’s understanding of death and the end of life emancipates life. Finality is an instrument of solace. A person is not obliged to prepare for death and eternal life and worry about damnation. An individual’s only task is to live, despite only doing so for a limited period of time.

New novel impulses for the philosophical inquiry into death came about in the nineteenth century. Arthur Schopenhauer confessed that, for him, death was the “*inspiring genius, or the Musagetes of philosophy*”.¹⁰ The essay *On Death and Its Relation to the Indestructibility of Our Inner Nature* was published by Schopenhauer as the first supplement to the Fourth Book of his

¹⁰ A. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation II*, New York 1966, p. 463.

The World as Will and Representation. As he himself said, he placed the topic of death at the top of this “last, most serious, and most important”¹¹ book of his work.

The claim of the meaninglessness of all things, and thus also of the human life and its suffering resulting also from the fact that each life ends in death is one of the key points of Schopenhauer’s philosophy. According to Schopenhauer, the World is created through gradual objectification of the will but it is not as a design but rather as the willful play of the will. The will is demonstrated in various degrees of organisation, which are formed in accordance with eternally existing patterns, ideas. Man is the supreme demonstration of objectified will, while animals, plants, rocks, etc. are the lower forms. The degrees of representation give rise to suffering in the world because the individual degrees of objectification compete with one another. Each degree of objectification competes with another for space, time, and matter. High egotism is the product of this competitive struggle. In seeking self-preservation, every individual is willing to destroy the entire world only to live a little longer.

The will constantly throws one into an inconclusive tension between a wish and its fulfilment. If a wish is not fulfilled, we suffer. However, once we fulfil a desire, we are immediately exposed to a new wish and desire. Happiness thus only depends on a quick succession of wishes and their fulfilment and new wishes. Permanent satisfaction is impossible, and we necessarily suffer all our life in the hands of blind will.

According to Schopenhauer, we only bear this unhappy existence because of our fear of death. Because of reason, humans realise the terrifying certainty of death. If the fear of death is the product of reason, it is also reason that can offer a cure against the fear of death. According to Schopenhauer, this cure is in the form of metaphysical points of view, which bring solace. Religion and philosophical systems are the antidote to the fear of death, they “enable man, far more than the others will, to look death calmly in the face”¹². However, different metaphysical systems offer a varying degree of success when providing this solace. Christianity is absolutely unsuitable to provide solace as it teaches that even though man “came but recently from nothing, that consequently he has been nothing throughout an eternity, and yet for the future is to be imperishable”¹³.

Schopenhauer bases his view on the assumption that only that which has no beginning, i.e. that which is eternal and exists outside of time, is indestructible. If we recognise creation from nothing, we should ask why are we, who were nothing for all infinity, nothing before our birth, so terrified by the idea that we shall become nothing again in death. It is not not-being which is most frightening about death. “For it is irrefutably certain that non-existence after death cannot be different from non-existence before birth, and is therefore no more deplorable than that is. An entire infinity ran its course when we did *not yet* exist, but this in no way disturbs us. On the other hand, we find it hard, and even unendurable, that after the momentary intermezzo of an ephemeral existence, a second infinity should follow in which we shall exist *no longer*.”¹⁴

According to Schopenhauer, the idea that death is the absolute destruction is as false as the idea that we are immortal, including our skin and hair. Both of these ideas are typical of the Western individual. As a source of consolation, Schopenhauer offers a non-European metaphysical system. His philosophising about death and mortality is derived from Brahmanism and Buddhism. Genuine consolation is only possible if we see that the nature of the world is eternal and that in us there is also something which does not come from nothing and we ourselves are

¹¹ Ibid, p. 463.

¹² Ibid, p. 463.

¹³ Ibid., p. 464.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 466.

a part of this eternal, timeless nature. Death disintegrates our individuality but our true nature remains. The true nature is the immortal life of the will.

If a human drops back into the will as the true nature the thing-in-itself and if this will is the will to life, we can presume that this will desires for a new objectification in the world of representation. Schopenhauer therefore does not rule out rebirth as the return of individuality to the objectification level. Rebirth is the demonstration of the will to life. However, each rebirth also represents a return to the cycle of suffering. According to Buddhism, the will has to be anaesthetised by detaching ourselves from all the comforts and pleasures of life. One of the desires that must be anaesthetised is dwelling on our individual existence. Death will then appear as a great liberation because individuality is something that should not be, something that contradicts the unity of our fundamental nature. An obliging nod to death brings actual freedom. The will to life denies itself in death. The real form of this denial is Nirvana – extinguishment – the definitive death without any further rebirth.

Schopenhauer's often-emphasised pessimism associated with life is complemented by optimism associated with death. Death offers liberty, and this offer provides consolation. This consolation is similarly paradoxical as the joy experienced by Nietzsche's Zarathustra when overcoming the spirit of gravity. By this overcoming of the spirit of gravity Nietzsche means the adoption of the teaching about the eternal return of the same. Linear time is replaced by cyclical time and all events identically repeat themselves. This thought is troubling for Zarathustra because, in addition to all great events, all that is small and lowly, i.e. human, will also repeat itself.¹⁵ However, in cyclical time, all the deaths and births will repeat themselves, for which reason we can consider the idea of the great return a certain way of coping with mortality and cessation.

Nietzsche's concept of cyclical time and never-ending repetition of the history of the world has yet another important consequence. If the history of the world starts over after it ends, the space reserved for heaven in linear eschatologies disappears. There is no longer any place of eternal salvation, no heaven where the saved souls dwell with God. After all, God is dead, as Nietzsche insisted.

In the nineteenth century, we can see at least one more way to approach death and mortality. This solution – which still remains influential – is based on excessive faith placed in the future potential of science and technology. Death will cease to exist because technology will gradually extend the human life *ad infinitum*.

Nikolai Fyodorov was one of the thinkers who developed this utopia. In his *Philosophy of the Common Cause*, he promoted the idea of overcoming death by technical means a religious mission and Christian obligation of mankind. Fyodorov's rather bizarre teachings foresaw not only the elimination of dying but also the total elimination of death with all its results. This involved the revival of all who ever died. Mankind would no longer reproduce sexually but by reviving deceased ancestors. This resurrected mankind, which no longer dies, will populate all of space.¹⁶

A new dimension was added to the philosophy of death in the twentieth century. This was mainly due to philosophising derived from Phenomenology. With increased persistence, Phenomenologists would ask questions about how we actually know about death and what the nature of our experiencing death is: Do we only know about death on the basis of experiencing the death of another person or is the notion of mortality implicitly included in our experience of ourselves? The answers to this question can be quite diverse.

¹⁵ F. Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, München 1999, pp. 241–245

¹⁶ See G. M. Young, *The Russian Cosmists. The Esoteric Futurism of Nikolai Fedorov and his Followers*, New York 2012. Also M. Jabůrek, “Kosmický étos filosofie Nikolaje Fjodorova?”, in: T. Nejeschleba – P. Floss (eds.), *Kosmologie v dějinách a současnosti filosofie*, Olomouc 2009, pp. 101–108.

For Gabriel Marcel or Karl Jaspers, death would always remain the death of another. For Jaspers it would be the cornerstone of what was real and true in our relationship with another person. Jaspers speaks of an existential relationship in which, if the relationship is true, the deceased continues to live inside the survivor. In contrast, Max Scheler, for example, looks for a way to phenomenologically demonstrate that one knows about their mortality independently of experience with the death of other people. In his work *Death and Life after Death*, Scheler analyses experienced time. As the proportion of the potentially experienced future in the whole of the experienced life decreases, one can experience coming closer to the end and also see the necessity for the end. Scheler understands death as a part of life.

Martin Heidegger was the thinker to overcome certain limitations of the phenomenological method and top off 20th-century philosophical inquiry into death. Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein* includes the statement that a man as *Dasein* is a being-toward-death. Death is understood as the outmost horizon of projecting *Dasein*. As such, it remains outside experience despite having a retroactive influence on and determining experience and despite death being accompanied by the uncertainty of the when.

Death is a specific variant of potentiality-of-being, and thus a specific possibility of *Dasein*. Heidegger thus understands freedom predominantly as the freedom to die, the freedom to death. *Dasein* questioning its existence can never be completed. Only death as the possibility of an ending makes *Dasein* complete. In death, every individual and *Dasein* are unsubstitutable. "Insofar as it 'is', death is always essential my own."¹⁷ Heidegger understands death as "the ownmost nonrelational, insuperable, *certain* possibility"¹⁸. If *Dasein* is lived as a being-toward-death, it "cannot evade its ownmost, nonrelational possibility or cover it over in this flight and *reinterpret* it for the common sense of the they"¹⁹.

Death is the death of every possibility. At the same time, death is our most intimate possibility. We are only free if we are free from death, if we come "face to face with the possibility to be itself, primarily unsupported by concern that takes care, but to be itself in passionate, anxious freedom toward death"²⁰.

Dasein is only free if it uncovers and at the same time leaves death as something towards which it is open despite all its unpredictability and unembracability: "Becoming free *for* one's own death in anticipation liberates one from one's lostness in chance possibilities urging themselves upon us, so that the factual possibilities lying before the insuperable possibility can first be authentically understood and chosen."²¹

Freedom as authentic Potentiality-of-Being is given by the open relation to death and to the unity of being, respectively. Freedom as such is not being-in-itself; it is *merely* the constitutive execution of *Dasein*. *Dasein* must necessarily find itself in the authentic mode of freedom in order to complete the anthropological project of *Dasein*. The concept of *Dasein* in Heidegger is mainly limited by the fact that here we encounter freedom of being-toward-death, freedom of the finite *Dasein*.

Before Heidegger's fundamental analyses of death in *Being and Time*, philosophical thanatology put great efforts into maintaining the hope of some kind of immortality. This hope ends with Heidegger. After him it is no longer possible to restore this hope by philosophical means. After

¹⁷ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 231.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 249–250.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

Nietzsche, Heidegger was another author to take a major step toward detheologising thinking about death.

On the previous pages I have attempted to outline the basic philosophical approaches to death from the beginnings of philosophising up to the twentieth century. The selection of the thinkers whose approach to death and mortality has been described here is certainly limited. However, it is sufficient for us to draw certain conclusions.

From the philosophical point of view, there can be two basic approaches to death: death can be either denied or acknowledged. Death is denied by the Pre-Socratics. What we call death is only transitions of being and being itself is eternal and immortal. Plato adopted a more daring approach to death, perhaps influenced by religion. Death is not the destruction of life; it only a transition to another level of permanence, while even maintaining the individual nature of existence. Epicurus, Montaigne, Schopenhauer, and, in a certain sense, Nietzsche (although conditionally) and Heidegger acknowledge death. Death is the definite end of human existence and as such must be accepted and made a part of life in order for life to have its own, inherent value.

In addition to these two philosophical approaches to death, there is also the religious approach: seeking to overcome death. Overcoming death can have two forms: utopian and eschatological, with the first form, in our text represented by the thinking of Nikolai Fyodorov, being the blasphemy of the other form. In the first case, death is overcome through the power of human technology; in the other case, through God's grace. There is, however, an abysmal gap between earthly, immortal mankind and the heavenly kingdom of God.

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Figuren, Orte und die Segmentierung des Kontinuums. Francastel und Husserl

Abstract | Der vorliegende Aufsatz widmet sich einer möglichen Konfrontation Husserls Phänomenologie mit der Konzeption der figurativen Erfahrung von Pierre Francastel. Francastel kann sehr gut Husserls Theorie der Intersubjektivität ergänzen und die Phänomenologie kann dagegen Francastels Analysen basaler Wahrnehmungsformen bereichern. Ausserdem können diese Untersuchungen zur interessanten Diskussion über sog. „vorsprachlichen Charakter“ der Realität beitragen.

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Ich bin kein Kunsttheoretiker und kann mir vorstellen, dass die Ansichten von Pierre Francastel, der zweifellos ein bedeutender und geachteter Vertreter der modernen Kunsttheorie ist, bereits überholt sind. Das vermag ich nicht einzuschätzen. Trotzdem erlaube ich es mir, an einige Gedanken Francastels anzuknüpfen, denn unlängst haben mir manche interessanten Bezüge, vordergründig zur Phänomenologie, eingeleuchtet. Ob die vorliegenden Schlussfolgerungen auch für die Kunsttheoretiker plausibel erscheinen, darf ich selber nicht beurteilen, deshalb wage ich es, sie zur öffentlichen Auslotung anzubieten.

Der *linguistic turn* als ein Problem

Francastels Überlegungen sind meiner Ansicht nach für eine ganze Sparte der leidenschaftlichen Debatte innerhalb der heutigen Philosophie von Belang. Bekanntlich hat ein Teil der Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert den so genannten *linguistic turn* erfahren. Das ist legitim, zumal das Thema „Sprache“ in der Vergangenheit marginalisiert wurde und viele einem lässigen Sprachgebrauch entspringenden Missverständnisse die alltägliche Kommunikation sowie den wissenschaftlichen Austausch beeinträchtigt haben bzw. beeinträchtigen. Der erwähnten linguistischen Wende ist nun bald eine „pragmatische“ Wende gefolgt: Um diesen *turn* ist es jedoch viel komplizierter bestellt. Er implizierte eine so große Rolle der Sprache, dass er uns zu ihren Gefangenen machte. Die Sprache selbst produziere die „Objekte“ und Gegenstände der Kommunikation und daher hätten wir auf die Vorstellung zu verzichten, die Realität, so wie sie tatsächlich ist, anders als sprachlich bewältigen zu können. Jede Äußerung über die Realität sei von den Referenzrahmen abhängig, aber die Referenzsysteme oder -rahmen gehören „vielmehr zu Beschreibungssystemen und nicht dazu, was beschrieben wird [...]. Wir hängen von den Beschreibungssystemen ab, egal was wir beschreiben. Unser Weltall besteht in einer gewissen Hinsicht mehr aus diesen Beschreibungssystemen als aus irgendeiner Welt oder Welten.“¹ Die Richtigkeit einer Aussage im konkreten Referenzrahmen (diese Aussage wird „Version“ genannt) lasse sich nicht durch

¹ N. Goodman, *Způsoby svétatvorby*, Bratislava 1996, S. 14–15.

den Vergleich mit einer wirklichen Welt außerhalb dieses Rahmens verifizieren: Die Richtigkeit einer Version darf wieder nur mit Hilfe einer anderen Version überprüft werden. Ähnliche Überlegungen ermöglichen radikale Thesen, welche behaupten, dass die Sprache die Realität konstruiere² und dass wir die Sprache nur dann begreifen können, wenn wir nicht auf die reale Welt rekurren, sondern nur auf die Regeln, die in einer „unser Sprachspiel mitmachenden“ Sprachgemeinschaft geteilt werden. Ein einstweiliges Überhandnehmen von einem Sprachspiel verbürge nicht dessen Wahrhaftigkeit (im Sinne einer geeigneteren Beschreibungsweise der Realität), sondern lediglich die Kraft und die Fähigkeit der Sprachbenutzer, auf dem freien Diskursmarkt den ihrigen durchzusetzen.

Zu diesem Ziel sollen die Philosophen in der Rolle der Provokateure und Ironiker Wache stehen, damit keine der jeweiligen Sprachspiele für eine allzu lange Zeit überhandnimmt. „Die Ironiker sind sich mit Davidson über die menschliche Unmöglichkeit einig, aus der Sprache herauszutreten, um sie mit etwas anderem zu vergleichen, und sie stimmen mit Heidegger überein, wenn die Zufälligkeit und Zeitgebundenheit dieser Sprache angesprochen werden“, legt der prominente Vertreter des linguistischen Pragmatismus Richard Rorty nahe³ und er fügt an einer anderen Stelle hinzu: „Falls wir die Vorstellung verabschieden, der Sinn des Diskurses sei eine getreue Repräsentation der Wirklichkeit, werden wir soziale Konstrukte von anderen Dingen nicht mehr unterscheiden wollen. Wir werden uns auf die Diskussion über die Nutzbarkeit alternativer Konstrukte einschränken.“⁴

Ähnliche Äußerungen lassen in einer postmodernen Zuspitzung Ansichten gedeihen, die suggerieren wollen, dass alles, was uns zur Verfügung steht, ausschließlich „Aussagelandschaften“ seien, und da keine von ihnen als die für die Beschreibung der Realität geeignetere privilegiert ist, müssen alle als gleich wertvoll anerkannt werden. „Jede Wahrheit über ein Ding ist nur eine Übereinstimmung eines historischen Wir über deren praktische Folgen.“ Den Richter spielen in Streitfällen „lediglich praktische Folgen der Handlung, nicht Lösungen, heilige Formeln oder eine ungeduldige Herrschergeste, die kein Aber zulässt.“⁵

Eco: Segmentierung des Kontinuums und primitive Semiose

Unlängst ist das spannende Buch von Umberto Eco *Kant e l'ornitorinco* [Kant und das Schnabeltier, dt. 2000] in tschechischer Übersetzung⁶ erschienen. Der Titel mutet ein wenig bizarr an und sein Ziel ist es wahrscheinlich, Leser anzulocken. Er bringt jedoch lapidar das zum Ausdruck, wofür es geht. Kant ist nämlich der Urheber von Vorstellungen, laut derer man in *Ansichtsformen* eingesperrt ist, d.h. in den Modi, die uns zur Behandlung der Realität dienen, und laut derer uns diese Ansichtsformen daran hindern, zum Ding an sich vorzudringen. Als dann die Vertreter der pragmatischen Sparte in der Sprachphilosophie die Ansichtsformen mit den Sprachformen ersetzten (Sprachspiele, Diskurse, Episteme, Aussagelandschaften), wurde Kants These nur in einen anderen Bereich verlagert, die Tragweite blieb jedoch dieselbe: Unser Gefängnis würden wir keineswegs los. Die Welt werde mit Hilfe von Sprachkategorien konstruiert – die Welt entspreche somit unserer Sprache. Das zweite Wort im Titel des Eco'schen Buches soll uns auf eine witzige Weise jedoch die Grenzen dieser Theorie vor Augen führen.

² N. Goodman, *Jazyky umění*, Praha 2007, S. 41

³ R. Rorty, *Filozofické orchidey*, Bratislava 2006, S. 84.

⁴ Ibid, S. 38.

⁵ V. Bělohradský, *Společnost nevolnosti*, Praha 2007, S. 88.

⁶ U. Eco, *Kant a ptakopysk*, Praha 2011.

Das Schnabeltier ist ein Wesen, das man unter vielen anderen zu erkennen vermag, das jedoch keiner bis heute gültigen Kategorie zuzuordnen ist. Es handelt sich um eine Entität, die ihren Platz in der Weltstruktur zu beanspruchen fähig ist, die jedoch offensichtlich von keiner Aussagelandschaft produziert bzw. eingeordnet wurde, da es für diese Entität kein Begriffsschema gibt. Wäre unsere Welt restlos von der Sprache segmentiert, wäre man außerstande das Schnabeltier überhaupt nur zu registrieren, ebenso wie die Vertreter des linguistischen Pragmatismus glauben, dass diejenigen, die keinen Begriff für „blau“ besitzen, die Farbe einfach nicht sehen. Eco betont daher: „[...] auch wenn wir einräumen, jedes Kultursystem und das von ihm abhängige Sprachsystem würden das Kontinuum der Erfahrung auf seine eigene Art und Weise segmentieren (Davidson würde an dieser Stelle von einem ‚konzeptuellen Schema‘ sprechen), trotzdem bietet sich uns das in Propositionssystemen organisierte Kontinuum im Einklang mit resistenten Grenzen, die uns die intersubjektiv homogene Perzeption bestimmenden Richtlinien diktieren, und das auch zwischen Personen, die sich auf unterschiedliche Propositionssysteme berufen. Die von einem Propositions- und Kategorialsystem vorgenommene Segmentierung des Kontinuums berücksichtigt die Tatsache, dass dieses Kontinuum nicht völlig amorph ist. Besser gesagt: Ist dieses Kontinuum propositionell amorph, ist es jedoch nicht gänzlich perzeptiv chaotisch, denn es wurden aus ihm die auf der Perzeptionsebene interpretierten und konstituierten Gegenstände bereits ‚ausgeschnitten‘. Als ob ein Kontinuum, aus dem ein Propositionssystem eigene Konfigurationen ‚herausschneidet‘, durch eine ‚primitive‘ und bisher unsystematische Semiose bereits vorformatiert wäre.“⁷

Für die Zwecke des vorliegenden Beitrages darf nun wohl Ecos Vermutung unterstrichen werden, dass das Perzeptionsfeld, das uns Impulse für unsere Wahrnehmung liefert, nicht völlig ungeformt, leer oder sinnlos sei, sodass wir nachträgliche Konzeptualisierungen und somit auch eine gewisse *Vergewaltigung* zu Gunsten eines historisch- bzw. kulturbezogenen Diskurses unterstellen müssten.

Zusammengefasst darf gesagt werden, dass Eco die Segmentierung des Kontinuums für das Ergebnis einer bestimmten menschlichen Erfahrung hält und dass er sie als eine angewöhnte Verknüpfung der Phänomene zu Ganzheiten sieht, die uns einen Sinn geben. Dabei lässt sich nicht bestreiten, dass ein Diskurs ständig am Werk ist, da die Interessen, die uns zwingen das Kontinuum zu segmentieren, der Kultur entstammen, in der wir leben. Deshalb will Eco auch nicht, dass das ganze Perzeptionsfeld von Konzeptualisierungsschemata usurpiert wird, er setzt jedoch zugleich voraus, dass zwischen der perzeptiven und kategorialen Wahrnehmung ein Gleichgewicht bestehe, dass das Eine gegen das Andere nicht auszuspielen sei, denn beide wirkten parallel und in einem ständigen Rollenwechsel. „Primitive Semiose“ als ein dem Perzeptionsfeld zugehöriges Ereignis geht also bei Eco der Konzeptualisierung nicht völlig voraus, sie ergänzt sie bloß.

Ich will mir nun die Frage stellen, ob man vielleicht nicht ein Stück weiter gehen könnte. Aufschlussreich scheint mir hierbei die Konfrontation von Francastels Theorie mit der Phänomenologie.

Der Beitrag von Pierre Francastel

Wenn ich Francastels Konzeption richtig verstehe, dann beharrt auch er auf der Vorstellung, dass es Schichten unserer Erfahrung gibt, welche in den Strukturen der realen Welt eingetaucht sind und die uns an sich eine sinnvolle Darstellung derselben anbieten. Die bildende Kunst vermag es, uns diese Schichten näher zu bringen. Falls man der Sprache immerhin die Fähigkeit zusprechen

⁷ Ibid., S. 245–246.

darf, mit in das Spiel einen „Sinn“ und eine „Bedeutung“ hineinzubringen, „Versionen dieser Welt“ zu schaffen und dadurch diese Welt sogar zu erschaffen, darf man es nur deswegen tun, da sich die Sprache an die Einbildungskraft anlehnt, die aus den erwähnten ursprünglichen Schichten *bereits schöpft*. Konzepte oder Begriffe sind „Ergebnisse einer anderen intellektuellen Tätigkeit, die sich von dem bildnerischen, figurativen Denken unterscheidet“.⁸

Wollen wir uns jetzt Francastels Überlegungen ein wenig eingehender widmen:

Mit Hilfe seiner Analyse der Realitätsabbildung in der Renaissance bemüht sich Francastel zu beweisen, dass bei der Produktion und Rezeption von Bildern drei Ebenen zu unterscheiden sind. Die erste Ebene macht die *Identifikation elementarer Zeichen* aus, welche auf dürftige Fragmente der sinnlichen Erfahrung hinweisen. Die zweite Ebene besteht aus dem *Erkennen und Nachvollziehen ordnender Prinzipien in materiellen sowie mentalen Konfigurationen*, die bestimmten Kunstwerken Sinn und Bedeutung verleihen. Und nicht zuletzt die dritte Ebene, welche von Verkettungen gedanklicher Vorstellungen repräsentiert wird. Es handelt sich um gewisse Assoziationsregeln, dank derer die Figurationstätigkeit das Niveau anderer geistiger Betätigungen erreicht. *Erst* auf dieser, sich über anderen Figurationen erstreckenden Ebene und *ausschließlich* auf dieser Ebene erweist sich der Vergleich der Kunst mit dem verbalen und wissenschaftlichen Denken als begründet.⁹

Wenn ich die Ausführungen (die ich hier jedoch spürbar vereinfacht habe) richtig nachvollziehe, dann sind es die beiden ersten Ebenen und ihre gegenseitige Verknüpfung, die Francastel als das Wichtigste ansieht. Diese Ebenen haben Kraft genug dazu, besondere figurative Konzepte zu erschaffen, die nicht unbedingt an die mentalen, von der Sprache gesteuerten Aktivitäten gebunden werden müssen. Mit Ecos Terminologie zusammengefasst, erproben die Figuren und Orte bereits eine Ur-Segmentierung des Kontinuums, welche unbedingt mit den der Realität eigenen Strukturen arbeiten muss, so dass die Sprache auf ihre Erschaffung keinen wesentlichen Einfluss haben kann. Dies zu begreifen ist insofern von Bedeutung, als man die Rolle der dritten (mentalen und verbalen) Ebene dahingehend abgrenzt, dass man sie nicht unterschätzt aber auch (und dies vor allem) auf keinen Fall überschätzt. Schauen wir uns die jeweiligen Ebenen detailliert an.

Die erste Ebene wird aus materiellen Fragmenten unserer Wahrnehmung gebildet und wird offenbar von deren Verknüpfung aufgrund unserer Welterfahrung am meisten beeinflusst. Das Sammeln und die Verknüpfung sind sehr oft spontan und also auch variabel und vage und besitzen noch keinen deutlichen *Sinn*: Die Gesamtheit ästhetischer Fragmente bedeutet für uns – kurz gesagt – noch nichts. Darüber hinaus verzerrt diese Ebene die Darstellung des Gegenstandes grundsätzlich: Sie verlängert oder verkürzt seine Seiten, bringt ihn in diverse Verdecke, bietet sie den Augen beleuchtet oder in Schatten verhüllt, in konvexer oder hohler Überzeichnung. Sie vermag es nicht, selbst mit diesen Artefakten umzugehen, sie häuft sie bloß, ohne hinter ihnen die Repräsentation der Gegenstände sehen zu können.

Laut Francastel tritt zum Glück beinahe sofort die erwähnte zweite Ebene ins Spiel, die es möglich macht, dass „die ordnenden Prinzipien materieller sowie mentaler Konfigurationen, die den beobachteten Werken einen Sinn zuschreiben, eingesehen werden“.¹⁰ Die Bilder bestehen somit nicht nur aus den sinnlichen Fragmenten, die wirkliche Wahrnehmungen irgendwie erregen müssen, sondern auch aus Konfigurationen, welche bereits ein Ergebnis eines bestimmten Verständnisses, einer Weltanschauung sind; dieses „Erfassen“ verläuft jedoch immer noch mittels *Bild-* und keineswegs mittels *Sprachmittel*. Es wird im Spiel nicht nur zum Bestandteil der

⁸ P. Francastel, *Figura a misto*, Praha 1984, S. 12.

⁹ Vgl. *Ibid.*, S. 301–303.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, S. 302.

individuellen Konstitution, sondern gerät auch unter den Einfluss der Gesellschaftsinstitutionen und -instanzen.

Derart eingesetzte sinnvolle Konfigurationen nennt Francastel „Figuren und Orte“: „Die Figur und der Ort stellen, wenn man so will, die zweite Stufe der figurativen Verallgemeinerung dar, und sie sind so den einzelnen Elementen übergeordnet, sie geben unseren Sinnen Orientierung; sie ermöglichen uns nicht nur, die Bilder in der Realität richtig einzuordnen, sondern auch ihre Bedeutungen zu entschlüsseln. Man mag sie für Strukturen halten, die eine Übergangsphase ausmachen, nämlich die Phase zwischen der spontanen Fähigkeit, Wahrnehmungen zu ordnen, und dem Zustand einer völligen Koordination des Denkens mit der Tat.“¹¹

Für die Bildkunst und das Lesen der Bilder bedeutet das, dass das Gemalte, der „figurative Gegenstand“, nie eine einfache Wirklichkeitsaufzeichnung, nie nur eine Weltrepräsentation ist, sondern immer *nolens volens* bereits eine vorgefertigte und chiffrierte *Auffassung* dieser Wirklichkeit ist, welche von der vorherigen Erfahrung, von Kulturansätzen, von intersubjektiver Teilung geprägt wird: „[...] in der materiellen Konfiguration eines Werkes der bildenden Kunst bilden sich nicht nur die Erinnerung des Künstlers an das in die unveränderliche Ordnung der Natur eingebundene Gesehene, sondern auch imaginäre Strukturen ab. Die Anordnung des zweidimensionalen figurativen Feldes hängt vom Netz der Sinneswahrnehmungen und zugleich von den Rahmen der Denkproblematik ab, die der Künstler mit seinen Zeitgenossen teilt. Die bildenden Zeichen und ihre Gruppierungen schaffen ganzheitliche Bedeutungssysteme, da sie nicht nur eine Anwendung irgendeiner allgemeinen Semiologie sind, sondern sie beweisen die Mechanismen und auch die Tragweite einer gewissen autonomen Funktion des menschlichen Geistes.“¹²

Es geht also nicht darum, dass die zweite Ebene eine Geburt der „Erzählung“ veranlassen würde, eine Weltauffassung im verbalen Sinne des Wortes. Vielmehr werden hier die sinnlichen Artefakte in einer Weise geordnet, die viel über kulturspezifische, für eine Zeit und Gesellschaft typische und für diese Gesellschaft am besten verständliche „Konfigurationsformen“ aussagt. Man darf noch nicht über eine symbolische Funktion reden, sondern über die Geltendmachung einer allgemein geteilten Sicht- und Deutungsweise, über die Installierung von Figuren und Orten, deren gemeinsame Verknotung genug deutlich und aussagekräftig wird, damit man begreifen kann, was eigentlich gesehen wird und wie es zu deuten ist.

Dank der Kultur und dank dessen, dass man innerhalb dieser Kultur großgezogen wird, eignet man sich die allgemein geteilten Interpretationsformen, das Ordnen sinnlicher Fragmente an. Man entwickelt eigene Wege, wie man ihnen „Sinn“ zuschreibt, wie man sie in weitere Konfigurationen einfügt, und diese Ordnungsweisen werden nicht mehr durch ausschließlich materielle Bedingungen der Wahrnehmung oder von deren Physiologie gebildet. Sie sind jedoch auch nicht willkürlich: „[...] jede solche Darstellung lehnt sich letzten Endes an Werte definierende Bedeutungssysteme, von denen für die jeweilige Gruppe der Individuen die genaue Bedeutung und die – nennen wir es so – Manipulierbarkeit der jeweiligen Form abhängt.“¹³

Man darf Francastel zufolge daher niemals eine bloß repräsentative Darstellung unterstellen. „Zu jeder Zeit und bei jedem Menschen ist der Ausschnitt der visuellen Erfahrung von den verinnerlichten Orientierungen geprägt. Selten kreierte man den Realitätsschnitt neu. Normalerweise bemüht sich unser Geist Zeichengruppierungen zu erkennen, die auf eine allgemeine Erfahrung rekurrieren. Das Bild rekurriert auf die Einstellungen. [...] Das figurative Werk ist deshalb sinnvoll, da es institutionalisierte Ganzheiten aufzeichnet. Es versenkt sich

¹¹ Ibid., S. 301.

¹² Ibid., S. 9.

¹³ Ibid., S. 55.

in die Realität, die nicht nur mehrere Dimensionen, sondern auch mehrere Realitäts- und Abstraktionsstufen oder – wenn man will – Konventionsstufen aufweist. Ein direktes Verhältnis zwischen dem Menschen und der Welt gibt es selten. Jeder ist von dem Quantum an Erfahrungen und Hypothesen abhängig, die uns die Vergangenheit beisteuert. [...] Den Menschen machen nicht nur die Sinne, sondern auch das Gedächtnis aus.“¹⁴

Repräsentieren oder greifen die beiden erwähnten Bildebenen die eine Erfahrung auf, nämlich die „figurative Erfahrung“, liegt es nahe, dass sie auf engste miteinander verkoppelt sind. Es ist unmöglich, die eine auf die andere zu reduzieren, aber die eine vermag ohne die andere nicht zu existieren. „Die Einbildungskraft der Künstler schöpft nicht ausschließlich aus dem Gesehenen, das uns die natürliche Welt bietet, sie macht auch von Informationselementen Gebrauch, die vorläufig in der gesellschaftlichen Sphäre ausgearbeitet werden und die oft durch die eigene Arbeit parallel mit ausschließlich figurativen Werken entstehen. [...] Das Künstlerauge registriert nicht bloß die Naturerscheinungen, sondern auch institutionalisierte Tatsächlichkeiten.“¹⁵

Das würde dann heißen, dass das Bild eine aktive Herausforderung zum Ordnen von Figuren und Orten darstellt, freilich auch auf einer höheren Ebene von Kulturordnungen, also wird zu einer gesellschaftlichen Tätigkeit. Auch die Ansicht von Petr Wittlich bestätigt dies: „Ein Künstler, der in seinem Werk diverse gegenständliche, räumliche und zeitliche Elemente kombiniert, konfrontiert hiermit seine individuelle Erfahrung mit der kollektiven Erfahrung und dem Gedächtnis der sozialen Gruppe, deren Wortführer/Sprecher er auf einer tieferen Ebene der Qualifikation und Propagation ihrer Lebenseinstellung und ihres Lebensprogramms wird.“¹⁶

Was Wittlich mit seinen Worten meint, lässt sich schnell und einfach an einem spannenden Experiment aus der Malerei illustrieren. Im 15. Jahrhundert hat Piero della Francesca seine Vorstellung der idealen Stadt skizziert: Man kann einen Realitätsausschnitt betrachten, die Vorstellungen von Wohnhäusern, die eine konkrete Figur und einen konkreten Ort haben müssen (die Häuser in einer bestimmten Drehung und in einer Nachbarschaft), es gibt hier auch eine spezifische, institutionalisierte Sichtweise in Bezug auf die Stadt und deren Häuser, welche in der zeitgebundenen Erfahrung begründet liegt. Nun wollen wir uns ein futuristisches Stadtbild vom Ende des 21. Jahrhunderts vor Augen führen. Diese Häuser werden bestimmt ähnliche Allgemeinzüge aufweisen, die institutionalisierte Einbildungskraft des Projektanten wird jedoch eine andere sein. Sie wird sicherlich bar sein von den für die Renaissance typischen Vorstellungen, was ein Haus ist und wie er auszuschaun hat. Auf den futuristischen Bildern sieht man oft fensterlose Hochbauten. Ein Haus ohne Fenster wäre in der Renaissancezeit jedoch undenkbar, da niemand die Möglichkeit der Strombeleuchtung und der Klimaanlage voraussetzen konnte. Jede Vision eines Gebäudes muss unbedingt von dem jeweiligen epochenspezifischen Technikniveau ausgehen. Der technische Hintergrund, der die gesellschaftlich anerkannte Wirklichkeitsreflexion präsentiert, prägt die dargestellten Figurationen. Die Sprache spielt hier eine sekundäre Rolle, denn der bloße „Hausbegriff“ vermag nicht die Einbildungskraft zu bestimmen, welche gerade auf die zeitgenössischen Möglichkeiten und Usancen beim Hausbau zurückzuführen ist. Andererseits muss sich auch dieses „soziale“ Element auf das „materielle“ beziehen: Es muss doch immer ein Haus bleiben. Auch wenn „moderne“ Stadtvorstellungen schon mit fensterlosen Häusern rechnen können, diese Häuser müssen trotzdem immer noch den „Sinn“ des Hauses besitzen, d.h. einer kubischen Substanz, die bewohnbar ist und vor Witterungsungunst schützt.

¹⁴ Ibid., S. 66.

¹⁵ Ibid., S. 65.

¹⁶ P. Wittlich, *Francastelova sociologie umění*. In: P. Francastel, *Figura a místo*, Praha 1984, S. 313–314.

Man darf wohl betonen, dass die erwähnte Eco'sche Segmentierung des Kontinuums, welche bei Francastel die Arbeit mit der „Figur“ und dem „Ort“ repräsentiert, auf die auch sozial geformte Erfahrung zurückzuführen ist, dass diese Erfahrung aber *sinnbildlich* und *schweigsam* ist, bar aller Einflüsse der Sprache. Erst die dritte erwähnte Ebene bringt verbale und abstrakte Interpretationen mit sich. So wird die Repräsentation der „verbalen Erfahrung“ hervorgebracht, welche freilich auch ihre spezifischen Anforderungen stellt. Das verbale Denken wird von einer anderen Ordnung, Logik und einer anderen Reihenfolge beherrscht: Seine Struktur bildet die Prädikation, d.i. eine bestimmte Form von Reihung, die eine Subjekt- und Prädikatwahl verlangt. Das lässt sich als ein unnatürlicher Eingriff in die Wirklichkeit interpretieren, die somit in spezifische Ebenen gegliedert wird (ausgesucht ist etwas, woran man etwas Neues anhängt). Man darf wohl deshalb die dritte Ebene für eine Art Überbau halten, welcher für die eigentliche Arbeit am Bild nicht unbedingt wichtig ist – sie erscheint uns nur als ein abwechslungsreicher Zusatz. „Die figurative Sprache ist nicht homogen, es ist nicht eine Sprache, die sich durch eine andere Sprache ersetzen ließe oder die mit einer anderen Sprache teilweise äquivalent wäre; sie stellt eines der Systeme dar, die als Mittel für die Hierarchisierung und Integrierung individueller sowie kollektiver Erfahrungen fungieren, die oft auf unterschiedliche Schichten der Wirklichkeit hinweisen.“¹⁷

Die erwähnten drei Ebenen zu unterscheiden ist Francastel zufolge immens wichtig, der Kunsttheoretiker meint, dass „die Unkenntnis dieser drei Ebenen, auf denen sich der bildende Schaffensprozess entwickelt, zu erheblichem Chaos führt.“¹⁸

Francastel und die Phänomenologie

Es hat den Anschein, dass die Überlappung des Ansatzes von Francastel und der Phänomenologie vor allem in Francastels Gebrauch der Husserl'schen Terminologie (Husserls Begriffe wie etwa „vorprädikativ“ oder „vorsprachliche Erfahrung“ entsprechen bei Francastel höchstwahrscheinlich dem Begriff des „figurativen Denkens“) besteht. Bekanntlich ging es der Phänomenologie auch darum zu betonen, dass die Strukturen der figurativen Konstellationen anders sind und dass sie einer anderen Logik unterliegen (zeitlich und räumlich gesehen) als derjenigen, die Sprache und Narration herstellt. Auch wenn es die Sprache und das abstrakte Denken vermögen, den gegenständlichen Sinn mit Vorteil zu bewahren und mitzuteilen, ihn zu präzisieren und zu ergänzen (gerade deshalb, weil er zum Gegenstand der spezifischen Kommunikation wird), darf man – so ist zu schlussfolgern – sich nicht der Vorstellung hingeben, dass die Struktur der verbalen Erfahrung kompatibel ist mit den Strukturen der „figurativen Erfahrung“ oder dass sie auf die Sprache und das abstrakte Denken restlos zu simplifizieren ist.

Der Phänomenologe würde mit Freude folgende Äußerungen Francastels akzeptieren: „Bindungssysteme, die die Sprache und das diskursive Denken nicht als privilegiertes, sondern als spezifisches Mittel einer Form der geistigen Betätigung gebrauchen, beherrschen keineswegs zugleich die visuelle und figurative Aktivität. Ein figuratives Bild ist weder realistisch in Bezug auf die Wirklichkeit, noch ist es mit einer anderen, gleich welchen Denkweise (etwa der Mathematik, der Linguistik oder der Biologie) äquivalent.“¹⁹ Man befindet sich in einer Welt von „Erscheinungsformen“, die noch keine Zeichen oder Symbole darstellen, die jedoch trotzdem rekurrieren (darauf, was sie zur Erscheinung bringen), und die unbedingt eine Bedeutung haben müssen.

¹⁷ P. Francastel, *Figura a místico*, S. 302.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, S. 67.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, S. 48.

Francastel und Husserl setzten also ein asymmetrisches Verhältnis zwischen der figurativen und verbalen Sphäre und beide machen auf die Gefahr aufmerksam, die darin besteht, wenn die verbale Sphäre überhandnimmt. Sobald sie einen allzu großen Einfluss gewinnt, verzerrt sie in bestimmter Weise unsere Sichtweisen oder sie unterlegt ihnen Handlungsweisen, welche ihnen nicht unbedingt eigen sein müssen.

Das gemeinsame Interesse an der nichtsprachlichen Segmentierung des Kontinuums schließt allerdings nicht aus, dass es zwischen Francastel und Husserl interessante Unterschiede gibt, die es uns m.E. ermöglichen, den einen durch den anderen zu korrigieren. Beide Theoretiker setzen voraus, dass es unter der sprachlichen Sphäre zwei Ebenen gibt; die erste Ebene ist bei beiden mehr mit der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung und der Bildung von Wahrnehmungskonfigurationen assoziiert, die zweite hat mit intersubjektiven oder sogar direkt sozialen Angelegenheiten unseres Daseins in dieser Welt zu tun. Ein großer Unterschied besteht jedoch im Akzent: Husserl hat m.E. die Tragweite der intersubjektiven Sphäre unterschätzt, die Rolle anderer Menschen innerhalb der von allen geteilten Welt minimalisiert er auf den Nachweis der angenommenen Transzendenz im Innern des reinen Ego. Er befindet sich somit zu nahe an der Grenze zum Solipsismus, womit er im Übrigen wissentlich ringt.²⁰ So gesehen ist Francastel mehr überzeugend und inspirativ als Husserl. Umgekehrt darf aber gesagt werden, dass Francastel die erste Ebene unterschätzt hat – hier könnte zwecks höherer Ausgeglichenheit wiederum Husserl mit seinem Ansatz über den gegenständlichen Sinn und die Ansicht des Allgemeinen aushelfen, welche bereits auf der sinnlichen Ebene vorausgesetzt werden müssen, um einen Kulturrelativismus zu vermeiden.

Wenden wir uns nun den dargestellten Zusammenhängen näher zu:

Bei Husserl genügt zur Suche nach der Intersubjektivität der so genannte analoge Erfahrungstransfer, die Breite des so genannten Hineinversetzens – also eine Prozedur, die es mir als einem durch Reduktion gereinigten Subjekt erlaubt, die Existenz eines Alter Ego vorauszusetzen. Das andere Subjekt wird als apriorische Disposition *meines* Bewusstseins gedeutet. Ich kann es in der Reflexion meiner eigenen Sinnesregungen entdecken (in meiner primordialen Sphäre). „Es ist von vornherein klar, dass nur eine innerhalb meiner Primordialsphäre jenen Körper dort mit meinem Körper verbindende Ähnlichkeit das Motivationsfundament für die ‚analogisierende‘ Auffassung des ersteren als anderer Leib abgeben kann. – Mein körperlicher Leib hat in meiner primordialen Sphäre, als auf sich selbst zurückbezogen, seine Gegebenheitsweise des zentralen ‚Hier‘; jeder andere Körper und so der Körper des ‚Anderen‘ har den Modus ‚Dort‘.“²¹ Kurzum: der Andere tritt phänomenologisch als „Modifikation“ meines Selbst auf und in meiner Monade konstituiert es sich appräsenantiv eine andere.²² An dieser Stelle verwickelt sich Husserl in unschöne Aporien. Die Aufgabe besteht darin, sich dem anderen Ich zu nähern, um zu registrieren, was für dieses Ich konstitutiv ist – nämlich die Tatsache, dass es für mich eine total unzugängliche Entität ist. Ihr Inhalt macht etwas aus, was niemals ein Bestandteil meiner selbst werden kann, was mir für immer fremd bleiben muss. Es muss letztlich um die Erfahrung des „Fremden“ gehen. Es zeigt sich jedoch bald, dass Husserl sie nicht anders nahe zu legen vermag als analog, d.h. mit einer probenhaften, fiktiven Erfahrung, mit ihrem bedingten Transfer. Mir steht keine andere Möglichkeit zur Verfügung, um den anderen auszuweisen, als dass ich mich in seine Position zur Probe hineinversetze, dass ich die Gründe seiner Handlung, seiner Gesten nachvollziehe, „als ob“ ich an seiner Stelle wäre. In diesem Falle wird das radikale Fremdsein

²⁰ Vgl. 5. Kapitel in den *Cartesianischen Meditationen* von E. Husserl.

²¹ E. Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen. Krisis*. In: Husserl, E., *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 8, Hamburg 1992, S. 113, 119.

²² *Ibid.*, S. 118.

des Anderen wieder lediglich ein Teil *meiner* Vorstellung, *meiner* Setzung. Die Vorstellung „als ob“ kann niemals so aussagekräftig sein wie das faktische Erlebnis einer Setzung von etwas mir Äußerem, Transzendtem. Man darf deshalb den Äußerungen mancher Kritiker zustimmen, wenn sie Folgendes behaupten: „Die phänomenologische Auslegung der Fremderfahrung verbleibt somit in der Immanenz der Primordialität, sie schafft es nicht, das intersubjektive Sein des alter ego in seinem apperzeptiven Gehalt als zweites absolutes Hier zu vergegenwärtigen. Die Folge davon ist, dass die transzendente Intersubjektivitäts-Theorie, so wie sie Husserl in den CM durchführt, in eine Aporie mündet, da sie das alter ego über seine Phänomenalisierung, als ein in der Primordialsphäre auftretender Sinnmodus, hinaus nicht in seinem eigenständig-leiblichen Sein auslegen kann.“²³

Bei Francastel ist die intersubjektive Erfahrung auf eine spannende Weise von der Arbeit mit den Bildern geformt. Die Kunst (und insbesondere die bildende Kunst bzw. die Malerei) hat hier eben diese Funktion inne: Das Individuum macht sich bewusst, ob und inwiefern seine eigene Erfahrung mit den Erfahrungen anderer kompatibel ist, aber es institutionalisiert diese Erfahrung zugleich durch Bilder, es lässt sie zum Bestandteil des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, der Kultur und Tradition und somit auch zum Werkzeug der Erziehung werden. Auf diese Art und Weise ist das ganze Arsenal intersubjektiver Instanzen in der Tat nur äußerlich, zugleich aber der unmittelbaren Erfahrung zugänglich. Francastel erreicht somit den Punkt, den Husserl – wie mir scheint – umsonst zu erreichen versuchte. Durch Bilder (nicht bloß durch die direkte Wahrnehmung der Wirklichkeit, aber auch nicht erst durch die Sprache) lernt man die Sichtweise des Anderen und daher auch die allgemeinen Wahrnehmungsstile zu begreifen. Diese sind selbstverständlich bereits in den Erscheinungsweisen der eigentlichen Dinge vorgezeichnet, aber das Bild (seine Produktion und rückwärtig ebenso seine Rezeption) führen die beiden Erfahrungen zusammen: die Konfiguration materieller Artefakte und den Nachvollzug der Tatsache, dass diese Konfiguration eine intersubjektive Tragweite besitzt.

Die Kunst ist für Francastel eigentlich die bildhafte, noch schweigsame, dabei jedoch intersubjektiv bedeutungsvolle Konfigurationsform, die die Menschen lehrt, die Welt durch die Sicht der Anderen wahrzunehmen, zeitbedingte Verhaltens- und Verstehensweisen u.ä. aufzufassen und dies mittels konkreten sinnlichen Materials, mittels der Möglichkeiten, wie Figuren geformt und auf welche Weise für sie Orte hergestellt werden. Die Bindung an die sinnliche Realität wird beibehalten und zugleich wird die Rolle der intersubjektiven Instanzen richtig vorausgesetzt. Man sieht stets das, was gewöhnlich in einer bestimmten Zeit gesehen wird, was gesellschaftliche Praxen als Muster hervorbrachten, was aber nicht unbedingt durch die Sprache geformt oder getragen werden muss. Husserls hermetische, auf die problematische „analogische Appräsentation“ angewiesene „primordiale Sphäre“ wird hier mit dem Eintritt in den Raum künstlerisch instalierter Figuren und Orte ersetzt, mit der zusätzlichen Möglichkeit, sich die intersubjektive Erfahrung im konkreten Objekt, jedoch bereits im sozial geordneten Raum zu bestätigen. Francastel bietet durch die Kunst ein Gebiet, das noch in einer engen Berührung mit der eigentlichen ontologischen Wahrnehmungssphäre steht, das jedoch zugleich schon von sozialen Verhaltensweisen, Interpretationen und Kultureinflüssen durchwachsen ist. „Die Kunst ist eine der dauerhaften und spezifischen Tätigkeiten eines gesellschaftlich lebenden Menschen. Sie ermöglicht uns nicht nur die erworbenen Vorstellungen aufzuzeichnen und mitzuteilen, sondern auch neue Vorstellungen zu entdecken. Sie ist nicht nur eine Mitteilung, sondern eine Setzung, sie ist keine Sprache, sondern ein Sinnsystem.“²⁴

²³ T. Stogler, *Das ästhetische a priori des alter ego*, Würzburg 1994, S. 72.

²⁴ P. Francastel, *Figura a místico*, S. 13.

Husserls Beitrag

In dem Ansatz von Francastel lässt sich trotz allem ein Nachteil finden. Durch die enorme Betonung auf die zweite Ebene hat Francastel die erste allzu sehr in den Hintergrund gerückt. Hier könnte wieder umgekehrt Husserl mit seinen Wahrnehmungsforschungen und der Konstitution des gegenständlichen Sinnes einspringen. Was ich meine: Die „erste Ebene“ ist im größeren Maße strukturiert, sie beinhaltet (wie einige Schüler Husserls behaupten) irgendein „ästhetisches Apriori“, es ist somit kein Gerümpel von bedeutungslosen sinnlichen Artefakten und bildet also keinesfalls nur eine leere, materielle Basis für die nachfolgenden interpretativen Handlungen. Man muss es für allzu einseitig halten, wenn Francastel schreibt, dass „das figurative Bild keineswegs als eine Elementenauswahl zu betrachten wäre, die auf fest abgegrenzte, konstante, in der materiellen, uns umgebenden Welt situierte Ganzheiten hinweist [...]. Der Künstler identifiziert nicht, er verleiht die Form. [...] wenn man figurale, von den materiellen sich unterscheidende Gegenstände identifiziert, die historisch in Zeit und Raum determiniert sind, dann interpretiert man sie nicht als Gegenstände, die einfach auf Ausschnitte der aus einer naiv anthropomorphischen Perspektive angeschauten Natur hinweisen, sondern man studiert sie dann als Gegenstände, als die erste Stufe, besser gesagt erste Artikulation eines originellen, schöpferischen Formenplans.“²⁵

Husserl hat (spätestens seit 1907, als er seine später unter dem Titel *Ding und Raum* herausgebrachten Vorlesungen gehalten hat) immer wieder betont, dass die Dinge niemals in ihrer Ganzheit erscheinen, sondern nur in einer perspektivischen Schattierung, so dass man ihre Aspekte in einer spezifischen Folge beobachtet. Diese Tatsache stellt jedoch paradoxerweise kein Hindernis dar, im Gegenteil, sie bietet einen Vorteil. Man könnte nämlich sagen, dass in dem faktischen physikalischen Raum die Dinge nicht nur erscheinen, sondern für uns auch einen bestimmten Sinn erwerben. Die Logik, mit der die Aspekte des erscheinenden Dings angeordnet werden, entspricht nämlich der Beschaffenheit dieses Dinges: Ein anderes Ding würde seine Aspekte in einer anderen Reihenfolge erscheinen lassen. Wenn man sich folglich das Ding in der Vorstellung hervorruft, muss man es sich in *irgendeiner* konkreten Drehung, in *irgendeiner* Perspektive (jeder von uns in einer anderen) vorführen, und somit muss man die Erscheinungsstruktur und das Rekurrenzsystem respektieren, welches die Aspekte des jeweiligen Dinges mit sich bringt. Ein Ding wahrzunehmen oder darzustellen heißt also, sich in seinem inneren Horizont mit einem bestimmten Verständnis oder einer Erwartung bewegen zu können: Mit jeder Wahrnehmung kommt eine Voraussetzung der nächsten Erscheinung in einem gewissen Stil, im Horizont des Nicht-zu-Ende-Bestimmbaren, das jedoch für uns etwas vom Ergründlichen hat. Die Wahrnehmung eines Dinges hat mit unserer Bewegung in solchen Horizonten zu tun und das Endprodukt gibt nicht das Bild des Gegenstandes selbst, sondern vielmehr das ab, was Husserl – was schon erwähnt worden ist – signifikant „der gegenständliche Sinn“ nennt.

Es sind also die Gegenstände selbst, was sich hier in der Raumverteilung und -konfiguration bietet, die sinngebend sind und die man begreifen lernt, die wir zu durchforsten suchen. Gerade weil es sich hier um unsere Wahrnehmung handelt und zugleich um die Erscheinungsgesetzmäßigkeit, der die Dinge unterliegen und in der sie ihre Typik zum Ausdruck bringen, findet sich in diesem Prozess nichts Subjektives bzw. Willkürliches. Wir haben es mit Strukturen, Orten und Figuren zu tun, welche ihre objektive Organisiertheit, ihre Konfiguration aufweisen, die wir zu respektieren haben und nicht nach Belieben verändert dürfen. So gilt es, dass *jeder von uns* – wenn auch subjektiv – seine Wahrnehmung so steuert, wie sie an seiner

²⁵ Ibid., S. 56–57.

Stelle *jeder andere* steuern müsste. „Das Ding ist eine Regel möglicher Erscheinungen. Das sagt: das Ding ist eine Realität als Einheit einer Mannigfaltigkeit geregelt zusammengehöriger Erscheinungen. Und diese Einheit ist eine intersubjektive.“²⁶ Diverse Menschen können ein Ding aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven sehen, in unterschiedlicher Drehung, jedoch immer nur in der Erscheinungsstruktur, die für sie gleich verbindlich ist. „Das physikalische Ding ist intersubjektiv gemeinsam in der Art, dass es für alle mit uns möglichem Verkehr stehenden Individuen gilt. Die *objektive Bestimmung* bestimmt das Ding durch das, was ihm zukommt und zukommen muss, wenn es mir oder irgend einem mit mir in Verkehr stehenden soll erscheinen und jedem der kommunikativen Gemeinschaft Angehörigen soll als dasselbe gelten können – auch mir bei allen möglichen Abwandlungen meiner Sinnlichkeit.“²⁷ Husserl meint hier zweifellos noch nicht die „starke“ Intersubjektivität als Erfahrung des Anderen, sondern vielmehr ihre erste Voraussetzung, denn der Kontakt mit Anderen muss immer irgendwie von der gemeinsam geteilten Welt hergeleitet werden, über deren Verständlichkeit man sich (sogar noch vor der Anwendung der Sprache) gewissermaßen einigen kann. Es zeigt sich hier etwas, was man für einen *allgemeinen* Zustand halten darf, er besitzt nicht nur in meinem eigenen Falle Gültigkeit, und dieser Gültigkeit wird man sich gut bewusst. Die bekannte Wesensschau, in die die phänomenologische Reduktion münden soll, nennt Husserl selber nicht zufällig „Einsicht des Allgemeinen“.

Das Bedürfnis, die erste bei Francastel ein wenig vernachlässigte Ebene zu stärken, ließe sich leicht an der Entwicklung der modernen Kunst exemplifizieren. Francastel legt dar, dass die Perspektive der Renaissancezeit eine Analogie zu jenem intersubjektiv institutionalisierten Deutungszugang darstellte, der die Konfiguration der Dinge auf dem Bild bestimmte und somit die Deutungstradition weiterentwickelte und befestigte. Francastel (ähnlich wie einige gelehrte Künstler der Spätrenaissance) weiß also, dass die Perspektive nicht ermöglicht, die Realität an sich darzustellen, sondern vielmehr die Art und Weise, wie sie gesehen wurde und wie sie die Gesellschaft dieser Zeit sehen wollte. Er verurteilt es jedoch nicht als etwas Ungehöriges, wird doch in jeder Zeit unter der Schirmherrschaft der Tradition mit Figuren und Orten gearbeitet.

Die moderne Kunst – so meine Ansicht – versuchte, sich von diesen sozialen Deutungsschemata radikal loszusagen. Bezeichnend ist ihr Affront gegen die Perspektive, die wahrscheinlich am schrillsten diesen institutionalisierten Einfluss verkörperte. Auch die Absage an „Morphoplastizität“ durch Hinwendung zur Farbigkeit usw. hatte ein ähnliches Ziel. Deshalb ist es meiner Ansicht nach falsch zu behaupten, dass etwa Cézanne nur von einer sozial bedingten Sichtweise beeinflusst wäre. Nicht nur laut seiner eigenen Verlautbarungen, sondern auch im Einklang mit den Ergebnissen seiner Arbeit handelte es sich bei ihm um einen reinen Realismus, um die Darstellung der Dinge so, wie sie sind. Cézanne ging es darum, worum sich Husserl mit Hilfe der phänomenologischen Reduktion bemühte: die Deutungsschemata, die in der zeitgenössischen Kultursphäre verankert sind, loszuwerden und zu den Dingen an sich durchzudringen. Durch diese Reduktion kann jedoch die soziale Sphäre freilich nicht beseitigt werden: Sie wird nun auf die Ebene verlagert, an der sie sich in einer noch größeren Kraft zeigt – als die Erfahrung des Allgemeinen. Dazu tragen nun aber viel mehr die Dinge an sich bei und ihnen muss sich jedes Deutungsschema anpassen.

Es zeigt sich, dass die beiden Ebenen noch mehr ineinander verwachsen sind, als es auf den ersten Blick schien. Man darf die erste Ebene nicht nur als eine sinnfreie Konfiguration zersplitterter Artefakte auffassen, denen erst mal die zweite Ebene eine Ordnung (und somit

²⁶ E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, Husserliana, Bd. IV., Haag 1952, S. 86.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, S. 87.

auch eine soziale Deutung) verleiht. Sonst würde die Interpretation (und letzten Endes auch die Wahrnehmung selbst) der Realität allzu sehr von den relativen Kulturinteressen abhängen. Andererseits lebt man nicht in einer sterilen Räumlichkeit, in der sich die Dinge nur als sie selbst geben. Sie kommen immer so gruppiert vor, wie sie die jeweilige Kultur konfiguriert hat, und es gibt wahrscheinlich keine gänzlich reine Wahrnehmung, die bar kultureller Einflüsse wäre.

Vielleicht lässt sich dermaßen festes Ineinander von beiden Ebenen am folgenden Beispiel einleuchtend erklären. Einen Spielball zu sehen bedeutet sicherlich ein *kulturell* erzeugtes Artefakt zu sehen, das bereits zu etwas dient und das daher selbst ein gewisses, der gemeinsamen Tradition entnommenes Deutungsschema darstellt – „das hier ist etwas zum Werfen, zum Kicken“, man kann mit ihm auf diese und jene Art spielen usw. Aber auch der Ball als kulturelles Artefakt bleibt immer in allen seinen Erscheinungsformen von gewissen Erscheinungsgesetzmäßigkeiten abhängig. Auch er gliedert sich in gewisser Weise in die perspektivische Verkürzung ein, ähnlich anderen physikalischen Gegenständen des gleichen Typs, die jedem anderen in gleicher Weise zugänglich sind, auch wenn dies nicht mehr Gegenstände der kulturellen Produktion sein müssen. So erscheint zum Beispiel der Mond auf dem Himmel – in der Logik dessen, wie überhaupt runde Gegenstände erscheinen.

Schluss

Hierin erblicke ich die gegenseitige Befruchtung der Ansätze Husserls und Francastels. Man vermag nicht die zeitgemäßen Deutungsschemata loszuwerden (wenn ich so simplifiziert die spezifische Arbeit mit Figuren und Orten in der jeweiligen Epoche bezeichne), die in der Tradition der jeweiligen Gesellschaft institutionalisiert vorliegen. Bei Francastel schwächt diese Stellungnahme allzu sehr die Rolle der ersten Ebene, innerhalb derer man mehr zur Realität selber hingezogen wird. Husserl, der wiederum die zweite Ebene ein wenig in den Hintergrund gerückt hat, trug dazu bei, dass die erste Ebene ernster genommen wurde, und damit die Dispositionen, die viel mehr als bei Francastel unseren sinnlichen Kontakt mit der Realität analysieren, so dass bereits in ihm Quellen für Sinnhaftigkeit und intersubjektive Objektivität zu finden sind.

Francastel und Husserl können inspirativ in die Auseinandersetzung über die Möglichkeit der vorverbalen Erfahrung eingreifen, gegen deren Anerkennung sich die analytische Philosophie so vehement wehrt. Es handelt sich keineswegs um eine haarspalterische Debatte. Geht es doch um die Beziehung zur Realität und um die Einschätzung der Rolle der Kultur und Sprache in der Gesellschaft – letztlich auch mit politischen Folgen. „Den Sinn und die Sinnlichkeit voneinander zu trennen, den Zusammenhang zwischen der perzeptuellen Gegebenheit des Objektes und seiner prädikativen Artikulation abzulehnen heißt, die Beziehung zwischen dem begrifflichen Denken und der Perzeption unbegreiflich und zufällig zu machen“²⁸ und das kann leicht „zum Relativismus verleiten – was real ist, sei restlos von unserem allgemein benutzten Sprachspiel determiniert.“²⁹

Francastel strahlt jedoch eine allgemeine Anziehungskraft auf die Philosophen aus. Obwohl sich seine Darlegungen an einer bestimmten philosophischen Denkweise orientieren, ist er im Gegenteil zu „spekulativen“ Leistungen der Philosophen fähig, mit konkretem, greifbarem Material zu arbeiten. Die bildende Kunst lässt sich als eine spontane Praxis begreifen, die die Ordnung unserer natürlichen Erfahrung berührt und die Figuren und Orte der Realität selbst betastet. Sie fragt, ob wir sie unter Anwendung ästhetischer, sinnlicher Mittel zu begreifen imstande sind. Die Kunstgeschichte liefert uns eine Unmenge an empirischem Material zur Erforschung

²⁸ D. Zahavi, *Husserl's Phenomenology*, Stanford 2003, S. 29.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, S. 150.

der Tatsache, wie wir die Welt wahrzunehmen pflegen und wie wir sie in Vorstellungen und Bilder umformen. Die Analysen eines Kunsttheoretikers sind deshalb wertvoll, da der abstrakten, in Diskussionen über verbale Landschaften und Sprachspiele verwickelten Philosophie das experimentelle Material, ja beinahe „exakte“ Beweise, über welche Francastel verfügt, abhandeln gekommen sind. Es zeigt sich unter anderem daran, wie etwa der oben erwähnte prominente analytische Philosoph Nelson Goodman, welcher sich gelegentlich den Grundlagen der bildenden Kunst widmet, allzu leicht in eine relativistische Position geschlüpft ist. Eine grundlegende Einsicht des Kunstanalytikers vom Rang Francastels scheint mir eine Art Bremsmechanismus für solch unüberlegte Äußerungen zu sein.

Worum sich die Philosophie in ihren Traktaten, die so leicht die Realität aus den Augen verlieren, bemüht, verwirklicht die Kunst in einer konkreten bildnerischen Tat, die man im Nachhinein neu einsehen und erfahren kann.

Deutsche Übersetzung Lukáš Motyčka

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Sommes-nous libres de nous changer ? *Sur les limites de la nature humaine*

Abstract | Are we free to transform ourselves? Free will is a condition of moral conduct. This phenomenon is one of the key features of humanity. A well-founded belief in free will is also a condition which makes the functioning of a democratic society and a legal state possible. If we are really free, there are an endless range of possibilities which we can essentially achieve. We are free to postulate ideals and try to fulfil them. We are aware, however, of the fact that human beings are sometimes cruelly limited in terms of their desires. Nature often limits and restrains humans. Philosophers have concluded that man is only free in thought. In the 21st century we are finally beginning to realize that we can do much more than merely think correctly. Science with its biotechnologies provides us a powerful weapon against erstwhile necessity. We do not have to succumb to such an extent to the oftentimes inhuman laws of nature. We can work at changing them ... and perhaps even change ourselves. Should one, however, do everything we can?

.....

Liberté des Modernes

Même si l'on reste, ce faisant, quelque peu imprécis, on peut dire que le désir fondamental de l'Homme moderne, ainsi que la définition-même de la modernité, est la revendication de la liberté.¹ Il ne s'agit pas seulement de la liberté du citoyen en *polis*, mais d'une liberté ontologique – pourrait-on dire – ontologiquement illimitée et en un sens infinie. L'Homme est, de ce point de vue, défini par la modernité comme un être qui désire devenir le fondateur, la source et la raison unique et souveraine de ses actes.² Si jadis l'Homme s'est projeté dans Dieu et Dieu dans l'homme, aujourd'hui, dans le monde moderne, c'est l'Homme seul qui veut être fondateur de l'ensemble de ses valeurs. « Nous ne t'avons créé ni céleste, ni terrestre, ni mortel, ni immortel, et c'est pourquoi tu peux recevoir, en pleine possession de ta liberté et de ta vertu, étant créateur de toi-même, la figure que tu préfères » écrit, à la place du créateur, le savant de l'époque de la Renaissance, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. L'homme de l'humanisme moderne refuse désormais d'accepter aveuglement et docilement des normes, des lois ou des valeurs de n'importe quelle autorité, même s'il s'agit de « la nature des choses » . Il exige au contraire de les fonder sur sa propre volonté et sa propre raison, même si celles-ci sont limitées.

Aux yeux d'Alexis de Tocqueville l'individualisme moderne se traduit par deux traits principaux : par une révolte des individus contre la hiérarchie au nom de l'égalité et par la dénonciation de l'autorité traditionnelle au nom de la liberté. L'individu moderne déclarant une révolution permanente contre la tradition s'y affirme à la fois comme valeur et comme principe.

Cette exigence de liberté se projette aussi dans la conception de l'Etat et du droit moderne : l'humanisme législatif des Modernes est fondé sur la conviction que l'homme seul est le principe

¹ A. Renaut, *L'individu*, Paris 1995.

² Et peu importe qu'il soit souvent trop peu l'auteur, le fondateur et la source de ses actes.

de toute normativité – l’auteur d’un droit qui est le sien, et qui est instauré par l’accord contractuel des parties respectives. « L’Homme n’a d’autre législateur que lui-même » proclame Jean-Paul Sartre. L’individu est finalement obligé de créer, d’accepter ou de trouver seul ses valeurs. Personne ne peut l’aider : « Nous sommes condamnés à la liberté » disait, non sans une trace d’amertume, le même auteur.

Le principe central de la morale des Temps modernes devient la liberté. Le libre arbitre est alors la condition de la possibilité de la conduite morale fondant ainsi l’humanité. La croyance dans le libre arbitre est la condition de la possibilité du fonctionnement de la société démocratique et de l’état de droit.

Liberté positive et négative

Mais le concept de la liberté individuelle est loin d’être sans ambiguïtés. Dans les livres contemporains de philosophie politique et morale on distingue, selon Isaiah Berlin, deux aspects de cette notion : la liberté positive et la liberté négative.

Le synonyme pour le manque de liberté en son sens négatif pourrait être le mot „coertion“. Il s’agit de la liberté plus ou moins politique. Je suis négativement libre „dans la mesure où aucune personne ou aucun groupe n’empiète sur mon action“.³

Le sens positif du mot liberté est dérivé du désir de l’individu d’être son propre maître, d’être mené dans son comportement par ses propres raisons et par ses buts conscients et non par des causes externes – bref d’être le sujet et non l’objet.⁴ Cette liberté implique tout ce que la personne est capable ou incapable de faire.

Amartya Sen, le détenteur du prix Nobel en 1997, donne un bel exemple qui montre la différence entre les deux conceptions : „Si je ne peux pas me promener librement dans ce parc, parce que je suis handicapé, ma liberté positive de me promener est en défaut ; mais rien, dans un tel cas, ne suggère la moindre violation de ma liberté négative. En revanche, si je suis incapable de me promener dans ce parc, non parce que je suis handicapé, mais parce que des voyous me battraient si je m’y aventurais, alors, c’est là une violation de ma liberté négative (et pas seulement de ma liberté pris en un sens positif).“⁵

Dans les écrits influencés par des classiques de la philosophie politique anglaise la plus importante mesure d’attention porte sur l’aspect négatif de la liberté et certains auteurs proposant que le concept de liberté, soit restreint. C’est très clair quand Berlin cite Helvétius : „L’homme libre est celui qui n’est pas dans les chaînes, qui n’est pas enfermé dans une cage, qui n’est pas terrorisé par la crainte d’être puni comme un esclave... il n’y a pas de manque de liberté si l’homme ne vole pas comme un oiseau ou ne nage pas comme une baleine.“⁶

Amartya Sen a clairement prouvé dans le champ de la philosophie politique et morale que la dichotomie entre la liberté positive et négative est inadéquate et peu heuristique obstruant dès lors de véritables problèmes. La définition adéquate de la liberté devra inclure les deux aspects.⁷

Dans ses livres, Sen cherche à déployer une conception de l’éthique sociale pour laquelle la liberté individuelle serait la valeur la plus fondamentale et en même temps le lieu de la responsabilité sociale. La liberté individuelle sans ces composantes positives qui nous rendent capables de nous comporter en individus autonomes et responsables (comme les soins de santé

³ I. Berlin, “Dva pojmy slobody”, in: *O Slobode a spravodlnosti*, Bratislava 1993, p. 23.

⁴ Ibid, p. 31.

⁵ A. Sen, *L’économie est une science morale; La découverte*, Paris 1999, p. 48.

⁶ I. Berlin, “Dva pojmy slobody”, note. 3, p. 70.

⁷ M. Petrů, “Senův sen”, *Listy* 31/2, pp. 61–64.

essentiels, la garantie d'une éducation minimale, un niveau de vie décent excluant la faim et la pauvreté absolue, et ainsi de suite) n'est pas pour Sen une vraie liberté.⁸ La liberté doit être l'objet de la responsabilité sociale garantie par l'Etat. Le devoir d'Etat devrait inclure la protection des libertés positives – c'est-à-dire des libertés sociales – et pas seulement des libertés négatives. Sen se range ainsi dans le courant de la pensée moderne pour laquelle la définition fondamentale de l'humanité de l'homme est l'exigence d'une plus grande mesure de liberté individuelle. La liberté individuelle – dans laquelle il faut inclure la liberté d'évaluer sa propre situation et la possibilité de la changer – est une valeur essentielle.⁹

C'est pourquoi il ne s'agit pas de distribuer équitablement des libertés formelles, des revenus ou des ressources, mais plutôt ce que Sen appelle les „capabilités“ – c'est-à-dire les capacités de convertir des libertés formelles ou des ressources en libertés réelles, en des modes de fonctionnement humains fondamentaux, permettant de vivre une vie digne et sensée plutôt que seulement accumuler des biens. Ce qui est important, c'est que les individus puissent véritablement jouir de la liberté de choisir le mode de vie auquel ils aspirent.

La philosophe américaine Martha Nussbaum, un auteur très proche de Sen, a proposé une liste de capabilités fonctionnelles de base qui a certainement une certaine validité transculturelle.¹⁰

1. Pouvoir vivre, autant que possible, une vie humaine complète jusqu'à la fin ; éviter une mort prématurée ; ou pouvoir mourir avant que notre vie soit diminuée au point de ne plus valoir la peine d'être vécue...
2. Pouvoir jouir d'une bonne santé, d'une alimentation adéquate, d'un foyer décent ; avoir des opportunités de satisfaction sexuelle ; pouvoir se déplacer d'un endroit à un autre.
3. Pouvoir éviter toute douleur inutile et connaître l'expérience du plaisir.
4. Pouvoir utiliser nos cinq sens ; pouvoir imaginer, penser et raisonner.
5. Pouvoir éprouver un attachement pour des personnes et des réalités extérieures à nous-mêmes ; pouvoir aimer ceux qui nous aiment et se soucient de notre sort, pouvoir pleurer leur absence ; en général, pouvoir aimer et éprouver douleur, désir et gratitude.
6. Pouvoir se former une conception du bien et s'engager dans une réflexion critique sur la planification de notre propre vie.
7. Pouvoir vivre pour et avec les autres êtres humains, leur manifester notre capacité de reconnaissance et d'attention, nous consacrer à diverses formes d'interaction sociale et familiale.
8. Pouvoir vivre dans le souci de et en relation avec les animaux, les plantes, le monde de la nature.
9. Pouvoir rire, jouer et nous adonner à des activités récréatives.
10. Pouvoir vivre notre propre vie, et pas celle de quelqu'un d'autre.
11. Pouvoir vivre notre propre vie dans un environnement et un contexte de notre choix.

L'idée sous-jacente c'est qu'une vie à laquelle ferait totalement défaut l'une ou l'autre de ces dimensions verrait son contenu humain sérieusement diminué.

On ne peut pas concevoir les „capabilités“ comme étant les prescriptions ou les commandements moraux valables pour toujours et pour tous. Il s'agit plutôt de desiderata, de modèles de l'humanité que nous avons postulés comme notre idéal. En ce sens la liste des capabilités n'est

⁸ A. Sen, "Responsabilité sociale et démocratie: l'impératif d'équité et le conservatisme financier", in: *L'économie est une science morale; La Découverte*, Paris 1999, p. 96.

⁹ M. Petru, "Svoboda Moderních (Spor o individuum ve Francii posledních let)" in: http://profil.muni.cz/03_2000/studst_petru.html.

¹⁰ M. C. Nussbaum, "Aristotelian Social Democracy", in: Douglass, R. B. – Mara, G. M. – Richardson, H. S. (eds.), *Liberalism and the Good*, London 1990, pp. 203–252.

qu'une liste de travail. S'il s'avère que l'un ou l'autre des articles n'est pas utile au bonheur de l'homme rien n'empêche de le supprimer ou de le remplacer par un autre.

Servitude

Si nous sommes réellement libres dans le sens positif du terme, l'empire infini des possibilités que nous pouvons en principe atteindre doit s'étendre devant nous. Nous sommes libres de postuler des idéaux et d'essayer de les réaliser.

Néanmoins il est en même temps impossible de ne percevoir les limites de l'homme notamment quant à ses desirs au face à la nature qui l'écrase et le restreint. Les philosophes en ont déduit que l'homme n'est libre qu'en pensée : „L'homme n'est qu'un roseau, le plus faible de la nature ; mais c'est un roseau pensant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser : une vapeur, une goutte d'eau, suffit pour le tuer. Mais, quand l'univers l'écraserait, l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, puisqu'il sait qu'il meurt, et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui ; l'univers n'en sait rien. Toute notre dignité consiste donc en la pensée. C'est de là qu'il faut nous relever et non de l'espace et de la durée, que nous ne saurions remplir. Travaillons donc à bien penser : voilà le principe de la morale.“, écrit au XVII^{ème} siècle Blaise Pascal.¹¹ Nous sommes libres de postuler les idéaux mais nous ne sommes pas libres de les réaliser.

Amour

J'ai choisi comme exemple de l'irréalisabilité pratique de nos valeurs: l'idéal de l'amour. Mais le terme est également équivoque. On sait que le grec disposait de trois noms pour désigner l'amour : Eros, Philia et Agapè.¹²

D'Eros, c'est Platon qui dit l'essentiel. Freud ne fera que le répéter vingt-trois siècles plus tard : le désir sexuel ; exalté dans la passion amoureuse, est manque. Il en appelle à la consommation de l'autre. Une fois satisfait, il s'abîme dans un néant repu, jusqu'à ce qu'il renaisse et recommence sans autre fin ultime que la mort elle-même.

A l'inverse de l'Eros, Philia que l'on traduit d'ordinaire par amitié, ne vit pas dans le manque et la consommation, mais au contraire dans cette joie, précieuse et singulière, qui naît de la simple présence, de la seule existence de l'être aimé.

Agapè fait son apparition dans les Evangiles pour désigner cet amour que le Christ nous recommande d'étendre jusqu'à ceux qui nous sont indifférents, voire à nos ennemis eux-mêmes. Il s'agit de l'amour à peine envisageable par les hommes, amour désintéressé, gratuit, sans justification même, puisque c'est peu de dire qu'il continue d'agir hors de toute réciprocité.

Il est clair qu'au sens de Philia je ne puis jamais aimer plus de dix ou vingt personnes en ce monde. Il s'agit exactement du nombre de gens que je fréquente plus intimement. C'est dans l'ambiance des petits groupes sociaux que s'est passé la plupart de l'évolution de l'homme – c'est-à-dire l'évolution de l'émotivité humaine et des sentiments moraux. Le néo-darwinisme explique bien l'origine de l'amour Philia : les gens ont des sentiments qui les aident à transmettre leurs gènes dans la génération suivante – ou – plus exactement qui les aideraient dans l'environnement dans lequel la plus grande partie de l'évolution s'est accomplie. Ceci explique notre incapacité à aimer un inconnu par l'amour Agapé. La règle „aime ton prochain comme toi-même“ est

¹¹ B. Pascal, *Pensées*, Paris 1972, p. 161.

¹² Je suis ici le commentaire donné de ces trois termes par Luc Ferry dans son *L'homme-Dieux*, Paris 1996, pp. 159–162, qui suis à son tour André Comte-Sponville dans son *Petit traité des grandes vertus*.

absolument irréalisable avec notre psychisme. Mais que faire quand plus de cinq milliards de personnes sont hors du champ de l'amour *Philia* ?

Considérons les faits suivants : d'après la FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) environ 815 millions de personnes souffrent de malnutrition chronique.¹³ Cela signifie que 815 millions de personnes manquent de calories, de protéines, de vitamines et de minéraux qui leur sont nécessaires pour maintenir en bonne santé leur corps et leur esprit. Des millions d'êtres humains ont constamment faim ; d'autres souffrent de carences nutritives et d'infections chroniques auxquelles un meilleur régime alimentaire leur permettrait de résister. Les enfants sont les plus durement touchés. Selon une étude, quatorze millions d'enfants de moins de cinq ans meurent chaque année des effets combinés de la malnutrition et des infections, et, dans certaines régions, un enfant sur deux n'atteint pas son cinquième anniversaire.

Robert McNamara, alors président de la Banque mondiale, avait naguère proposé de distinguer la notion de „pauvreté absolue“ et de „pauvreté relative“. La pauvreté qui nous est familière dans les nations industrielles est relative, c'est-à-dire que certains citoyens sont pauvres en comparaison de l'aisance dont jouissent leurs voisins dans la même rue. Les personnes qui vivent dans une pauvreté relative en France pourraient être considérées comme bien loties par rapport à des personnes vivant de pensions en République Tchèque et à leur tour celles-ci ne sont pas considérées comme pauvres par rapport au peuple du Mali ou d'Éthiopie.

La pauvreté absolue, en revanche, reste une pauvreté peu importe le critère. Il s'agit de la vie à l'extrême marge de la survie. McNamara définit la pauvreté absolue comme „des conditions de vie que la malnutrition, l'analphabétisme, la maladie, un environnement insalubre, la mortalité infantile et la faiblesse de l'espérance de vie situent en deçà de toute définition raisonnable d'une humanité décente“. Le Worldwatch Institute estime que 1,2 milliard de personnes, soit 23 % de la population mondiale, vivent dans la pauvreté absolue. La pauvreté absolue constitue donc probablement la cause principale de la misère humaine d'aujourd'hui.

Au tableau de la pauvreté absolue tracé par McNamara, Peter Singer, le philosophe australien, oppose la distinction entre la richesse relative et la richesse absolue.¹⁴ Ceux qui jouissent de la richesse absolue ne sont pas nécessairement riches par rapport à leurs voisins, mais ils le sont d'après une définition raisonnable des besoins humains. Cela signifie qu'ils ont un revenu supérieur à celui dont ils ont besoin pour se procurer tous les éléments nécessaires à la satisfaction de leurs besoins vitaux. « Après s'être assuré (directement ou indirectement grâce aux prestations sociales) la nourriture, le logement, l'habillement, les services de santé et d'éducation, les riches absolus peuvent encore consacrer de l'argent au superflu. Ils choisissent les aliments pour les plaisirs du palais, non pour assouvir leur faim ; ils achètent de nouveaux vêtements pour se parer, non pour se maintenir au chaud ; ils changent de maison pour bénéficier d'un environnement plus agréable ou avoir une salle de jeux pour les enfants, non pour se protéger de la pluie... et ensuite il leur reste encore de l'argent à dépenser en chaînes stéréo, caméras vidéo et vacances passées outre-mer. »¹⁵

Peter Singer constate que la majorité des citoyens d'Europe de l'Ouest, d'Amérique du Nord (etc.) jouissent de cette richesse absolue et qu'ils pourraient renoncer à la partie de leurs ressources en faveur de la pauvreté absolue sans tomber dans le même état.

Si tels sont les faits, si les peuples des pays riches laissent ceux des pays pauvres souffrir de pauvreté absolue, avec la malnutrition, les maladies et les morts qui s'ensuivent, même s'ils ont la possibilité réelle de faire quelque chose pour remédier à la situation (Singer propose de se

¹³ Cf. *State of Food Insecurity in the World* (2004), [1] <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/007/y5650e/y5650e00.pdf>.

¹⁴ P. Singer, *Questions d'éthique pratique*, Paris 1997, chap. 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

priver de 10 % de ses revenus ou de 10 % de son temps libre en faveur des pauvres absolus), s'ils dépensent de l'argent en objets de luxe plutôt que de l'utiliser pour sauver des vies, n'est-ce pas l'équivalent moral du meurtre ? Oui, c'est exactement ça !, conclut durement Singer. Si l'on admet qu'il n'y a pas de différence intrinsèque entre laisser quelqu'un mourir et le tuer, il semblerait que nous soyons tous des meurtriers. Nous sommes responsables non seulement de la mort de celui que nous tuons mais aussi de celui que nous ne sauvons pas si nous le pouvons. Si nous ne le faisons pas nous devons être punis. L'exigence d'aider quelqu'un en état de besoin ne tombe pas dans le champ de la charité et bienfaisance mais dans le champ du devoir dont l'omission est criminelle.

Imaginons que sur la route de cette conférence vous trouviez un jeune enfant à la mer en train de se noyer. Qui nierait que votre devoir est de plonger et de secourir l'enfant ? Cela supposerait détérioration de vos nouveaux vêtements et retard à la conférence – choses qui, en comparaison avec le fait d'éviter la mort d'un enfant, sont évidemment sans importance.

Le principe moral suivant qui consiste à dire que je dois dans ce cas secourir l'enfant pourrait être énoncé ainsi : s'il est en notre pouvoir d'éviter que quelque chose de grave se produise, sans rien sacrifier d'une valeur morale comparable, nous devons le faire. Ce principe semble indiscutable.

Il n'en reste pas moins que le caractère indiscutable et unanime du principe selon lequel nous devons empêcher le mal quand nous le pouvons sans sacrifier quoi que ce soit de valeur morale comparable est une aimable illusion. Si ce principe était pris au sérieux et réellement appliqué, nos vies et notre monde en seraient fondamentalement transformés. Car il n'est pas uniquement approprié aux rares situations dans lesquelles quelqu'un peut sauver un enfant de la noyade, mais il est lié à la situation quotidienne dans laquelle nous pouvons porter assistance à ceux qui vivent dans la pauvreté absolue, même si nous ne les connaissons pas personnellement.

Cette conclusion découle avec une nécessité logique des prémisses suivantes :

1. Si nous pouvons empêcher un mal sans sacrifier quoi que ce soit de comparable en valeur morale, nous devons le faire.
2. La pauvreté absolue est un mal.
3. Il y a une part de la pauvreté absolue que nous pouvons empêcher sans sacrifier quoi que ce soit de comparable en valeur morale.

Conclusion : Nous devons combattre au moins une part de la pauvreté absolue.

Mère nature cette vieille sorcière

L'exemple précédent a dû démontrer notre incapacité à réaliser les principes moraux que nous acceptons. Le principe d'égalité par exemple. Mais il n'est certainement pas très difficile d'inventer d'autres exemples – plus persuasifs. Par exemple notre inhabilité à respecter le principe *ahimsa*, dont la validité universelle se manifeste, quant au monde de l'ouest, dans les réflexions sur les droits des animaux.¹⁶

¹⁶ Le but de l'éthique est d'indiquer quels sont mes devoirs envers les autres. Singer, renouant avec la tradition utilitariste, conteste que le critère me permettant de déterminer quels êtres demandent mes égards éthiques puisse être des qualités telles que la capacité à parler ou à réfléchir. Bavards aussi bien qu'aphasiques, hommes de génie et sots sont égaux devant le droit. Seule la capacité à souffrir peut être un critère éthiquement valable. Tous les êtres qui ont des « intérêts » doivent être sujets du droit et de la morale. Il s'agit de l'intérêt à sentir les délices plutôt que les amertumes et les souffrances. « La capacité à sentir la jouissance ou la souffrance, écrit Singer, est la condition primordiale pour avoir des intérêts, la condition qui doit être remplie pour pouvoir parler des intérêts de façon intelligible. Il serait absurde d'affirmer qu'une pierre n'est pas intéressée de recevoir des coups

de pied d'un écolier rentrant à la maison. La pierre n'a pas d'intérêts puisqu'elle n'est pas capable de souffrir. ... Une souris, au contraire, est intéressée de ne pas recevoir des coups puisqu'elle en souffrirait. " Cf. P. Singer, *Die Befreiung der Tiere*, Rowohlt 1996, p. 36.

Tous les êtres possédants des intérêts sont formellement égaux, quelles que soient leurs inégalités « naturelles ». Les gens ne naissent pas entièrement libres et égaux – ni d'aspect physique ni psychiquement. L'inégalité biologique est d'ordre factuel. La prédisposition aux maladies, la force physique et même probablement l'intelligence sont des facteurs qui sont loin de nous obéir. Ils nous façonnent et nous déterminent plutôt. S'il s'avérait qu'une " race " humaine montre dans n'importe quel domaine des aptitudes plus élevées qu'une autre (ce qui n'est pas exclu même après Hitler), le racisme n'en serait pas pour autant justifié. Car l'égalité n'est pas une description factuelle mais une prescription, un *desideratum*, ou en d'autres mots un ordre moral.

Fondé sur ces arguments, Singer demande en conséquence l'émancipation des animaux. Il est signifiant que ce soient les mêmes arguments qui réclament l'égalité des noirs aux blancs et des femmes aux hommes. L'appartenance à l'espèce ainsi qu'à la race ou au sexe ne peut être le critère moralement pertinent, auquel appartient le degré de faculté à sentir la souffrance. En vertu des mêmes raisons qui font qu'il est moralement répréhensible de préférer un être en fonction de son appartenance à une race (racisme) ou à un sexe (sexisme), il est répréhensible de le faire aussi en fonction de son appartenance à une espèce (spécissisme). " Il devrait être clair, écrit Singer, que l'objection principale contre le racisme et le sexisme touche le spécissisme. Si une intelligence plus élevée n'autorise personne à utiliser l'autre pour ses propres buts, comment pourrait-elle l'autoriser à abuser dans cette même optique d'un être vivant non-humain (*nichtmenschliche Lebewesen*) ? " Ibid p. 35. Une intelligence plus élevée ou bien la capacité à s'élever au dessus des lois sauvages de la nature ne fondent pas des droits spécifiques moraux (comme suggère un Ferry) mais au contraire des devoirs envers les autres sujets de la morale.

En vertu de ce critère qui contient la capacité à sentir la souffrance, Singer divise les êtres en trois catégories. Dans la première catégorie, il classe les êtres sans conscience et sans intérêts. Ce sont les choses, les végétaux et les animaux qui ne sont pas capables de souffrir. Nous n'avons aucun devoir envers eux, et pouvons ainsi les traiter à notre gré.

La deuxième catégorie est formée par les êtres sans conscience mais sensibles. Dans cette catégorie sont regroupés tous les animaux qui ont un système nerveux central et peuvent sentir la douleur. Ces êtres ont une valeur en soi et nous devons les traiter en accord avec les règles utilitaristes de façon à ce que la somme de contentement mondial croisse ou la somme de la douleur baisse. Cela n'exclut évidemment pas les expérimentations à but médical sur certains animaux.

La troisième catégorie est formée par des êtres conscients. Il s'agit d'êtres dotés de la conscience de soi ainsi que de la capacité à se situer en fonction d'un passé et d'un futur. De tels êtres sont les personnes.

C'est envers tous les êtres que nous avons des devoirs au sens de l'utilitarisme préférentiel : si deux êtres souffrent différemment dans les mêmes conditions, il faut les traiter aussi différemment. Il est important qu'on ne comprenne pas cette différence a priori, en vertu de l'appartenance à une espèce, mais juste actuellement en vertu d'un état factuel. Voilà un exemple que Singer utilise souvent : l'homme condamné à mort souffrira plus dans cette situation qu'un animal, puisque il est capable de prévoir son sort. L'animal capturé pour un traitement médical souffrira plus qu'un homme parce qu'il ne saisit pas le caractère temporaire et la bienfaisance d'un tel emprisonnement.

Cette logique de fer mène Singer vers des conséquences qui s'opposent entièrement à notre émotivité. Imaginons que nous devons choisir entre un chimpanzé adulte sain et un nouveau-né humain : nous serions obligés d'opter pour l'animal. Des exemples ainsi exacerbés font que Singer est en philosophie (allemande surtout) manifestement tabouisé et diabolisé, et pour certains, il est le diable même. Mais il est plus que probable que les sentiments programmés par l'évolution pour la survie biologique ne sont pas en éthique les conseillers forcément le plus appropriés. Il faut compter aussi sur la raison, même si elle est d'une certaine façon discréditée. Or, dit Singer, " la libération des animaux est en même temps la libération des hommes." Ibid p. 16.

Je ne peux pas cacher qu'il y a un grave problème dans la conception de Singer. Il est quasiment impossible de déterminer avec une certitude unanime quels êtres appartiennent à quelle catégorie. Comme le montre la philosophie de l'esprit (le test de Turing notamment), aucune investigation ne peut nous dire si à l'intérieur d'une coquille ou bien derrière l'écran clignotant d'un ordinateur ne se trouve pas quelqu'un avec des intérêts, quelqu'un qui puisse souffrir. Il peut se comporter comme les ayant, mais cela peut-il vraiment nous aider ?

En 1986 le gouvernement britannique a complété les lois visant à protéger les animaux contre les expérimentations, en ajoutant la pieuvre à la liste de ceux qui ne doivent pas être opérés sans recours à l'anesthésie. (Cf. D. Dennet, *Druhy myslí*, Bratislava 1997) La pieuvre est un mollusque, de point de vue physiologique

On pourrait volontairement élargir les exemples qui démontreraient plus ou moins dramatiquement comment l'homme est limité dans ses désirs éthiques et dans ses besoins humains par la sujétion au biologique, comme la sujétion au biologique l'empêche d'atteindre les buts qu'il vise et dans lesquels il voit le niveau réellement humain. Le niveau auquel l'homme désire s'élever est la vie en l'amour Agapé qui permet d'éviter de causer de la souffrance à toute créature sensible. Mais il est clair que l'exigence de l'amour Agapé est pour l'homme biologique trop forte et irréalisable bien qu'elle rendrait toute éthique inutile.

Nous avons découvert l'existence de l'amour Agapé non grâce aux évangiles mais grâce à l'essor de l'intellect qui nous a permis d'entrer dans le monde intellectuel – le monde trois de Karl Popper. L'intellect commence là où le biologique finit (bien qu'il en émerge). L'intellect introduit dans l'univers le problème et la question des valeurs. Il cherche et crée les valeurs et détruit ainsi l'espace d'évidence.

Grâce à nos capacités cognitives nous sommes capables de nous rendre compte que le mécanisme d'évolution qui nous a créé peut, d'un certain point de vu, être conçu comme un processus mauvais ou au moins indifférent. Il n'en résulte en aucun cas une obligation morale ou des valeurs que nous devrions accepter. Thomas Henry Huxley, le bouledogue de Darwin, l'a compris en 1893. Dans sa fameuse conférence intitulée *Evolution et éthique*, il s'est farouchement opposé au darwinisme social de cette époque : « *Die kosmische Evolution kann uns lehren, wie die guten und bösen Neigungen des Menschen entstanden sind; aber an sich ist sie ganz ausserstande, uns eine bessere Begründung als wir zuvor hatten, zu liefern, warum, was wir gut nennen, dem, was wir böse nennen, vorzuziehen ist. ... Wie schon bemerkt, schliesst die Ausübung des ethisch Besten – was wir als Güte oder Tugend bezeichnen – eine Wiese des Verhaltens ein, die nach jeder Richtung hin das Gegenteil von dem ist, was im kosmischen Kampf ums Dasein zum Erfolg führt. ... Wen jedoch das wahr ist, was ich ausgeführt habe, wenn nämlich der kosmische Prozess keinerlei Beziehung zu moralischen Zielen hat, und wenn seine Nachahmung durch den Menschen mit den ersten Grundsätzen der Ethik unvereinbar ist, was wird dann aus dieser überraschenden Theorie? Wir müssen es als ein für allemal ausgemacht betrachten, dass der ethische Fortschritt der Gesellschaft nicht von dem Nachahmen des kosmischen Prozesses und noch weniger von der Flucht davor zu erwarten ist, sondern von dem Kampfe gegen ihn.* »¹⁷

George Williams, le père spirituel du néo-darwinisme, a confirmé les mots de Huxley : « La mère nature est une maudite vieille sorcière. La sélection naturelle est vraiment aussi mauvaise

beaucoup plus proche d'une huître que d'une truite, sans parler d'un mammifère, mais son comportement est tellement intelligent et apparemment sensible que des autorités scientifiques ont décidé que les ressemblances comportementales dépassent les différences anatomiques : les céphalopodes, mais pas d'autres mollusques, sont officiellement estimés sensibles.

Les singes makak rhesus nous sont au contraire physiologiquement très proches, aussi avons-nous tendance à supposer qu'ils souffrent de la même manière que nous. Mais ces macaques combattent souvent tellement furieusement au cours d'accouplement, qu'il n'est pas rare de voir comme l'un fait tomber l'autre et lui tranche un de ses testicules en le rongant. Le singe blessé ne crie pas et ne tord pas même la bouche, lèche la plaie et repart. Un ou deux jours plus tard, il s'accouple de nouveau.

Nous ne pouvons donc tout simplement pas espérer que l'évidence physiologique et comportementale rejoignent notre satisfaction et nous procurent des réponses sans équivoques. Puisqu'on ne peut pas, pour l'instant, déterminer quels êtres sont sensibles et donc sujets de nos jugements éthiques, il serait mieux de suivre provisoirement la règle faillible et d'englober dans la classe des êtres sensibles plus d'individus qu'il aurait fallu. Mais cette règle, quoique éthiquement correcte, est tout à fait contre la notion de survie et, en la suivant, nous mourrions bientôt de faim. Il ne nous reste alors plus qu'à nous confier au bon sens et à l'évidence comportementale.

¹⁷ T. H. Huxley, „Evolution und Ethik“, in: K. Bayertz (ed.), *Evolution und Ethik*, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 67–74.

qu'elle en a l'air comme l'a affirmé Huxley. C'est pourquoi nous ne devons ni l'accepter ni la fuir, mais l'affronter. »¹⁸

Grâce à notre capacité de connaître, nous sommes amenés à la frontière de la liberté – au stade où nous gagnons la connaissance de notre servitude et de notre assujettissement. Mais c'est le premier pas vers la libération, vers la révolution, vers le renversement de l'ordre esclavagiste. Dammons les savants qui veulent nous faire croire que nous sommes les forçats de la nature, que nous ne pourrions jamais nous élever au dessus du biologique parce que nous perdriions toute humanité. Ceux qui font l'apologie de la servitude affirment qu'avec le biologique nous serions obligés d'abandonner la fleur la plus belle – l'amour. Mais ce que nous appelons l'amour, n'est-ce pas l'ombre malheureux de l'amour qui miroite dans la glace de notre désir, de notre idéal de l'amour, de l'amour *Agapé* ?¹⁹

Je crois qu'une nouvelle qualité évolutive de l'univers sera imposée et affirmée au moment quand le biologique sera extrinsèque à l'intellectuel. L'accomplissement de l'humanité de l'homme doit être en même temps la négation et transgression de l'homme comme la partie du biologique. Il ne nous suffit pas d'être des hommes, nous rêvons d'être humains.

Au XXIème siècle nous commençons à nous rendre compte que nous pouvons plus que bien penser, comme estimait Pascal. La science avec ses biotechnologies nous donne un bouclier puissant contre la nécessité naturelle de jadis. Nous ne devons plus systématiquement nous plier sous le joug des lois biologiques – la sélection naturelle condamnant faibles et mal-adaptés. Nous ne devons plus entièrement et passivement obéir aux règles qui nous sont imposées par notre héritage biologique. Car elles ne servent pas sans condition la vie de l'homme ; elles ne se soucient pas de lui – ce ne sont que des mécanismes et des principes aveugles quoique très sophistiqués. Le temps est venu où nous pouvons nous révolter contre ces lois « naturelles ». Nous pouvons essayer de les changer... et nous changer nous-mêmes en même temps.

¹⁸ Cité de: L. Watson, *Temné síly přírody*, Olomouc 1996, p. 217.

¹⁹ Je ne veux pas uniquement « cracher » sur la nature, car ce ne serait pas juste. Seul un homme insensé se plaindrait de sa pauvre mère inculte qui lui a donné la vie mais sans tout ce que son coeur désire. Seul un homme aveuglé et plein d'amertume ne verrait pas que la nature, créant l'homme tel qu'il est, lui a donné la possibilité de travailler pour l'accomplissement de ses vœux.

¹¹ faut être reconnaissant : pour la possibilité qu'il nous est donné de vivre, pour la possibilité de décider, parce que la nature nous a offert, à côté des peines, les maintes joies dont nous pouvons jouir, parce qu'elle a permis que nous comprenions que certaines formes de comportements sont meilleures que d'autres, parce qu'elle est belle et qu'elle nous a doué de la capacité d'admirer sa beauté...

^{1e} n'ai pas beaucoup développé cet aspect du biologique. Je me suis concentré sur les phénomènes qui sont, du point de vue de l'homme, négatifs, et sur les réalités naturelles auxquelles nous aimerions échapper. J'ai voulu montrer que les processus créatifs naturels, quoique nous ne comprenions pas toujours entièrement leurs mécanismes, portent des conséquences qui sont parfois néfastes pour l'humanité.

François Jacob parle du bricolage de l'évolution. Nos douleurs de dos, qui ont un rapport avec une mauvaise construction de notre colonne vertébrale, sont l'exemple banal de ce bricolage. La colonne vertébrale a beaucoup changé au cours de l'évolution de l'homme. Tandis que la majorité des vertébrés marche à quatre pattes et s'appuie donc sur quatre membres, l'homme, qui s'est dressé debout, a extrêmement appesanti cet organe. La conséquence directe en est que la colonne vertébrale de l'homme est rapidement usée et facilement détériorée. L'affection des disques intervertébraux précoce et l'oppression des nerfs qui en résultent font partie des maladies neurologiques les plus fréquentes et les plus douloureuses. Ces peines sont l'impôt que la majorité de nous paie, malgré soi, et avec des pleurs et des grincements de dents, pour la tenue verticale de notre corps. (S. Káš, *Neurologie*, Praha 1993, p. 117).

Nous commençons à être capables de maîtriser trois grands domaines de nos existences : la reproduction, l'hérédité et le système nerveux.²⁰ L'homme peut changer lui-même par les manipulations génétiques, par les neuromanipulations et finalement par une cyborgisation de son propre corps.

L'exemple de la transgression : les neuromanipulations

En dehors de la possibilité de dominer la reproduction et l'hérédité, existe la possibilité de maîtriser notre système nerveux. Les neurosciences sont aujourd'hui en plein essor. La médecine change et guérit. Il est ainsi possible, au moins en théorie, de modifier et de guérir le cerveau humain.²¹

Dans tous les cas nous sommes capables de causer les modifications de l'esprit qui concernent non seulement la capacité de l'organisme d'atteindre ses buts mais qui altèrent les buts mêmes et les motivations du sujet. Ce phénomène serait à peine intelligible si nous imaginions que l'esprit est pour l'organisme ce que le chauffeur est pour sa voiture. L'endommagement de la voiture peut causer l'incapacité du chauffeur à atteindre son but mais sa capacité à générer les buts n'est pas changée.

La relation cerveau-esprit devrait être comparé plutôt à la relation de l'encre et du papier. Si on veut modifier le contenu du texte il faut impérativement changer la distribution de l'encre sur le papier – et vice versa. La possibilité de manipulations physiques de l'esprit humain départ de la supposition que l'esprit est tellement lié à son substratum matériel que la destruction ou bien la stimulation des parties de ce substratum cause non seulement des changements dans le comportement mais aussi des changements de l'expérience propre du sujet.

Les neuromanipulations ne sont pas l'affaire d'aujourd'hui. Les politiciens, les soldats, les caïds religieux et les éducateurs se sont toujours efforcés de manipuler l'esprit humain. Mais la connaissance des mécanismes et principes du fonctionnement du cerveau élargit radicalement le rayon de ces actions. En mieux mais aussi en pire. Et il faut impérativement réfléchir à ces changements. Ce n'est pas par hasard que les éditeurs de la revue Scientific American ont voué en 2003 un numéro spécial à une discipline naissante : la neuroéthique.

On discute des possibilités d'amélioration du cerveau par psychochirurgie, neurotransplantations, neuroimplantations, neurostimulations, neurogénérations, psychopharmacologie ou bien psychomanipulations.²²

Il en est ainsi par exemple de la possibilité de l'interconnection du système nerveux et de la cybernétique. Au cours d'une expérimentation les chercheurs ont implanté dans le cortex moteur et le thalamus ventrolatéral d'un rat les électrodes qui enregistraient la commande des mouvements de sa patte antérieure. Le rat avait appris dans la cage de Skinner à pousser le bouton manipulant le bras robotique avec la source de l'eau. Au moment où les chercheurs ont trouvé le

²⁰ J. Bernard, *De la biologie à l'éthique*, Paris 1990.

²¹ Cet espoir renforce le fait que la douve banal d'espèce *Dicrocoelium dendriticum* le réussit aussi. Le cycle vital de cette planaire parasitique passe par trois hôtes : brebis, gastéropode et fourmi. Le cycle commence dans le gastéropode dans lequel la douve se peuple en 50 cercaries qui sont en forme d'une boule gluante expulsées du système respiratoire de l'animal. Ensuite la boule, qui se colle sur l'herbe, est dévoré par la fourmi dans le corps de laquelle la douve se différencie en d'autre type de la larve – métacercarie. Une de ces larves pénètre dans le ganglion cérébral de la fourmi où elle reprogramme de façon bizarre le comportement de son hôte. La fourmi parasitée monte pendant les journées au sommet de l'herbe où elle s'accroche et elle attend jusqu'à ce qu' une brebis – l'hôte définitive de la douve – la mange. A midi la fourmi se cache dans l'ombre pour ne pas dessécher et la nuit elle rentre dans son fourmilière. J. Flegr, *Mechanismy mikroevoluce*, Praha 1994, p. 31.

²² M. Petrů, *Možnosti transgrese. Je třeba vylepšovat člověka?*, Praha 2005, chap. *Neuromanipulace*.

code cérébral permettant de prévoir les mouvements du bras robotique en fonction de l'activité nerveuse du rat, ils ont retiré le bouton et ils ont laissé le rat commander le bras seulement par les signaux de son cerveau par l'intermédiaire d'un ordinateur, qui les capturerait. Le rat assoiffé a vraiment très vite appris à commander le bras robotique de façon « télépathique ».²³

Les médecins réussissent depuis longtemps à traiter un cerveau malade et un esprit aliéné. Mais n'est-il pas possible d'améliorer un esprit sain ? Oui, certainement ! Martha Farah du *Centre des neurosciences cognitives de l'Université de Pensylvanie* résume dans son article *Emerging ethical issues in neuroscience* publié dans la prestigieuse revue *Nature Neurosciences* en 2002 les possibilités d'amélioration du cerveau sain par les méthodes psychopharmacéutiques par ces mots : « L'amélioration (enhancement) n'est plus une possibilité théorique. L'amélioration de l'humeur, de la cognition et des fonctions végétatives des gens sains est dorénavant une réalité de la vie quotidienne et la seule incertitude consiste dans la vitesse qui apportera les méthodes d'amélioration plus nouvelles, plus efficaces et plus attrayantes et combien d'utilisateurs potentiels cela attirera. »²⁴

Quand cette nouvelle se répandra, beaucoup de gens vont certainement se demander, analogiquement au philosophe américain Arthur Caplan : Devons-nous profiter de notre connaissance du cerveau pour nous améliorer nous-mêmes et nos enfants ? Et il répond carrément : Oui, nous le devons !²⁵

Alors une question essentielle se pose : en vertu de quels principes défendre aux gens sains d'essayer de manipuler et d'améliorer leur propre système nerveux ? Existe-il une différence fondamentale entre le traitement d'un cerveau malade et l'amélioration d'un cerveau sain ? Qu'est ce que le normal et le pathologique ?

L'époque où on pourra efficacement avec la connaissance de toutes les conséquences possibles améliorer l'esprit et le système nerveux des gens en bonne santé est certainement très loin. Mais je ne doute pas que ce temps viendra. Il faut être préparé. Par le mot de Jean Rostand : « La question n'est donc pas aujourd'hui de savoir et de pouvoir, elle serait de vouloir et d'oser. »²⁶ Et le même auteur ajoute : „ Sous la baguette magique de la biologie, voici que l'homme devient peu à peu tout autre qu'il n'était. Voici qu'il se change en une bête nouvelle et paradoxale, inconnue des nomenclateurs, ayant une physiologie spéciale et bigarrée, empruntant ses traits aux familles animales les plus hétéroclites. Voici que l'*Homo sapiens* est en voie de devenir un *Homo biologicus* étrange bipède qui cumulera les propriétés de se reproduire sans mâle comme les pucerons, de féconder sa femelle à distance comme les mollusques Nautiles, de changer de sexe comme les poissons Xiphophores, de se bouturer comme le ver de terre, de remplacer ses parties manquantes comme le triton, de se développer en dehors du corps maternel comme le kangourou, de se mettre en état d'hibernation comme le hérisson... “

Thérapie ou amélioration ?

Si je peux me permettre de présenter une thèse fort provocatrice, la voilà : J'affirme non seulement que nous pouvons nous changer nous-mêmes (dans le moral et effectif sens du mot) mais nous sommes même moralement forcés de changer notre nature biologique, c'est-à-dire d'essayer d'échapper aux limites biologiques, qui nous empêchent de réaliser les idéaux que notre civilisation a postulés. Si nous voulons rester humains nous n'avons d'autre possibilité que de

²³ E. Kelemen, “Možnosti prepojenia nervového a elektronického systému”, *Vesmír* 82 (2003), pp. 452–454.

²⁴ M. J. Farah, “Emerging ethical issues in neuroscience”, *Nature Neuroscience* 5/11 (2002), pp. 1123–1129.

²⁵ A. Caplan, “No-Brainer: Can We Cope with the Ethical Ramifications of New Knowledge of the Human Brain?”, in: Marcus, S., J. (ed.), *Neuroethics, Mapping The Field*, San Francisco 2002, pp. 95–106.

²⁶ J. Rostand, *Confidences d'un biologiste*, Paris 1987, p. 98.

nous efforcer de changer cette partie de notre nature qui nous oblige à causer les souffrances aux autres êtres sensibles.

S'il est vrai qu'il existe des valeurs que nous postulons ou découvrons mais qui sont incompatibles avec notre nature biologique ou irréalisables sur la base biologique, alors nous avons seulement deux possibilités : soit nous renonçons à ces valeurs avec la devise « ce qui est irréalisable n'est pas obligeant », ou bien nous nous efforçons au contraire par tous les moyens de nous libérer de la nécessité naturelle qui nous est imposée.

Si je me demande s'il faut modifier l'homme, il est toujours nécessaire de concrétiser la question. Est-il possible de débarrasser l'homme de ses douleurs de dos ? Est-ce possible techniquement ? Et le respect de la nature ne nous empêche-t-il pas de réparer ses créations ? Ne dépassons-nous pas un tabou qu'il ne faut pas transgresser ? Si les grandes questions éthiques sont ainsi concrétisées, leur solution ne devrait pas rester impossible. La question éthique est essentiellement une question de santé.

Je rappelle la définition de la santé la plus connue : *“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity.”*²⁷ Mais si la santé est définie comme « un état complet de bien-être physique, psychique et social », elle reste, pour la majorité écrasante des gens tout à fait hors d'atteinte. Est d'accord avec ce point de vue le doyen de la psychiatrie tchèque Vladimir Vondracek qui dit : « Il y a plus de malades que de gens sains. »²⁸ Et dans un sens nous sommes tous malades.

Tant que la demande de thérapie des affections biologiques existera, aucun interdit, aucune condamnation, ne pourra à long terme prévenir des tentatives thérapeutiques, même les plus risquées. Car il n'y a pas de frontière distincte entre les expériences folles tentant de dépasser le corps lui-même et les dépannages conservatoires des infirmités. Lorsqu'on accepte les seconds, on n'a aucune raison d'éviter les premières. Restituer la vue d'un aveugle à 50 % ? Mais pourquoi pas à 115 % – c'est-à-dire pour qu'il puisse voir mieux qu'avant l'accident ? Et qui ne désirerait pas prolonger sa vie ? Et qui ne voudrait pas améliorer les capacités de sa mémoire ? Et caetera, et caetera...

La thèse que je veux défendre ici est : de même que la différence entre liberté positive et liberté négative est inadéquate, il n'existe pas non plus de différence intérieure entre la thérapie et l'amélioration. « Existe-il une frontière naturelle au delà de laquelle notre nature serait clairement corrompue et entachée par le changement ? » demande Arthur Caplan et répond immédiatement. « Certainement pas. C'est l'essence de l'humanité d'essayer de s'améliorer soi-même et le monde. »²⁹

Certains se demandent ce qu'il adviendra de l'homme après la venue d'un surhomme. Je réponds : il se passera la même chose que ce qui s'est passé avec l'*homo habilis* et l'*homo erectus* après l'arrivée de l'*homo sapiens*. Rien. L'*Homo habilis* s'est transformé lui-même en *homo erectus* et celui-ci à son tour en *homo sapiens*. De la même façon, l'*homo sapiens* quitte doucement la scène. « D'ailleurs, écrit Axel Kahn, depuis que l'homme est apparu sur terre, il y a environ deux

²⁷ Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948. <http://www.who.int/about/definition/en/>.

²⁸ V. Vondráček, *Úvahy psychologicko-psychiatrické*, Praha 1975, p. 21.

²⁹ A. Caplan, “Is better best?”, *Scientific American*, 389/3, (2003), p. 85.

millions d'années, son histoire est faite d'une succession de transgressions, d'un franchissement continu des limites auparavant imposées à sa pensée et à son action. »³⁰

Si nous avons peur de la fin de l'homme, nous devons d'abord définir ce que l'homme est, et du fin de qui l'on parle. L'homme est-il un agrégat de molécules ou une structure anatomique concrète, un sac de cellules ? Ou devient-on homme par des idées et des valeurs ? La différence est énorme. Car si l'homme est un être « spirituel » plutôt que « matériel », il n'est pas nécessaire de voir dans le substratum matériel de l'homme quelque chose de sacré qui ne se prêterait pas à manipulation. Le sacré est ce que l'on définit comme tel. Et je crois que ce sont davantage des qualités spirituelles plutôt que des qualités biologiques. L'homme n'est pas humain à cause de son corps, mais à cause de son esprit. Et si on ne peut amplifier la spiritualité humaine qu'à travers les modifications du substratum biologique de l'homme, on doit y réfléchir, sinon l'accepter. Et si nous savons que beaucoup d'états mentaux sont étroitement liés au substrat biologique, au cerveau, on sait que l'amplification de la sphère spirituelle n'aura pas lieu sans une transformation du biologique.

Je répète : si l'humanité est définie par la spiritualité plutôt que par la corporéité, si les valeurs et les idées, que l'homme accepte, sont sacrées, et non le substratum biologique et si ces valeurs entrent en conflit avec les principes biologiques, ou si à cause du substratum biologique elles ne peuvent être réalisées ou amplifiées, il faut alors au moins réfléchir sur la possibilité d'améliorer l'homme biologique.

Où il y a la volonté, il y a le chemin

La peur et l'inquiétude des conséquences imprévues et imprévisibles – tout à fait légitimes d'ailleurs – est une autre chose. Comme dit Zarathoustra : „Der Mensch ist ein Seil, geknüpft zwischen Thier und Übermensch, – ein Seil über einem Abgrunde. Ein gefährliches Hinüber, ein gefährliches Auf-dem-Wege, ein gefährliches Zurückblicken, ein gefährliches Schaudern und Stehenbleiben.“³¹ „Le véritable danger des nouvelles technologies n'est pas qu'elle parviennent à transformer le monde conformément à leur projet, mais qu'elles conduisent à le modifier de façon imprévue et irréversible », ajoute Jacques Testart.³² Le principe des conséquences imprévisibles du comportement et le principe de la rationalité limitée sont ici pleinement valables. Nous n'arrivons pas à imaginer toutes les variantes et toutes les possibilités. Nous ne pouvons que les approcher asymptotiquement.

La prudence doit devenir l'éthique de la transgression.³³ Il faut être vraiment circonspect car l'avertissement de Jean Hamburger est certainement bien fondé : „L'évolution des êtres vivants est fondée sur la sélection naturelle, victoire des êtres forts et féconds aux dépens des êtres faibles et stériles, l'homme cherche l'égalité des chances et la défense des faibles. Révolte audacieuse et magnifique, mais difficile et hasardeuse, car on ne viole pas impunément les lois qui règnent efficacement sur le monde vivant depuis des milliards d'années.“³⁴ Aucune connaissance théorique, aucune innovation, ne peut être détachée du contexte socioculturel contemporain. En cherchant comment elles pourraient être exploitées pratiquement, il faut compter avec l'homme réel – qui n'est pas un ange. Si on veut rendre publique la découverte de la dynamite, on doit prévoir qu'elle

³⁰ A. Kahn, „L'Homme et la maîtrise du vivant”, in: T. Ferenczi (ed.), *Changer la vie?*, Paris 2001, p. 47.

³¹ F. Nietzsche, *Tak pravil Zarathoustra*, Olomouc 1992, p. 11 ; <http://www.uni-potsdam.de/u/philosophie/texte/nietzsch/also.htm>.

³² J. Testart, „Technoscience: Le déficit démocratique”, in: T. Ferenczi (ed.), *Changer la vie?*, Paris 2001, p. 21.

³³ Cf. B. Debré, *La grande transgression*, Paris 2000, p. 153.

³⁴ J. Hamburger, *L'aventure humaine*, Paris 1992, p. 125.

sera tôt ou tard utilisée non seulement pour briser les roches mais aussi pour briser de jeunes enfants. C'est pourquoi il est nécessaire d'essayer de juger, en prenant en considération tous les points positifs et négatifs, de l'existence d'un espoir réel que le monde considéré comme un tout sera, avec une nouvelle technologie, un peu meilleur, ou la vie un peu plus supportable.

Mais la prudence n'est pas l'inactivité. L'impact d'une innovation et de son influence sur la structure sociale ne peut finalement être jugé qu'à posteriori, par l'expérience. L'expérimentation sociale, malheureusement risquée et parfois sanglante, mais le plus souvent bienfaisante, est absolument irremplaçable. Il faut à tout prix entretenir en société un mécanisme qui arriverait à prévenir des éventuels excès. La société ouverte dispose heureusement, du moins semble-t-il, d'un tel mécanisme.

Je crois qu'il n'existe d'autres limites que celles dont nous tracerons nous-mêmes. Pour terminer, j'aimerais citer Hermann Buhl, l'alpiniste, qui le premier a maté Nanga Parbat, malgré l'interdiction du chef d'expédition, et qui fut obligé au cours de la descente de bivaquer debout dans une zone mortelle, tout seul, et qui disait sur un petit balcon: Où il y a la volonté, il y a le chemin !

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Eternity in Plotinus

Abstract | In *Ennead* III.7 Plotinus defines eternity (*aiōn*) as the life of the Intellect, contrasted with time (*chronos*) as the life of the Soul. The aim of this paper is to highlight the philosophical importance of the notion of eternity in Plotinus and explore its philosophical background. It is argued that the association of *aiōn* with the notion of life in *Ennead* III.7 is significant for the history of ancient Greek philosophy.

.....

I

Ennead III.7 [45] includes Plotinus' main philosophical discussion on the nature of eternity (*aiōn*) and time (*chronos*).¹ The aim of the treatise is twofold: firstly, to justify the timelessness of eternity in non-durational terms, and secondly, to identify time as the intelligible life of the Soul. Plotinus criticizes Aristotle's theory of time as "number of motion"² (*Physics* IV.10-14.217b-224a) and refutes the Pythagorean, Stoic and Epicurean notions of time.³ For Plotinus, *chronos*⁴ is related to the intelligible life of the Soul; time should be regarded as distinct from physical motion or bodily change, not described by a property or a quantifying measure of the corporeal world. Plotinus' criticism is based on two major arguments: firstly, since motion occurs in time, time cannot be identified with something occurring in it (*Ennead* III.7.8.45-47); secondly, motion can stop or be interrupted but time cannot (*Ennead* III.7.8.6-8). Plotinus follows Plato's metaphysics of the Forms with his renowned definition of time as the "moving image of eternity" (*Timaeus* 37c-38d).⁵ In this paper I shall argue that the association of eternity with the notion

¹ Plotinus' concept of eternity is also discussed in *Enneads* I.5.7.15 ff., II.5.3.8 ff., IV.1.6, IV.3.25.15, IV.4.1.12 ff., IV.4.15.2 ff., V.1.4.17-18, VI.2.21.54, VI.5.11.16 ff., VI.6.18.36 ff.

² For Aristotle's theory of time see D. Bolotin, "Aristotle's Discussion of Time", *Ancient Philosophy* 14 (1997) 47-62; M. J. White, "Aristotle on 'time' and 'a time'", *Apeiron* 22 (1989) 207-224; D. Bostock, "Aristotle's Account of Time", *Phronesis* 25 (1980) 148-169; J. Annas, "Aristotle, Number and Time", *Philosophical Quarterly* 25 (1975) 97-113; J. Hintikka, "Necessity, Universality and Time in Aristotle", *Ajatus* 20 (1957) 65-90.

³ Aristotle's theory is assessed and refuted by Plotinus in *Ennead* II.7 chapter 9, while the Pythagorean, Stoic and Epicurean accounts are rejected in chapters 8 and 10.

⁴ Over the last few decades a number of profound studies have appeared on the study of Plotinian time: A. Smith, "Eternity and Time", in: L. P. Gerson (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, Cambridge 1996, pp.196-216; A. Smith, "Soul and time in Plotinus", in: Von. J. Holzhausen (ed.) *Psukhe - Seele - anima: Festschrift für Karin Alt zum 7. Mai 1998*, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 355-344; S. Strange, "Plotinus on the nature of eternity and time", in: *Aristotle in Late Antiquity: Studies in philosophy and the history of philosophy*, Washington D. C. 1994, pp. 22-53; P. Manchester, "Time and Soul in Plotinus III, 7 [45], 11", *Dionysius* 2 (1969) 101-136; W. Beierwaltes, *Plotin über Ewigkeit und Zeit*, Frankfurt a. M 1967; H. Jonas, "Plotin über Ewigkeit und Zeit", in: A. Dempf and H. Arendt (eds.) *Politische Ordnung und Menschliches Existenz*, München 1962, pp. 295-31 - but far fewer on his notion of eternity; see A. H. Armstrong, "Eternity, Life and Movement in Plotinus' Accounts of *Nous*", in: *Plotinian and Christian Studies* London 1979, pp. 67-74; D. V. Nikulin, "Plotinus on Eternity", in: A. Neschke-Hentschke (ed.) *Le Timée de Platon. Contributions à l'histoire de sa réception*, Paris/Louvain 2000, pp. 15-38.

⁵ See *Ennead* III.7.10.12 ff. For Plato's theory of time: O. Goldin, "Plato and the Arrow of Time", *Ancient Philosophy* 18 (1998) 125-143; J. M. Robinson, "The *Timaeus* on types of duration", *Illinois Classical Studies*

of life in Plotinus' *Ennead* III.7 signifies the continuity of the notion of *aiōn* in ancient Greek philosophical thought.⁶

II

Ennead III.7 is important in the history of philosophy for two main reasons: firstly, its exposition of certain ancient theories of eternity and time such as the early Pythagoreans, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics and Epicureans⁷, and, secondly, its influence in later philosophical and theological traditions of Islam, Byzantium and the Latin West.⁸ Plotinus is aware that many earlier philosophers had worked at length on the concepts of eternity and time. As he puts it in the first chapter of the treatise, "some of the great philosophers of ancient times have found out the truth; but it is proper to investigate which of them has attained it most completely, and how we in our turn could reach an understanding about these things" (1.13-16). Plotinus' philosophical methodology on his sources is actually based upon his dialectics, influenced by Aristotle's methodology in the *Topics* (101a35-b4), the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1145b6-8) and the *Metaphysics* (995a28-31).⁹

However, it has to be noted, that despite the fact that Plotinus' philosophical method of inquiry follows Aristotle's dialectic methodology, Plotinus' treatment of the ancient sources varies to a great extent.¹⁰ Plotinus' criticism of the ancients does not aim at analyzing in detail the inappropriateness of the preceding theories, as Aristotle usually practiced, but mainly to stress the continuity of ancient thought. Moreover, Plotinus offers brief and general accounts of ancient theories, while Aristotle usually provides us with literal and lengthy accounts of his predecessors. Plotinus' approach towards the ancients is positive most of the times in contrast to Aristotle's, and sometimes Plato's, disapproving attitude.

11: (1986) 134–151; R. D. Mohr, "Plato on time and eternity", *Ancient Philosophy* 6 (1986) 39–46. See also the commentary of V. Kalfas, *Plato's Timaeus*, Athens 1995.

⁶ An earlier version of this position was supported in 'The Presocratic Origins of Plotinus' Theory of Eternity', a paper presented at the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies Annual Meeting, *Philosophy, Spirituality, and Art in the Neoplatonic Tradition* held at Liverpool on 24–27 June 2004 (Sponsored by The University of Liverpool, The Leverhulme Trust, and The British Academy). For a general account about eternity and time in Plotinus and the Presocratics see my monograph G. Stamatellos, *Plotinus and the Presocratics*, SUNY Press 2007, chapter 4.

⁷ See A. H. Armstrong, *Plotinus*, Cambridge, Mass. 1966–1988, vol. III, p. 293. Armstrong comments that Plotinus' *Ennead* III.7 and Aristotle's theory of time in *Physics* IV are the two main surviving accounts of time in ancient Greek philosophy. However, Armstrong excludes Alexander Aphrodisias' short treatise *On Time*, Simplicius' corollary on time in *Physica* 773.8-800.21, Proclus' influential work *On the Eternity of the World* and Philoponus' refutation of Proclus' work which became a model for the controversy between Pagans and Christians about the eternity of the world and the existence of God. For some ancient theories of time see R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum: Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, London 1983.

⁸ See R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum: Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Ithaca/New York 1983, ch.11; J. E. McGuire – S. K. Strange "An annotated translation of Plotinus *Ennead* III.7: *On eternity and time*", *Ancient Philosophy* 8 (1988), p. 251; R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, London 1995², p. 167 ff.

⁹ S. Strange, "Plotinus on the nature of eternity and time", pp. 23–24, points out the difference between Aristotle's dialectic methodology in the abovementioned works and the non-dialectical notion of demonstration in the *Analytics*. For Strange, Plotinus' proper philosophical method could be regarded as a 'dialectical method of philosophy' with a three-fold structure: (1) stating the arguments (the positions of the many); (2) analysis and evaluation of the arguments (agreements and disagreements); (3) resolving the arguments (minimizing contradictions in one position).

¹⁰ According to S. Strange, "Plotinus on the nature of eternity and time", pp. 24–25, Plotinus recognized in Aristotle's methodology a Platonic practice followed in the Academy and thus Aristotle's methodology in some manner reflects Plato's dialectics.

Particularly in *Ennead* III.7, Plotinus' intention, before establishing his own interpretation of eternity and time, is to assess the value and relevance of earlier accounts of his predecessors (7.10-17) as well as to follow a philosophical inquiry rather than a historical presentation of preceding theories (10.9-12). Nevertheless, even though a historico-philosophical approach contradicts Plotinus' deliberate ahistorical intentions (*Ennead* III.7.10.9-12), a historico-philosophical analysis of the *Enneadic aiōn* enlightens the notion of eternity both in preceding and later philosophical traditions. For instance, Plotinus' association of eternity with the timeless life of the intelligible realm is echoed by Plutarch's *De E apud Delphos* 393ab, while the definition of time as the life of the Soul is reflected in Plutarch's *Platonic Questions* 1007bc and Chalcidius' treatise *In Timaeum* (ch. 101). Plotinus' theory of eternity and time also parallels with Philo's definition of eternity as the "life of the intelligible world" contrasted to the definition of time as the "life of the sensible world" (*De mutatione nominum* 267).¹¹ Moreover, Plotinus' theory of eternity and time influences later Neoplatonists, early Christian and Medieval thinkers. For instance, Boethius' definition of eternity in *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (V. Prosa 6) as *interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio* echoes Plotinus' definition of *aiōn* as the life of the intelligible world and Augustine's three modes of durational consciousness in the *Confessions* follows Plotinus' psychological perception of time (XI 14-28).¹²

After Augustine, any modern treatment of time as psychological reality should be traced back to Plotinus' theory of time in *Ennead* III.7; such as Bergson's *durée* and the continuous flow of evolving consciousness (*Time and Free Will* 197–227)¹³; Heidegger's *ectases* of temporality (*Being and Time* 328)¹⁴; Deleuze's concept of the 'virtual' as eternal share of being¹⁵. Plotinus' theory is even present in Jorge Luis Borges' reference to the *Enneads* in the opening lines of his treatise 'A History of Eternity': "The passage of the *Enneads* which seeks to question and define the nature of time states that a prior acquaintance with eternity is indispensable since – as everyone knows – eternity is the model and archetype of time"; in his text, Borges is aware that Plotinus' conception of eternity and time originates from Plato's *Timaeus* and the 'Eleatic refutation of movement' (124).¹⁶

¹¹ See J. E. McGuire – S. K. Strange "An annotated translation of Plotinus *Ennead* III.7: *On eternity and time*", p. 265, n. 1; see also R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p. 138.

¹² Augustine's doctrine of time in the eleventh book of the *Confessions* is an *intentio animi* towards God; whereas *time* involves successive duration, a passing from one thing to another, *eternity* belongs to God's complete and simultaneous existence (XI 11-13). While God's reality is undivided and inseparable in past, present and future, human reality is divided and separated in the tenses of time: past, present and future are discrete and divisible realities. For Augustine, anticipating Plotinus' psychological treatment of time, the tenses of time are three modes of durational consciousness in the present: 'the present time of past things is our *memory*, the present time for present things is our *sight*; the present time of future things is our *expectation*' (XI 20); See J. S. Hill, *Infinity, Faith and Time: Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature*, Quebec 1997, p. 78 ff.

¹³ For Plotinus and Bergson cf. R. Mossé-Bastide, *Bergson et Plotin*, Paris 1959. For Bergson, *durée* is the coincidence of the *currently experienced present* and a *remembered past* in which every new moment is carried with the whole of its past in an all-embracing memory. Bergson was influenced in his theory of time not only by Plotinus but also by Plato, Aristotle and modern philosophers such as Spinoza, Leibniz and Kant; see also J. S. Hill, *Infinity, Faith and Time*, pp. 83–87.

¹⁴ On the concept of time in Heidegger and Plotinus see E. Brann, *What, then, is time?*, Lanham 2001, ch. 3.

¹⁵ For Deleuze's concept of the *virtual* and its connection to Plotinus, Hegel and Bergson see K. A. Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life*, London 2001, p. 97 ff.

¹⁶ The influence of Plotinus on Borges has been overlooked by modern scholarship. Borges is also influenced by Heraclitus' fragment 91: in 'A New Refutation of Time' (1944–47), Borges recalls Heraclitus '...each time I recall fragment 91 of Heraclitus, I admire his dialectical skill, for the facility with which we accept the first meaning ("The river is another") covertly imposes upon us the second meaning ("I am another") and gives us the illusion

III

In *Ennead* III.7, Plotinus' *aporia* is the following: *to what extent eternity is the archetype of time and to what extent time is related to perceptible motion?* Plotinus' inquiry originates from Plato's definition of time as the "moving image of eternity" in the *Timaeus* (37c-38d). Plato ascribes a specific motion to time in order to denote that distinction between being and becoming, the realm of the Form and that of the perceptible universe; time is a *moving* image of eternity as an *analogous* copy of the eternal realm.¹⁷ For Plotinus, eternity is related to the life of the Intellect around the One and time to the life of the Soul around the Intellect (*Ennead* III.7.1).¹⁸ Eternity is related to the Intellect's stability, unity, indivisibility, sameness and perfection, contrasted with the Soul's restless motion, otherness and divisibility. Whereas eternity is the 'paradigm', time is the 'moving image' of eternity (*Ennead* III.7.1.19); eternity is "the life which exists around being, all together and full, completely without extension" (3.36-38)¹⁹ and time is "the life of the Soul in a transitory movement from one state of life to another" (11.44-45). Eternity and time imply two different forms of 'life' (*zoē*); 'life' is the term, which, on the one hand, differentiates both natures at the level and form of intelligence and, on the other, relates them to the same primal substance (45-56).

Plotinus' aim is also to stress the antithesis between eternity and time. This antithesis is crucial for the comparison between the two natures since this comparison denotes not an absolute distinction between the two notions but primarily certain interrelated analogies of their properties according to the realities they participate and manifest in. By contemplating eternity in ourselves we are able to recognize eternity through what is eternal to ourselves (*Ennead* III.7.5.1-12); it is our soul that provides us with the ability through time to contemplate eternity. An analogy leads the mind to the apprehension of eternity and time, between *what is temporal* and *what is eternal*. The 'key' to this process is the Platonic recollection: "if someone were to form a conception of the essence of time before contemplating eternity, it would be possible for him also to contemplate that to which time is similar, passing from this realm to that one by means of recollection" (*Ennead* III.7.1.20-24).

A comparison between eternity and time is also offered in *Ennead* I.5 *On Whether Well-Being Increases With Time* where well-being is related to eternal life. Since the life of well-being is a good life and the genuine good life is the eternal life of true being, then well-being must be related to the eternal life of true being outside any temporal affection, division or influence (*Ennead* I.5.7.21-31) Plotinus denies any division, extension or duration from the concept of eternity. Eternity is an indivisible, unextended and timeless nature clearly related to the life of true being and never to that of temporal becoming. Moreover, in *Ennead* III.7, Plotinus clarifies that eternity and Intellect are both majestic and self-inclusive (2.5-10), but not identical (2.15-17). Whereas intellect includes its whole in infinite intelligible *parts*, eternity includes the intelligible substance *without parts*: every intelligible is eternal in virtue of eternity. Eternal life in the Intellect is the result of contemplation in as far as intelligence and life both derive from proximity to the One. Movements of contemplation in the Intellect, which, with its noetic otherness is one-many,

of having invented it...'; See J. L. Borges, *Selected Non-Fictions*, Eliot Weinberger (ed.), translated by Esther Allen, Suzanne Jill Levine and Eliot Weinberger, New York 1999.

¹⁷ Plato's theory of time can be found, apart from *Timaeus* (37c-38d), in the *Politicus*' Myth (268e-274e) and the backward running time and the central questions in the *Parmenides* (e.g. 140e-141a, 152a) where Plato discusses the metaphysics of the One on the basis of time and progress.

¹⁸ See also *Ennead* IV.4.15.2.

¹⁹ For the timeless nature of eternity as it is differentiated from temporality and the perceptible realm see also *Enneads* I.5.7; II.5.3; IV.1; IV.3.25; IV.4.1.15; V.1.4; VI.6.18.

'cause' life in the special context of a genus-species relationship; whereas the notion of life is the genus-movement, *Nous* and *Psyche* are verities permeated by the five all-pervading Platonic Genera (*Sophist* 254d-e)²⁰ – substance, movement, rest, sameness, and otherness (*Ennead* VI.2.8).

Plotinus maintains in *Ennead* III.7.2 the identification of (1) *motion* with the life of the Intellect; (2) *rest* with stability and the changeless perfection of the intelligible world; (3) *sameness* with the non-extended nature of the intelligible realm.²¹ Plotinus states that as long as time exists in virtue of motion then eternity in all probability exists in virtue of rest; however, he further argues, that since eternity is not 'simply rest' (2.24-28), nor 'rest which resides to substance' (2.29-31), then the identification of 'eternity' with 'rest' is inadequate. Rest is predicated by eternity and eternity participates in the genus of 'rest', but it is not absolute 'rest'. Plotinus distinguishes 'rest' and 'movement'; 'rest' is applied to the non-discursive or restful self-contemplation of the Intellect, 'movement' to the discursive or moving contemplation of the Soul.²² Since 'movement' is the genus and 'life' its species – 'life' is a sort of subset of 'movement' – and anything predicated of the genus must be predicated of its species, so 'movement' is the genus and must be predicated of *all* life. Time is the life of the Soul in its entirety – primarily of the soul-genus, but thereby, also of the species souls (the world-soul and individual souls). However, where the life of the Intellect is balanced and complete in simultaneity, holding the equilibrium of sameness and otherness, the life of the Soul is weakened because it is unable to hold this balance and completeness in simultaneity. Whereas the intelligible world has a life abiding in a 'timeless present' (*Ennead* III.7.3.16-17), the universe has a life unfolding in temporal everlastingness by means of what is always going to be in the future (*Ennead* III.7.4.34). The everlasting existence of the cosmos is not an existence based on the sameness of the 'present' but on the otherness of the 'future', which produces a transient imperfect motion in otherness (11.35-43). For this reason, the universe exists in a state of temporal imperfection as it continuously hastens towards the future, aspiring to the perfection of the intelligible substance (4.28-33). The circular motion of the universe (*Ennead* II.2) imitates in everlastingness eternal timelessness (*Ennead* V.1.4.17-19); the universe is being in everlasting time: a manifestation of the self-sustained eternal timelessness of the Intellect (*Enneads* III.7.4.19-28; IV.4.15.5).

Eternity reveals and manifests the perfection of the intelligible realm, i.e. the Intellect's self-completeness, self-knowledge, self-inclusion and self-intellection. Intellect is a nature with infinite power (*Ennead* IV.3.8.35 ff.), boundless in non-spatiality (*Ennead* V.5.10.19-23) and free from any temporal or spatial limit and separation (*Ennead* IV.1.7-8). The Intellect is absolute unity-in-plurality, a perfect and complete intelligible organism (*Ennead* VI.2.21.50 ff.) which self-contains and self-thinks the intelligibles (*Ennead* VI.2.22). The perfection of the Intellect is not acquired outside itself, but all things lie in itself in 'true eternity' (*Ennead* V.1.4.16-19). For Plotinus, time is the life of the Soul in everlasting motion, in homonymous imitation of eternity, i.e. the unextended life of the Intellect at rest. The Soul imitates the Intellect not in an exact but in an analogous way as the Soul copies the Intellect through contrasts. The movement of the Soul participates in its paradigm – the non-discursive movement of the Intellect – of which it is an analogous icon – hence life in the Soul is an analogous copy of life in the Intellect. Eternity belongs and originates from the intelligible nature and manifests the very substance of

²⁰ On the Platonic General in the *Enneads* cf. VI.2; VI.3 and VI.4 *On the Genera of Being*; V.1.4; VI.2.8

²¹ See the introductory comment by J. E. McGuire – S. K. Strange "An annotated translation of Plotinus *Ennead* III.7: On eternity and time".

²² See *Enneads* III.8.8, V.8.3-4, VI.7.13. The non-discursiveness self-contemplation of the Intellect is a form 'super-logismos' – H. J. Blumenthal, "Nous and Soul in Plotinus: Some Problems of Demarcation", in: *Soul and Intellect: Studies in Plotinus and Later Neoplatonism*, Brookfield 1993, pp.209-10; cf. also A. H. Armstrong, "Eternity, Life and Movement in Plotinus' Accounts of *Nous*", pp. 67-74.

the intelligible realm (*Ennead* III.7.4.1-5). Eternity has a primary existence, and as a primary being must necessarily exist among the primaries on a higher ontological level than them (4.5-6); it is self-defined and self-identical (*Enneads* III.7.4.5-12; V.5.2.18 ff.; V.3.5.23-26), inherited in the intelligible world of true being which is deficient in nothing, lacking nothing, unaffected in any way (4.12-17); selfsame and homogenous (4.17-19), with no aspiration for the future since there is nothing for intelligible beings which is going to develop or progress (4.33-37). The eternal life of the intelligible realm is more perfect in unity and order than the temporal life of the perceptible realm. Eternal life is that which shines from the intelligible substrate (*Ennead* III.7.3.24-25), manifesting the eternal unity, stability and order of the intelligible realm. In eternity “life abides and intellect abides, and the real beings stand still” (*Ennead* VI.6.18.35-36), hence Plotinus accepts Plato’s position in the *Timaeus* 37d6 that “eternity abides in unity” (*Ennead* III.7.6.4-6). According to Plotinus, Plato’s intention is not only to express the self-unified nature of eternity, but also the sameness that holds the life of the real being around the One (*Ennead* III.7.6.7-10). In the *Timaeus* (29d-31a; 40a-b), both the intelligible world of Forms and the sensible world are conceived as living organisms: the Forms are ‘intelligible living-beings’, the celestial bodies are ‘divine living-beings’ and the cosmos as a whole is an ‘ensouled animal’. Plato’s world of the Forms and the world of senses are polar opposites, the first being eternal and the second implying duration within time. Plato, however, did not address the problem of whether eternity is non-durational or not; this was one of the aims of Plotinus’ *Ennead* III.7 to offer an appropriate exegesis of non-durational eternity.

IV

In the fourth chapter of *Ennead* III.7, Plotinus offers an etymological analysis of the term *aiōn* and radically removes the notion of ‘duration’ from the concept of eternity (*Ennead* III.7.6.21-36). In particular, he elucidates the difference between the ‘always’ (*aei*) of eternity and the ‘always’ of time and argues that the term *aiōn* correctly derives from *aei on*, since the Intellect is not only complete in terms of a whole having all the intelligible beings present in it, but also in not having any deficiency and never having any non-being present in it; in order to be eternal; the intelligible being has to be ‘always existing’ without any incompleteness, deficiency or non-being added to it (4.37-43). However, Plotinus clarifies that the ‘always’ of eternity does not imply any form of duration: the *aei* of *aiōn* refers to the self-sufficient unextended power of the intelligible world containing the whole simultaneously and not the nature of eternity (6.23-36): in the case of eternity ‘always’ should not be used in its strict (temporal) sense, “for ‘being’ is not something different from ‘always being’, just as a philosopher and a true philosopher are not different”.²³

Plotinus’ etymological derivation of *aiōn* from ‘always existing’ has its origins back in Aristotle’s *De Caelo* 279a25-28. In this passage, Aristotle defines *aiōn* as “fulfillment which includes the time of life of any creature, outside of which no natural development can fall ... the fulfillment of the whole heaven, the fulfillment which includes all time and infinity”. Aristotle’s etymology prefigures Plotinus’ etymology: *aiōn* is “a name based upon always being, immortal

²³ As Richard Sorabji correctly comments on this passage (*Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p. 112), Plotinus’ explanation of the eternal Intellect as having no duration is a successful way of resolving the ambiguity left by Plato in the *Timaeus* 38a3 concerning the question whether eternity is timeless or has an everlasting duration. Apart from this clarification, however, Plotinus’ aim is also to highlight the limitation of language in defining subtly metaphysical terms. While ‘always’ in time implies temporal duration, ‘always’ in eternity implies ‘ever existence’. The word ‘now’ can be placed within the same framework. While, the temporal ‘now’ indicates the present in contrast with other tenses of time, the eternal ‘now’ signifies a timeless present; see also S. Strange, “Plotinus on the nature of eternity and time”, p. 40.

and divine”²⁴ However, Plotinus’ reasoning has both etymological and philosophical significance. In III.7.6.21-36, Plotinus’ maintains that being is inherently ‘always’ inasmuch as it lacks ‘duration’, for ‘existing’ is an adequate word for substance, so that the addition of ‘always’ becomes redundant. However, ‘always’ must be added because of the confusion of ‘people’ who think ‘becoming was substance’. There must be, therefore, a crucial distinction between the ‘always’ of time and the ‘always’ of eternity. In the case of eternity, the word ‘always’ refers to the self-sufficient, unextended power of the intelligible world containing the whole simultaneously, without any durational connotation as in the case of time. For Plotinus, ‘being’ and ‘always being’ are one and the same, and ‘always being’ is identified with ‘truly being.’ Moreover, it is also noteworthy that in *De Caelo* 279a22-23 Aristotle points out that he provides the traditional etymology of *aiōn* which had a “divine significance for the ancients”. In all probability and on the basis of Aristotle’s discussion of the generation and destruction of the sensible world in *De Caelo* 279a30-280a34, Aristotle, refers to Plato²⁵ but also certain pre-Platonists in early Greek philosophical tradition.

V

The concept of eternity in early Greek philosophy has significant theoretical forms, divergent philosophical approaches and different applications such as: the everlasting existence of the primordial principles (Pherecydes, fr. 1); the everlasting indefiniteness of the *apeiron* (Anaximander, fr. 1); the ever-livingness of the cosmos (Heraclitus, fr. 30); the timelessness of being (Parmenides, fr. 8); the eternal lifetime of the divine and the immortals (Empedocles, frs 16, 17, 21, 22, 115); the lifelong generations of mortals (Empedocles frs 110 and 129); the eternal continuance of the cosmos (Philolaus, frs 21, 23 and 26); the everlasting activity of god (Philolaus, fr. 21.21); the everlasting glory of humans (Heraclitus, fr. 29); the everlasting infiniteness of being (Melissus, frs 4 and 7); the everlasting existence of *nous* (Anaxagoras, fr. 14) and the eternal recurrence of the human lifetime (Heraclitus, fr. 52; Empedocles, frs 7, 100).

Particularly for Heraclitus, *aiōn* represents the endless recurrence of life (fr. 52) within the enduring becoming of the cosmos (fr. 30); the Heraclitean cosmos ‘was’, ‘is’ and ‘will be’ endlessly, persisting in the everlasting vitality of fire the ‘ever-living’ fire which recurrently kindles in measures and quenches in measures. Heraclitus’ *aiōn* in fragment 52²⁶ is vividly expressed in the image of a child playing alone the ancient game of *pesseia*.²⁷ The context of the Heraclitean

²⁴ A. H. Armstrong, *Plotinus* vol. III, p. 309; J. E. McGuire – S. K. Strange “An annotated translation of Plotinus Ennead III.7: On eternity and time”, n. 49

²⁵ Aristotle probably refers to the *Timaeus* (28a) where Plato maintains that whereas true being *always is* and has no becoming, that which belongs in the world of becoming *always come-to-be* and never *really is*. Cf. also Plato’s relevant passages on *aei on* in the *Republic* 611e-612a; *Phaedo* 79d and the *Symposium* 211a-d.

²⁶ For fr. 52 cf. the commentaries of M. Marcovich, *Heraclitus: Greek Text with a short Commentary*, Merida/Venezuela 1967, pp. 490–495; C. H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, Cambridge 1979; M. R. Wright, *The Presocratics*, Bristol 1985, p. 73; E. N. Roussos, ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΤΟΣ, Athens 2000, p. 200.

²⁷ The *pesseia* was probably a board game originating from the Near East similar to backgammon. It was a divinatory and oracular ancient game that required both strategy skills and chance. In its common form, the game consisted of: (1) a board with five lines, (2) a number of *pessoi* (pawns of wood, ivory or clay discs) and (3) a pair of *astragaloi* (a type of dice made from the knuckle bones of sheep). The player moved the *pesseia* forward along the lines from the one end of the board to the other across barriers and into possible movements (openings) determined by the throws of the *astragaloi*. Each throw of the *astragaloi* activated 360 potentials and the 360 potentials of the *astragaloi* could be noteworthy related to the annual cycle of the seasons; cf. H. Hoffmann, *Sotades: Symbols of Immortality on Greek Vases*, Oxford 1997, p. 149 n. 17. According to Reinhardt (‘Heraclitea’ in *Vermächtnis* pp. 75–83; summarized in Kahn (1979), pp. 155–156) there is a proportional relationship between the cycles of the seasons measured in 360 days (3 seasons × 4 months × 30 days); human generation (30 years);

fragment refers to cosmos, soul and politics²⁸; the enigmatic figure of the child could be seen as the image of a divine personification representing destiny, lifetime and political leadership. Heraclitus' comparison of *aiōn* to a child reflects the vitality and the strength of the divine life.²⁹ For the early Greeks, youth is the time of abundant marrow: the children with their soft and supple flesh were said to 'abound in liquid' and with the advancing of years were drying up by losing life and strength.³⁰ Likewise Heraclitus' child, pure in thoughts, with spontaneous and straightforward actions, is the divine player who rules eternally on his board the mortal lives inside the cosmos like a king who rules with his decisions people's lives and destinies.³¹

Heraclitus' *aiōn* plays *alone* with itself and it reminds us the self-generative process of an ever-living fire producing and reproducing everlastingly the entire cosmos (fr. 30).³² The game of *aiōn* represents Heraclitus' circular kindling and quenching self-generative process of *aeizōon* fire.³³ This cosmic process is endless like the continuous play of a child in fr. 52 who starts his game over and over again. The *aiōn* represents the 'everlasting child' who remains forever

and the Great Year of 10800 (360 × 30). Based on this analysis, Heraclitus' game of *pesseia* could be related to the cycles of seasons, the order of time and human generation. Thus, it could be suggested that the Heraclitean *aiōn* is a personification of the Great Year playing with human life and generation on the board game of the cycles of seasons repeated over and over again in eternal repetitiveness; cf. also C. H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, pp. 227–229; M. R. Wright, *The Presocratics*, p. 73 and E. N. Roussos, ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΤΟΣ, p. 200.

²⁸ The connection between fr. 52 and political criticism is echoed in Diogenes Laertius' testimony concerning Heraclitus' misanthropy (*Lives* IX.3). The *pesseia* was also related to war and strategy; one can recall an image of Achilles and Ajax playing *astragaloi* before the walls of Troy described in Exekias black figured amphora (Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, Vatican Museums, Vatican State). Similarly Sophocles in *Ajax* (475) vividly describes life as a heroic game: 'what pleasure does its day bring after each day, moving the pieces forward and pulling them back from death' (Hoffman (1997, 143). Plato in the *Theaetetus* 146a describes a children's ball game where the winner becomes a king. M. Marcovich, *Heraclitus*, p. 494, also suggests that the game could mean 'play draughts', a game called *polis*; an interpretation which is linked to the political context of the fragment the *pesseia* was not really a children's game. Homer in the *Iliad* I.106 ff. presents the insolent suitors sitting in front of the palace door and playing *pesseia*. From this perspective Heraclitus' image of *pesseia* should be conceived as ironic in political terms. The image of the game in fragment 52 is more important for its structure and rules, which represent the Heraclitean order of the eternal *logos* (fr. 1) and for the skills of the player rather than for the chance of dice. This gives a backhanded political meaning to fr. 52, for whether or not ruling a city presupposes a man with skills and maturity, the King of the city behaves like a child who does not know how to play according to the correct rules of the game. For this reason fr. 52 would then link with the criticism of the leadership of Ephesus in fr. 121.

²⁹ Life and death are linked with the oppositions of divine and human (frs 53, 78, 79), immortals and mortals (fr. 62) throughout the understanding of *psyche*, *logos* and *fire* as mediation principles. The connection between childhood and time could be moreover related to Empedocles' fr. 100 where a young girl is playing with the time-instrument of the water clepsydra. For Empedocles and the meaning of the clepsydra cf. D. Furley, "Empedocles and the clepsydra", in: Allen – Furley (eds.), *Studies in Presocratic Philosophy*, London 1975, pp. 265–74.

³⁰ For Aristotle any living creature is moist and warm by its nature and when somebody gets old they dry up; cf. *De Long. Et Brev. Vit.* 466a, 19ff Cf. *De Gener. Anim.* 784a.

³¹ This is indeed Euripides' image of Destiny as a child of Chronos and *Aiōn* (*Heraclidae* 900) and Philo of Alexandria in *De vita Mosis* I.31 relates 'chance' to the game of human lives as well as Gregory of Nazianzus in *Carmina de se ipso* I.334.3 compares Chronos to the game of *pesseia*.

³² The *aiōn* could be regarded as similar the *ouroboros* (the tail-devouring snake) constantly recreating itself by eternally reproducing through its own organic material; think also the mythical figure of *Kronos* devouring its own children.

³³ For P. Turetzky, *Time*, Routledge 1998, pp. 109–111, Heraclitus' *aiōn* is an eternal 'rhythmic tension' that synthesizes all moments of becoming. The *aiōn* in contrast to the flow and order of time is the eternal moment of all moments; it is the eternal retuning returns of all moments; *aiōn* always returns to itself like the game of the child played again and again. *Aiōn* is the eternal recurrence of time that lies in the eternal repetition of becoming. On this basis, comparing Heraclitus' philosophy of time with Nietzsche's concept of the eternal return (especially described in *Will to Power*) time is the closest approximation (in existential terms) of the world of becoming to

youthful throughout his lifetime, playing the game of eternal kingship in a series of births and deaths across the generations. Heraclitus' *aei – ōn* is the *aei – zōon* of fr. 30: it is the bright Zeus (fr. 120); the thunder-ruler of everything (fr. 32), the 'one wise god' (fr. 64) or in Empedocles' words the Zeus King (fr. 128).

Therefore Heraclitus' *aiōn* signifies the polarity between divine eternity and the human lifetime; everlasting glory belongs only to the gods, while mortals share a limited lifetime and existence (fr. 29). Heraclitus' image of the cosmos could be that of a playing-field where a cosmic divine player moves pieces back and forth on a board where the pieces represent humans becoming old and young, living and dying, waking and sleeping.³⁴ Fr. 52, moreover, leads us to the relationship between the kingdom of *aiōn* and the kingdom of war in fr. 53 (the next one quoted by Hippolytus) where 'war is the father and king of all.' The player in fr. 53 is now 'war' playing with opposite forces and shows some as gods and others as men, some as slaves and others as free. In this fragment the playing-field becomes a battle-field where there is a general exchange of glory: some become winners and others losers (frs. 90 and 36). Heraclitus seems to denote that 'war' like 'life' is not played by a mature and wise god but by restless and immature children or warriors (compare frs. 56, 79, 117). The king of the *play*, as the king of the *cosmos* or the king of *polis* is not a man with aged wisdom but a child with the strength and the power of its eternal vitality. It is this image of *aiōn* that probably influenced later representations of *aiōn* both as a young restless child and as a wise old man³⁵; an image that shows the cycles of human age and generation. Heraclitus' cosmos remains ever new through the ever-living rekindling of its own fiery source, the human soul has its own lifetime.

Like Heraclitus' divine child *aiōn*, Plotinus' *aiōn* is "a god manifesting and revealing itself what really is" (III.7.5.19-22); this divine nature manifests true being; a *timeless* being which is imperturbable, the same and stable in its life. Since true being is imperturbable then eternal life is also imperturbable, 'which is all at once, altogether fixed and actually unlimited, which is without any sort of tuning away, and rests in and is directed towards the One' (III.7.11.1-5). Whereas Heraclitus' *aiōn* is a *single player* (representing his monistic hylozoism) Plotinus' *aiōn* is a *single life* (signifying his metaphysical monism), the eternal simultaneous and unextended unity of the divine realm (IV.3.3.12-13). Eternity manifests the inexhaustible and self-identity of the intelligible realm, a self-thinking nature outside any otherness or difference (III.7.3.12-15); it is a life all-together which persists *always* in a present state of being, unchanging, a nature which abides always in the same condition (III.7.3.15-38). Eternity is a complete and unlimited life; unlimited in virtue of expending nothing of itself, a life which never gives out in temporal becoming or bodily change (5.23-30).

the world of being; time both divides and merges reality in *what-is* and *what-is-not* reflecting Heraclitus' fr. 49a: into the same rivers we step and do not step, *we are* and *we are not*.

³⁴ The view of human destiny as the subject of a game can also be found in Plato's *Laws* 903d where the player of *pessieia* promotes a soul with a promising character to a better condition in order to meet the fate which it deserves.

³⁵ The most important later double personification is of Mandulis AION worshipped at the Roman garrison town of Talmis in two forms, as a full grown man and as a child, cf. A. D. Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, Oxford 1972, pp. 357–358. The two shapes of Mandulis Aion appeared side by side representing probably a solar deity associated with Isis. Moreover, for Sophocles *aiōn* is a kind of *daīmon* (*Trach.* 33–35) and in fr. 119 Heraclitus clearly states that 'a person's character is his *daīmon*. The guardian god or destiny is the man's character. What happens to a man during his life can be attributed to his personality, which is his guardian god. Humans make thoughts, actions, and decisions, playing in a way like the child. In that way, we have a link between the level of the divine realm and the level of the mortals' realm.

VI

Heraclitus' everlastingness of the cosmos may be contrasted with Parmenides' timelessness of being. Despite the fact that Parmenides never uses the word *aiōn*, the concept of 'timeless eternity' originates in fragment 8.³⁶ Parmenides envisages in his poem an indivisible and indestructible being: *what-is* exists as changeless and immovable in a timeless present, all together in atemporal completeness, unity and indivisibility (fr. 8.5-6): "it never was nor will be, since it is now all-together, one, continuous'. The timelessness of being can also be justified by Parmenides' words in verses 8.36-38: "time is not nor will be another thing alongside being, since this was bound fast by fate to be entire and changeless".³⁷

Inasmuch as Parmenides' being is atemporal, time should apply to 'eternity'. Parmenides' statement "it never was nor will be, since it is now all-together" in fr. 8 is in opposition to Heraclitus' view that "it always was and is and will be" in fr. 30. Whereas the Heraclitean *always* 'was', 'is' and 'will be' is in the process of generation and destruction through the work of the *ever* living fire, the Parmenidean being *never* 'was' nor 'will be', but is timeless, all together in a state of changeless unity where no generation and no destruction is taking place. The key term that differentiated the two fragments is clearly that of *duration* (*aei*). While Heraclitus uses it twice to express the everlastingness of the cosmos as well as its *ever-living* fiery substance, Parmenides omits the word completely from his language in the extant fragments. His silence on *aei* is an argument against the durational interpretation of fragment 8.5-6; whereas for Heraclitus the cosmos always exists, temporally divided into 'past', 'present' and 'future', for Parmenides, being is atemporal and undivided in time, having no past nor future, due to its ontological indivisibility, completeness, changeless and oneness.

Thus Parmenides' elimination of time results in the timelessness of being. Parmenides' being is beyond any temporal divisions since it is essentially indivisible and changeless. Duration must also be excluded since duration presupposes the senses of 'before' and 'after', and thus some change to distinguish 'before' from 'after', which the perfection and the completeness of being disallows. Hence temporal duration is also impossible since any transition from 'prior' to 'posterior', 'earlier' to 'later' is eliminated by the immutability of being. Thus, the only possible explanation for Parmenides' being is that of a timeless eternity: atemporality, along with a being's indivisibility, indestructibility and immovability, is essential for its completeness, unity and perfection.

Parmenides' timelessness of being corresponds to Plotinus' non-durational timelessness of eternity in *Ennead* III.7 (cf. also IV.3.25.14-15). For Plotinus "every act of intelligence is timeless" (IV.4.1.12); a real being involves eternity and not time (II.5.3.8), therefore the intelligible nature is characterized by the lack of any temporal tenses. Eternity possesses all things at once (III.7.3.18), in a "partless completion" (3. 19), as if all things were centralized in a single point and never flow out from this point (3.19-20), but remain in the same state of timeless and changeless existence, always being in an 'eternal present' (3.22) distinguished from the 'present of time': 'no past nor future, no was nor will-be, no earlier or later can be attributed to the eternal nature' (3.25 ff.) and thus any notion of change, becoming or passing-away is

³⁶ R. Sorabji in *Time, Creation and the Continuum* collects, along with his own, eight different interpretations of Parmenides' fr. 8.5-6, cf. chapter 8 and especially pp. 98-108. I am following Sorabji's interpretation that Parmenides introduces in his poem a timeless concept of being; see G. Stamatellos, *Plotinus and the Presocratics*, pp. 105-111.

³⁷ I adopt the Greek text provided by A. H. Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides*, Assen 1986, p. 76 and pp. 210-211; as well M. Conche, *Parménide: Le Poème Fragments*, Paris 1996, p. 126 and pp. 165-167, which are closely based on Simplicius' original in *Physica* IX.149.6.

incompatible with eternity. The eternal being is timeless beyond everlasting duration, enduring temporality or the tenses of time: “it was not, will not be, but is only” (3.34-35). The latter passage reflects Parmenides’ fr. 8.5-6.³⁸

Plotinus’ attribution of life to *aiōn* could be also associated to Empedocles’ theory of eternity. Empedocles applies both eternity and time to different hierarchies of life: (1) the *eternal life* of god and the *immortality* of the cosmic principles (frs 16, 17, 26 and 110); (2) the *long-lasting life* of *daīmones* (frs 21, 115, 129); (3) the short-lasting lifetime of mortals (frs 17, 30, 115). More precisely, Empedocles’ four material ‘roots’ as well as ‘love’ and ‘strife’ contain an ‘eternal life’ (*aspetos aiōn*) which ‘always was and is, and is never going to be extinguished or exhausted in the future’ (fr. 16.2).³⁹ Empedocles’ eternal life of *aiōn* – like in Heraclitus – denotes the difference between mortal and immortal beings. The continual temporal exchange of mortal life during the phases of ‘love’ and ‘strife’ makes it incompatible and inferior to the ‘eternal abiding life’ (*empedos aiōn*) of the immortals (fr. 17.11 repeated at 26.10). The gods, highest in honor, have ‘eternal life’ (fr. 21.12; 23.8) and between the temporal life of humans and the eternal life of the immortals lies the *aiōn* of the *daīmones*; the long-lasting lifetime of the intermediate spirits. Whereas the *daīmones* have a long-lasting lifetime, humans have only a short-lasting lifetime with limited knowledge and capabilities (fr. 2). Within their life humans can observe and participate only shortly in the eternal life of the whole. For this reason, Empedocles distinguishes between the temporality of the mortal world and the everlastingness of the divine. Likewise, in Philolaus’ fragments 21, 23 and 26, the cosmos is the everlasting activity of god and generation,⁴⁰ and it is noteworthy that in Philolaus we can find the only pre-Platonic occurrence of the term *aiōnios*,⁴¹ used later on in the metaphysical terminology of Plato denoting the eternity of the Forms in the *Timaeus*.

VI

Plotinus’ discussion of eternity signifies the continuity of Greek thought from early Greek philosophers to Plato and Aristotle. Plotinus’ denial of duration from eternity can be traced back to Parmenides’ timelessness being in fr. 8, while Plotinus’ definition of eternity as the life of the Intellect stems from central features of pre-Platonic thought such as the association of *aiōn* with the notion of life in Heraclitus and Empedocles. What differentiates the pre-Platonic notion of eternity from that of Plotinus is the intervening Platonic and Aristotelian transformation of the term from the Presocratic cosmology to post-Platonic metaphysics in

³⁸ The use of Parmenides’ terminology in *Ennead* III.7 is so evident that Steven Strange came to the conclusion that ‘Plotinus’ discussion of eternity is more a commentary on Parmenides than on Plato, though Plato himself is of course dependent on Parmenides fr. 8 at *Timaeus* 37e’; see S. Strange, “Plotinus on the nature of eternity and time”, p. 33.

³⁹ Cf. M. R. Wright, *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments*, New Haven 1981, pp. 166–179.

⁴⁰ Whereas in Philolaus the term *aidios* denotes *everlastingness*, Melissus uses the term to denote the everlasting infinity of being with no beginning and end in time (frs. 4 and 7).

⁴¹ For Huffman in *Philolaus of Croton* the word *aionios* is originally Platonic; this discussion originates in J. M. Robinson, “The *Timaeus* on types of duration”, *Illinois Classical Studies* 11: (1986) 134-151. See also V. Kalfas, *Plato’s Timaeus*, p. 383. In G. Stamatellos, *Plotinus and the Presocratics*, pp. 101-105, it has been supported that the use of the word *aiōnios* could have existed before Plato in the vocabulary of Philolaus. Philolaus’ ‘eternal continuance’ is a Pythagorean expression of special significance and verbatim twice in Syrianus (*in Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria* 123.6 and 142.24) and once in Proclus (*in Timaeus* I.239.2).

a Neoplatonic ontological context. Plotinus follows Plato in that eternity is the intelligible life of the true being abiding in eternal unity (*Timaeus* 37d). Plotinus' *aiōn* applies to the divine intellect and describes the non-durational eternal life of the intelligible realm. This originates in Aristotle's etymological definition of *aiōn* as 'always existing' (*De Caelo* 279a25-28).

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La Notion de Luxe (*polyteleia*) selon les Cyniques et les Stoïciens : Le Personnage d'Héraclès*

Abstract : Par son étymologie, le mot « luxe » renvoie à son origine latine, *lux-lucis*, qui signifie lumière. Dans un premier point de cet exposé, nous allons montrer pourquoi les Grecs avaient nommé le dieu du Soleil, Apollon, aussi *Lykeios*, « lumineux », qui, du point de vue étymologique, renvoie aussi au loup. Apollon, selon Cléanthe, le deuxième scholarque de l'École stoïcienne, doit son appellation *Lykeios*, au fait que le soleil « ravit », en quelque sorte, l'humanité avec ses rayons comme le loup (*lykos*) « ravit » les troupeaux. Aussi, dans un deuxième point, nous mettrons l'accent sur le personnage d'Héraclès, revu par les philosophies hellénistiques surtout les Cyniques, privé qu'il est de toute qualité de luxe et promoteur de la simplicité et de l'endurance. Dans la suite, nous traiterons de la notion de luxe comme facteur organisateur de la nature ainsi que de son influence sur la vie et sur le comportement de l'homme selon la philosophie stoïcienne.

Enfin dans un troisième et dernier point, nous allons mettre l'accent sur la rencontre de l'harmonie universelle (luxe dans la nature) avec l'harmonie individuelle (luxe dans l'âme) qui, en définitive, constituent un ensemble divin de luxe (*polyteleia*), de beauté et de perfection, selon les philosophies traitées dans cette étude.

.....

Parler du luxe ou essayer de le définir en philosophie, cela conduirait la discussion dans une impasse, dans la mesure où philosopher renvoie à un discours comportant en soi des limites puisées dans la logique. Pourtant le luxe (*polyteleia*) annonce déjà un dépassement de la mesure, un excès et, en conséquence, une privation de raison, comme nous allons le voir par la suite.

C'est dans ce cadre que nous nous proposons de dégager les traits constitutifs de cette notion telle que fut envisagée à l'époque hellénistique, lors de la naissance de la pensée cynique et stoïcienne qui fonctionna comme facteur conciliateur entre l'acceptation du luxe dans l'architecture et les mœurs de la cité et celle du luxe déployé dans la nature. Afin de suivre ce processus nous avons divisé notre propos en trois parties qui portent respectivement : (a) sur l'étymologie grecque des notions de *simplicité* (*euteleia*), d'*accomplissement* (*enteleia*) et de *luxe* (*polyteleia*); (b) sur l'interprétation du personnage d'Héraclès, désormais revu comme exercice révélateur des principes de la morale cynique et stoïcienne, fondés sur un exercice continu de peines suivi d'une attitude de vie simple à l'excès; (c) sur le rapport des étymologies des noms, inventées de Cléanthe d'Assos portant notamment sur Apollon (Lycéen), par rapport à la notion de luxe en tant que démesure et qu'épanouissement à la fois de la beauté cosmique¹.

* Article rédigé en mémoire du Professeur Ioannis Taïfakos, fidèle collaborateur et ami.

¹ Macrobe, I, 17, 36 (= S.V.F., III, 36, p. 249, ligne 23): Apollinis Lycii plures accipimus cognominis causas. Antipater Stoicus Lycium Appollinem nuncupatum scribit ἀπὸ τοῦ λευκαίνεσθαι πάντα φωτίζοντος ἡλίου.

Étymologie des termes

Dans son *Oraison Funèbre*, prononcée lors des funérailles des militaires morts au cours de la première année de la guerre du Péloponnèse, Périclès met l'accent sur le progrès athénien fondé sur une culture qui ne vise point le luxe, mais la modération: « Nous cultivons le beau dans la simplicité, et les choses de l'esprit sans manquer de fermeté »². La note de J. de Romilly portant sur l'interprétation de la phrase citée ci-dessus, montre bien qu'il aurait pu y avoir un malentendu par rapport au mot « simplicité » (εὐτέλεια³) s'accordant mal avec les constructions de l'Acropole réalisées pendant l'archontat de Périclès. Le général, selon J. de Romilly, fait justement allusion aux idéaux éternels des Athéniens et non certes aux monuments luxueux récents qui, par la suite, on le sait, lui attirèrent des soucis à cause d'une accusation pour dépenses excessives⁴. On sait par ailleurs, que les Grecs furent les premiers à concevoir la notion de mesure (μέτρον). C'est par ce terme qu'ils qualifièrent l'homme modéré, qui agit de manière ne comportant « rien de trop » (μηδὲν ἄγαν)⁵; la notion de mesure scella la pensée philosophique dès ses origines pour finir, avec les Cyniques et, au delà, avec les Stoïciens, à signifier un dépassement de limites et partant un excès de simplicité que l'on pourrait définir comme ἄ-τέλεια, à savoir comme une privation de mesure, donc, une imperfection.

Ainsi, la phrase imputée à Cléobule de Rhodes : « la mesure est la meilleure des choses »⁶; ou bien cette fameuse phrase attribuée à Solon, déjà citée : « rien de trop »⁷, montrent-elles bien le respect que les Grecs accordaient à cette notion.

Dans le domaine ontologique et axiologique, la mesure, comme médiété recherchée et qui n'est pas sans rapport étymologique avec le terme aristotélicien de la vertu de *mesotes*⁸ présente également une connotation qualitative ou quantitative concrète et, en conséquence, requiert un qualificatif, comme l'est, par exemple l'adverbe (εὖ)⁹. Dans le cas de l'εὐτέλεια, l'élément εὖ fonctionne positivement, comme indicatif d'une subtile supériorité, qui n'annonce pas encore un dépassement de mesure mais qui dénote un accomplissement *kairique*, à savoir le bon achèvement de l'action présumée. Ainsi l'εὐτέλεια implique la fin (τέλος) parfaite d'une action qui débute par un bon commencement (εὖ) pour se terminer par un accomplissement parfait sans défaut, εὖ-τέλεια, d'une succession et qui diffère de l'ἐντέλεια¹⁰, terme indicatif d'une fin portant en elle-même aussi bien la perfection que l'achèvement de l'action.

À ces deux termes cités s'oppose un troisième, qui porte lui aussi, comme deuxième élément le mot *telos*, mais qui à l'inverse des préfixes *a-* (négatif) et *eu-* (adverbial), est, à son tour, formé à l'aide du préfixe adverbial *polu* = πολυτέλεια. Ce préfixe est déjà indicatif d'un πλέον (plus) désignant un nombre indéfini de causes mais aussi des buts (τέλη). Or début et fin contiennent voire impliquent respectivement l'excès, à savoir la démesure. Aussi πολυτέλεια dénote-t-elle de

² Thucydide, *La guerre du Péloponnèse*, texte établi et traduit par J. de Romilly, Paris 1967, livre II, XL, 1 et n. 40.1 p. 97: φιλοκαλοῦμέν τε γὰρ μετ' εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφούμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας.

³ Cf. F. Montanari, *Vocabolario della lingua greca*, Torino, Loescher Editore, 2004 (1995), pp. 895–896.

⁴ Plutarque, *Vies, Périclès*, XII, 2–5.

⁵ Théognis, *Élégiés*, L. 1, ligne 335; Pindare, *Lyr. fr.* 35 b.

⁶ Fr. I, 63, 2 D.-K. Cf. Diogène Laërce, *Vies et opinions des philosophes*, Paris, Éditions de la Pléiade, 1962, I, 93.

⁷ Fr. I, 63, 14. D.-K. Cf. Diogène Laërce, *op. cit.*, I, 63, 23.

⁸ Aristote, *Éthique à Nicomaque*, 1108b11-19: Τριῶν δὴ διαθέσεων οὐσῶν, δύο μὲν κακιῶν, τῆς μὲν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ' ἔλλειψιν, μίας δ' ἀρετῆς τῆς μεσότητος, πᾶσαι πάσαις ἀντίκεινται πῶς; 1109a20-1109b26: Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ ἡ ἠθικὴ μεσότης, καὶ πῶς, καὶ ὅτι μεσότης δύο κακιῶν, τῆς μὲν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ' ἔλλειψιν.

⁹ E. Moutsopoulos, « L'éthique de Démocrite, une éthique de kairos ? », in: *Textes sur Démocrite, Premier Colloque International sur Démocrite, Xanthi*, 1983, Xanthi 1984, pp. 137–145 (p. 139).

¹⁰ Cf. F. Montanari, *Vocabolario della lingua greca*, p. 734.

par son étymologie une absence de mesure, un ἄ-μετρον, qui, loin d'être tempéré (εὖ-μετρον, μέτριον), aboutit à une privation et par là même, par la privation ou absence de mesure, à une confusion, à un embarras, à une fin illogique, digne d'un esprit à un état de déviation de mesure, à savoir à la déraison.

Le luxe (πολυτέλεια¹¹) dans la pensée philosophique mais aussi en général, renvoyait plutôt aux mœurs et coutumes asiatiques, mal vues, d'ailleurs par les Grecs, en raison de leurs prétendues outrances. Déjà dans la tradition des philosophes, il faut rappeler qu'Aristote était souvent critiqué par les Athéniens pour ses beaux vêtements luxueux, pour son habitude à porter des bagues et à se raser la barbe¹². Or Théophraste également, son successeur, malgré le respect que le peuple d'Athènes¹³ lui témoignait, grâce à sa personnalité et à son génie philosophique, fut critiqué pour l'abondance, la recherche et le luxe de ses banquets qui ne correspondaient point avec la simplicité de ses vêtements et qui ne se conformaient pas non plus à une table de philosophe.

Il est certes indéniable que les événements historiques influencent la vie politique et la vie intellectuelle des cités. Ce fut le cas de la conquête de la Grèce méridionale d'abord par le roi Philippe II de Macédoine, qui se paracheva, par son fils Alexandre, lequel modifia le destin du monde en incorporant toute l'Asie et l'Égypte à son royaume¹⁴.

L'interprétation du personnage d'Héraclès, désormais revu comme révélateur des principes de la morale cynique et stoïcienne fondés sur un exercice continu de peines

Les outrances de la vie luxueuse soulèvent la critique des courants philosophiques de l'époque, surtout des Cyniques, par la suite des Stoïciens, qui s'inscrivent dans la tradition qui fit d'Héraclès le modèle de leurs idéaux moraux¹⁵. Ce personnage légendaire d'Argos, au prix des peines et des travaux proprement herculéens, s'employait à libérer les pauvres gens de la tyrannie des puissants et de l'arbitraire des forces naturelles¹⁶. Héraclès, ainsi idéalisé, se présente-t-il comme l'exemple de celui qui supporte les peines afin de découvrir en lui-même la force de choisir au lieu de la voie facile et sans peine du Mal, celle, difficile et épineuse de la Vertu. Cet effort de progrès et d'amélioration de la nature humaine, les Cyniques la désignaient du nom de travail. Écoutons Antisthène : « Le travail (πόνος) est un bien; c'est ce qu'a montré Héraclès chez les Grecs »¹⁷ ; ce héros au caractère profondément humain, choisit, en définitive, grâce à son héroïsme moral, le chemin de la Vertu¹⁸. Le renouveau du personnage d'Héraclès s'inscrit dans le cadre des événements historiques qui portent toujours un impact sur la culture, tout en imposant des idées

¹¹ Cf. F. Montanari, *op. cit.*, p. 1726.

¹² Diogène Laërce, V, 1.

¹³ *Ibid.*, V, 37, 41.

¹⁴ P. Lévêque, *Le monde hellénistique*, Paris 1969, p. 12. Et l'on constate en général une transformation, voire altération, aux mœurs et coutumes grecs qui débute avec l'avènement de la monarchie d'Alexandre et continue pendant l'époque hellénistique dans tous les domaines de la vie, aussi publique que privée. Cf. p. ex. Athénée, *Deipnosophistes*, I, 12 § 50, ligne 6; A.-J. Festugière, *La vie spirituelle en Grèce à l'époque hellénistique ou Les besoins de l'esprit dans un monde raffiné*, Paris 1977, pp. 40–45.

¹⁵ G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme: The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century*, Oxford, Rowman & Littlefield, 1972, p. 5.

¹⁶ Cf. L. Paquet, *Les Cyniques Grecs, Fragments et témoignages*, Ottawa, Éditions de l'Université de Ottawa, 1975, p. 10.

¹⁷ Diogène Laërce, VI, 2. Selon le témoignage de Diogène Laërce, VI, 105, Antisthène écrit un traité *Héraclès*, consacré à l'héros.

¹⁸ J. Pépin, *Mythe et allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes*, Paris 1976, p. 104.

philosophiques nouvelles. Il s'en suit que la manière dont le monde est dirigé se répercute sur la conception théorique que l'on se fait de ce monde. Alors que la philosophie de l'époque classique s'était centrée sur les grandes questions existentielles et sur le bien commun en critiquant tout ce qui n'était pas grec, celle de la période hellénistique se fait plus ouverte aux autres cultures tout en se rendant plus individuelle et, en même temps, plus universelle. Dans ce milieu ébranlé par des mutations politiques et sociales, on assiste à l'émergence d'un nombre considérable d'écoles philosophiques, ayant toutes pour objectif central d'offrir à l'homme de l'époque hellénistique un *art de vivre* et, partant, son bonheur. Ces écoles¹⁹ préconisaient un modèle de vie éloigné de tout enseignement (conçu à son sens contemporain), en raison du fait que celui-ci a pour vocation d'insérer l'individu dans la société. Épicure, quant à lui, proposait comme modèle de bonheur le retrait de son Jardin, la vie entre amis, plutôt que la vie en société ouverte à laquelle l'enseignement était censé préparer²⁰. Considéré par ces écoles comme un outil visant à imposer « la tyrannie » du monde extérieur, l'enseignement y demeurait indésirable, voire exclu. Les Cyniques enseignaient que l'homme ne peut être heureux que s'il est libre et que s'il peut se proclamer « citoyen du monde »²¹, libéré enfin des ultimes contraintes qu'impose la société : une histoire, une tradition culturelle, un territoire, des droits et des devoirs qu'on n'a pas choisis²². Ainsi toute convention imposée par le milieu ne fait-elle que priver l'individu de sa liberté. Le Cynique semble donc vouloir bouleverser l'étiquette, les coutumes et les opinions reçues dans la société environnante. On dirait, d'une certaine façon, que son franc parler et son comportement poussés à l'extrémisme, perpétue l'ironie socratique²³, qui ébranle pour faire réfléchir²⁴. Il faut alors rejeter ce que plusieurs considèrent comme les fondements de la société : la famille, le travail, la *polis*. C'est dans l'endurance que l'homme trouvera son bonheur, étant donné que la souffrance n'est pas un mal. L'unique mal c'est la folie des illusions où l'insensé (*φᾶυλος*) se laisse entraîner par les faux jugements²⁵ ; ce n'est qu'à travers des exercices mentaux continus que l'homme atteindra la sagesse afin de s'intégrer dans le monde universel, en sa qualité de citoyen du monde, le monde qui l'entoure n'ayant désormais aucune valeur²⁶. Il considère que les titres naturels de race, de clan ou de famille appartiennent à une véracité mensongère. Il n'y a plus d'hommes riches ou pauvres ; il n'y a plus de classes ; il n'y a que des sages ou des fous²⁷. Il faut donc s'exercer l'intellect, qui est la seule issue de connaissance solide ; se connaître soi-même pour se mieux posséder²⁸. Et l'univers appartient exclusivement aux sages. Voilà la raison pour laquelle on assiste au retour triomphal du mythe d'Héraclès, le héros oublié dans une tradition « monolithique », où l'on n'en célébrait jusqu'alors que la force corporelle²⁹ ; l'exemple du valeureux Héraclès³⁰ était la preuve que la souffrance, considérée jusqu'alors comme un mal, pouvait désormais être un bien ; et le héros s'exalta, par la suite, à un symbole de vie, dans la mesure où

¹⁹ Les Cyniques, les Cyrénaïques, les Épicuriens, les Sceptiques.

²⁰ G. Reale, *Storia della Filosofia Greca e Romana, Cinismo, Epicureismo e Stoicismo*, Vol. 5, Milano 2002, pp. 122 et suiv.

²¹ Cf. D. L., VI, 63.

²² Cf. L. Paquet, *Les Cyniques Grecs, Fragments et témoignages*, p. 18.

²³ Cf. Cicéron, *De Orat.*, III, 17.

²⁴ Idem, *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁵ Cf. D. L. VI, 12.

²⁶ Cf. L. Paquet, *Les Cyniques Grecs, Fragments et témoignages*, p. 17.

²⁷ Cf. D. L. VI, 72.

²⁸ Cf. L. Paquet, *Ibid.*

²⁹ G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme*, p. 4.

³⁰ Diogène Laërce, VI, 2. À propos du traité *Héraclès*, d'Antisthène, cf. F. Declève-Caizzi, *Antisthenis Fragmenta*, Varese-Milano 1966, fr. 22-28 et n. pp. 94-97 ; CF aussi D. L. VI, 71.

il préfigure la simplicité du sage idéal, même avec la mort par le feu qu'il choisit librement et qu'elle annonce la totale liberté du Cynique face à son destin³¹.

Par ailleurs, ce héros, vêtu d'une peau de lion et armé d'une massue s'accordait bien avec la simplicité excessive de la tenue d'un Cynique : cheveux longs et sandales, « barbe, bure (τριβων), besace et bâton »³². Le cynisme est une morale sportive qui commence par des épreuves, un endurcissement, une dé-sensibilisation (ἀ-πάθεια). Non seulement faut-il récuser et miner, intellectuellement et humoristiquement, l'univers des valeurs, mais encore rendre son esprit et son corps insensibles aux objets qui y participent³³. Les Cyniques influencèrent les Stoïciens par l'intermédiaire de Cratès, celui-ci disciple de Diogène de Sinope et tous ensemble, exercèrent ensuite une nouvelle influence sur la tradition relative à ce héros³⁴. C'est en imitant l'exemple du sage Héraclès³⁵ que l'homme deviendrait sage et atteindrait le bonheur. Il n'est pas sans intérêt de noter ici qu'au début du III^e siècle av. notre ère, à Dodone, en Épire, un autel et un temple furent consacrés au culte d'Héraclès³⁶.

Le «pouvoir-faire» individuel, surtout s'il est entretenu par des épreuves adéquates, est une propriété irréductible de l'humain dans sa version «naturelle», et peut toujours infléchir le «devoir-être». Néanmoins, « l'habileté des hommes, le fait de découvrir et d'inventer beaucoup de choses pour améliorer l'existence, ne fut pas très utile aux générations suivantes. En effet, les hommes se sont servis de leur savoir (*sophia*), non pas en vue du courage ou de la justice mais en vue du plaisir »³⁷. C'est pourquoi les Cyniques considéraient Héraclès comme leur héros par excellence, dont les travaux constituaient à la fois des épreuves qui confortaient son «pouvoir-faire», et des preuves qui démontraient qu'un individu libre et fort ne connaît ni obstacles ni contraintes³⁸. Avec les Cyniques et les Stoïciens la vie vertueuse devient une attitude joyeuse envers la nature. Pour les Stoïciens le bonheur consiste au bon écoulement de la vie (εὖροια βίου)³⁹, pareil à la descente joyeuse des eaux d'une rivière. En revanche, la vie luxueuse, la *truphè* exprime une attitude hostile envers la nature ; aussi Cratès qualifie-t-il d'homme handicapé

³¹ Cf. L. Paquet, *Les Cyniques Grecs, Fragments et témoignages*, p. 19.

³² Diogène Laërce, VI, 22. (« Il [Diogène] fut le premier, d'après certains, à doubler son manteau, car il devait aussi y dormir enveloppé, il portait en outre, une besace dans laquelle se trouvaient ses vivres, et il tirait parti de tout endroit pour manger, dormir ou converser ». Et l'on connaît bien qu'Antisthène, le fondateur du Cynisme, homme d'une grande force de volonté, était réputé pour sa tempérance herculéenne (Eusèbe de Césarée, *Préparation évangélique* XV, 13, 7). Pareil à Héraclès, le philosophe supporte les peines (les travaux) pour la seule vertu, et s'abstient des biens matériels. Cf. aussi L. Paquet, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

³³ Cf. le bel article de S. Husson, « Revenir la vie des chiens », *L'animal comme modèle moral*, *Archai*, n. 11, juillet, 2013, pp. 69–78 (p. 71) et la référence au discours VI § 25–27 de Dion Chrysostome, de Diogène : « Voici pourquoi, à ce qu'il (à Diogène) lui semblait, le mythe raconte comment Zeus châtie Prométhée à la suite de la découverte du don du feu : parce qu'il constituait le commencement de l'origine de la mollesse et de la sensualité des hommes. En effet, Zeus, assurément ne hait pas les hommes et ne veut pas les priver d'un bien. Lorsque certains disaient qu'il n'est pas possible que l'homme vive comme les autres animaux à cause de la fragilité de sa chair et parce qu'il est nu, recouvert ni de poils comme un grand nombre de bêtes, ni de plumes, ni enveloppé par une peau épaisse, à ses arguments, il répliquait que c'est à cause de son genre de vie que l'homme est si fragile ; en effet, il fuit la plupart du temps le soleil, ainsi que le froid ».

³⁴ G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme*, p. 106 ; Diogène Laërce, VI, 22.

³⁵ J. Fontanille, « Le cynisme. Du sensible au risible », in : *Humoresques*, L'humour européen, Paris, Univ. de Paris VII, Lublin/Sèvres 1993, en forme PDF, pp. 9–26 (p. 14) (en ligne : www.unilim.fr/pages/jacques.fontanille/textes-pdf/Acynisme.pdf).

³⁶ Cf. D. L. VI, 71.

³⁷ S. Dakaris, *Dodone*, Athènes, 1993, pp. 19–20.

³⁸ Cf. Dion de Pruse, *Discours*, VI, (6) 28–29 dans S. Husson « Revenir la vie des chiens », *art. cit.*, p. 74.

³⁹ J. Fontanille, « Le cynisme. Du sensible au risible », p. 12.

⁴⁰ Stobée, *Eclog.* II, p. 77, 20 W. (= S. V.F., I, 184).

(ἀνάπηρος), celui qui vit dans le luxe, faisant un jeu de mot avec la besace (πήρα) et le manque de besace (ἀνευ πήρας)=(*ana-pērous*)⁴⁰.

(c) Étymologies des noms selon Cléanthe d'Assos

Le Stoïcisme était conscient de la puissance qu'offrait à l'homme la formation de son intellect. Ainsi, loin de respecter les principes des écoles contemporaines, malgré son penchant vers le Cynisme, dû à Cratès, le maître de Zénon de Cittium, les Stoïciens plaçaient l'homme avec ses semblables dans une société dirigée selon des lois imposées par la raison divine. Cette philosophie identifiait, en d'autres mots, la liberté humaine avec l'ordre cosmique et invitait l'homme à consentir aux lois universelles et à participer au miracle du devenir cosmique à travers ses capacités intellectuelles, accordées à lui par nature⁴¹. À cette démarche, les Stoïciens eurent recours à l'étymologie des mots⁴². Néanmoins l'on constate que Cléanthe fut plus attaché à ses « arrières maîtres », les Cyniques. Ce deuxième scholarque de l'École stoïcienne pensait, comme le fit Antisthène, que l'acquisition de la vertu⁴³ dépendait de la connaissance et qu'elle pouvait être enseignée⁴⁴. Mais on ne saurait l'apprendre, disait Antisthène, qu'en scrutant le sens des mots, puisque chaque mot est le reflet unique de ce qu'est chaque chose⁴⁵. Aussi Cléanthe enseignait que par l'intermédiaire de l'étymologie des noms et de l'allégorie, les passions humaines se calment, de sorte que l'explication des notions philosophiques et l'enseignement de la doctrine sont facilités⁴⁶. Il avait recours aussi à la peinture, afin de détourner les élèves d'autres écoles, comme c'est le cas avec les disciples de l'école d'Épicure⁴⁷. Le tableau, auquel Cléanthe d'habitude avait recours, symbolisait, très probablement, le carrefour de la Vertu et du Vice, du mythe d'Héraclès⁴⁸. Il est aussi probable que par la suite, Cléanthe faisait aussi allusion aux travaux du héros, indicatifs de la victoire de l'intelligence courageuse sur les passions qui rendent les hommes qu'elles habitent semblables à des animaux⁴⁹. Aussi Héraclès, dans la pensée de Cléanthe, se transformait-t-il en la rigoureuse tension (τόνος) de l'esprit qui brise (τὸ πλεκτικόν) et qui scinde (διαίρετικόν) ; bien plus : Héraclès est la tension (τόνος) qui règne sur le tout⁵⁰. On s'aperçoit déjà d'un penchant

⁴⁰ Diogène Laërce, VI, 105.

⁴¹ Ibid., VII, 86. Pour le logos accordé à l'homme par dieu, cf. Cléanthe, *L'Hymne à Zeus*, (= Stobée, Eclog. I, 1, 12 p. 25, 3, S.V.F., I 537), vers 4 de l'Hymne: ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος εἶσ' ἤχου μίμημα λαχόντες.

⁴² A.-J. Festugière, *Études de religion grecque et hellénistique*, Paris 1972, p. 124; cf. É. Bréhier, *Chrysippe et l'ancien stoïcisme*, Paris 1951, p. 201 et n. 13. Méthode déjà révélée par les Sophistes et ensuite par Platon ; elle a pourtant redonné vie aux anciennes formes traditionnelles. Ainsi, les interprétations stoïciennes fonctionnent comme facteur régulateur et réconciliateur entre les croyances théologiques antérieures et récentes.

⁴³ Alex d'Aphr., *de anima*, p. 159, 33 Bruns. (= S.V.F., III, 66) : « la vertu produit le bonheur »..

⁴⁴ D. L. VII, 91 (= S.V.F., I, 567). Ils s'inscrivent donc à la tradition socratique de l'acquisition de la vertu à travers l'enseignement.

⁴⁵ Cf. D. L. VI, 3 ; cf. Épictète, *Dis.*, I, 17, 10; cf. aussi A. Brancacci, *Oikeios logos. La filosofia del linguaggio si Antistene*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1990, pp. 43-84.

⁴⁶ Apollonius, *Soph. lex. Homer.*, p. 114 éd. Bekk. s.v. (= S.V.F., I, 526).

⁴⁷ Cf. P.-M. Schouhl, *Les Stoïciens*, textes traduits par É. Bréhier, sous la dir. de P. M. Schouhl, Paris, éd. de la Pléiade, 1962, p. 4, notice: « Aussi, pour détourner les esprits de l'idéal épicurien, il évoquait avec scandale un tableau où l'on verrait le plaisir assis sur un trône, entouré des vertus, transformées en servantes, qui n'auraient d'autre tâche que de le servir comme leur maître ».

⁴⁸ Ce mythe de Prodicos est arrivé jusqu'à nous par l'intermédiaire de Xénophon, *Mémorables*, II, 1, 21 et suiv.

⁴⁹ J. Pépin, *Mythe et allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1971, p. 339.

⁵⁰ Plutarque, *Des contradictions des Stoïciens*, cp. 7, p. 1034 D (= S.V.F., I, 563) ; cf. F. H. Sandbach, *Stoics*, London, Bristol Press, 1989 (1975), p. 112 : « The invention or development of the idea of tension a force that

du philosophe pour ce héros, auquel ses concitoyens l'identifiaient non seulement à cause de ses traits physiques (étant, lui-même, pugiliste⁵¹) mais aussi à cause des peines auxquelles il s'adonnait pour gagner de l'argent afin de pouvoir suivre les cours de Zénon⁵². Ayant choisi, lui aussi, une vie d'endurances pour gagner la sagesse, soutenait qu'il préférerait sa vie à celle des riches, disant même que, tandis que ceux-ci jouaient à la balle lui, travaillait à la bêche une terre dure et ardue⁵³, faisant ainsi allusion à la voie épineuse de la philosophie qu'il avait choisi, afin de gagner la vertu qui, seule, suffit au bonheur. Préconisant la simplicité de la nourriture, des vêtements et l'indifférence à tout besoin corporel, Cléanthe fut appelé par ses concitoyens « le second Héraclès »⁵⁴. Il disait même que les riches qui ont de quoi se nourrir, demandent aux autres de pourvoir à leurs besoins, et qu'ils se relâchent fort dans leurs études philosophiques⁵⁵ à savoir à l'exercice inlassable de l'intellect.

Néanmoins Cléanthe ne fut pas uniquement un philosophe ; il fut de surcroît un poète de talent, à lire ses vers éparses qui nous sont parvenus et son fameux *Hymne à Zeus*, cité par Stobée⁵⁶. Allégorie, étymologie et poésie, s'unissent sous sa plume quand il essaie, par une surprenante allégorie poétique de définir la présence du soleil dans la nature comme une intervention bienfaitrice et révélatrice du miracle universel.

Apollon (le soleil), écrit Cléanthe, le fils de Zeus au beau visage, joue à la lyre ; et pendant qu'il touche les cordes de son plectre (πλήκτρον), celles-ci à leur tour, touchent la terre et engagent le monde à entreprendre sa course harmonieuse⁵⁷. L'image révélée par ce fragment renvoie à la notion d'*eumetron*, d'harmonie⁵⁸; du bien tempéré ; de l'épanouissement du miracle de la nature, de la révélation de la beauté cosmique, où il n'y a rien de trop (μηδὲν ἄγαν).

Or, Cléanthe, procède à une nouvelle étymologie ; il analyse cette fois l'épithète *Lykeios*, attribuée à Apollon, afin de dévoiler son rôle sous-jacent dans la physique. Selon la liste des traités attribués par Diogène Laërce à Cléanthe on s'informe que le philosophe écrivit un traité *Sur les Dieux*⁵⁹; très probablement dans ce traité il faisait l'analyse étymologique du nom d'Apollon. D'après le témoignage de Macrobe, Cléanthe se référant à Apollon Lycéen disait qu'il est appelé Λύκειος, dans la mesure où l'on désire manifester l'énergie bienfaisante ainsi que l'intensité de la chaleur destructive du Soleil, car ses premiers rayons qui frappent le sol absorbent l'humidité ; ainsi un paysage, jusqu'alors statique, est totalement transfiguré et se remplit de fentes. Et il assimile cette procédure à l'invasion d'un troupeau de loups : celui-ci attaque le bétail qui ne se méfite pas et, tout en le dévorant, il transforme une image paisible à une scène de panique⁶⁰. Ici on est devant la scène qui montre la démesure, le πλέον, l'ἄ-μέτρον, qui dépasse le bien et qui devient πολύ (au sens de trop, ἄγαν). Alors ce πολύ, désirable au début, devient à présent déraisonné.

not only maintains the world as a whole but also gives strength to individual bodies and individual souls, was his (Cleanthes') chief contribution to Stoic theory».

⁵¹ Diogène Laërce, VII, 168.

⁵² Ibid., VII, 169. Selon le témoignage de Diogène Laërce (VII, 173), quand certains poètes le raillaient pour sa prétendue lourdeur d'esprit, Cléanthe ne se fâchait point, disant que, si Dionysos et Hercule ne se fâchaient pas des railleries à leurs dépens, pourquoi lui devrait-il l'être ?

⁵³ Ibid., VII, 171.

⁵⁴ Ibid., VII, 170.

⁵⁵ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁶ Cf. Cléanthe, *L'Hymne à Zeus* (= Stobée, *Eclog.* I, 1, 12 p. 25, 3, S.V.F., I 537).

⁵⁷ Clément d'Alexandrie, *Strom.* V, 8, 48, p. 764 P. (= S.V.F., I, 502).

⁵⁸ Cornutus, cp. 32 (*De Apolline* i. e. *de Sole locutus* (= S.V.F., I 503): « le Soleil, en sa qualité de musicien, cherche de sauver autant que possible, la symétrie réciproque des temps comme une cadence rythmique et dans la suite les voix des animaux et les bruits de tons des autres corps ».

⁵⁹ Diogène Laërce, VI, 175.

⁶⁰ Macrobe, *Saturnalia* I, 17, 36 (= S.V.F., I, 541).

Bienfaisance (celle de la lumière génératrice et de la chaleur du soleil) et destruction (la chaleur à l'excès) dérivent de la même source : de la lumière, du *lux*. Or, dans ce cas, la privation du beau dérive de l'excès. Voilà ce que Cléanthe a voulu montrer par cette étymologie.

Fidèle à sa simplicité herculéenne, il se contente de contempler la nature qui l'entoure en vue de fonder son enseignement de la physique.

Conclusion

On a déjà vu que la mesure va de paire avec la raison. À la place du luxe s'accorderait alors mieux avec la notion de mesure, la subtile supériorité, à savoir, une chaleur modérée et génératrice, l'*euteleia*. Le monde qui nous entoure pourrait en servir de preuve. C'est uniquement dans cette *euteleia*, étendue dans le Tout, que le luxe trouve son expression par excellence. Dans le cosmos, tout y est mesuré et rien n'y est laissé au hasard⁶¹. Dieu (*Logos* ou *Nature* dans ce cas) est un artisan créateur et décorateur qui vise à produire et à protéger le beau. La nature, affirment nos philosophes, « aime le beau (nous dirions le luxe modéré répandu dans la nature) et se plaît à la variété : ce qui l'illustre le mieux, c'est la queue du paon »⁶².

⁶¹ Aëtius, *Plac.*, I, 6. (= S.V.F., II, 1009); cf. aussi Aristote, *Métaphysique*, K8, 1065a9, Λ6, 1071b34; *Du ciel*, :«ἀλλ' εἰ μὴδὲν ὡς ἔτυχε» B 287b24-25 «οὐθέν γὰρ ὡς ἔτυχε ποιεῖ ἡ φύσις» B 290a31 «καίτοι οὐδὲν ὡς ἔτυχε γίγνεται τῶν κατὰ φύσιν» Γ 301a11.

⁶² Plutarque, *Des contradictions des Stoïciens*, 1044, 21 C.

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Bede's Eschatology and the Natural Philosophy of His Time*

Abstract | The article treats eschatological views of the Venerable Bede that bear a distinct shade of natural philosophical theories originating in Antiquity. These views are shown to be consistent with the spirit of Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram* and the Irish anonymous treatise *De ordine creaturarum* which focus on the four elements and their explanatory role in the theories concerning the nature of the world and the soul. The theory of "aerial purgatory fire" is under consideration. The fact itself that the discussion of the Last Judgment is placed by Bede in the final chapter of that natural philosophical treatise *De temporum ratione* confirms the suggestion that the eschatological events were considered by him within the framework of the teachings on the nature of the world, its origin and its end.

It can be shown that the basis of Bede's eschatological teaching indirectly goes back to the principles of natural philosophy of Antiquity. A number of them were borrowed from physics and cosmography. According to ancient tradition, which was accepted in the Middle Ages as well the visible world is composed of the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. Above the moon's orbit is the place of ether. Various authors identified the ether with pure air or a mixture of air and fire. The lower space below the moon is filled with a turbulent and cloudy atmosphere. It was assumed that each region is inhabited with its own creatures connatural to the prevailing element¹.

Another important principle was taken from psychology, which depended heavily on physics and physiology. The "physics" considered the soul as something composed of condensed air and fire. This assumption made psychology a part of ancient natural philosophy². Not by chance, Cicero stated: "If we are not ignorant in physics, then, without doubt, we are able to know what the soul is"³.

Already the Platonists and the Stoics placed the souls detached from their earthly bodies not beneath the earth but in the air region between the moon and the earth. The arguments to justify this point of view were taken from physics as well.

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¹ Valery V. Petroff, "Theoriae of the Return in John Scottus' Eschatology", in: *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and His Time. Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies, Maynooth — Dublin, August 16–20, 2000*, eds. James McEvoy and Michael Dunne, Leuven 2002, pp. 527–579.

² Aristoteles, *De anima* I, 1, 402 a 4–6; Idem., *De partibus animalium* 641 a 21–31.

³ Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* I, 71, 1-2: in animi autem cognitione dubitare non possumus, nisi plane in physicis plumbei sumus.

If all things have their “natural places” to which they aspire, then the aerial or ethereal soul after separation from the body tends to its “natural” place which is the lower atmosphere (air) or a higher region (aether)⁴.

Thus, in learned circles the theory of the “aerial purgatory” emerged, which combined: traditional religion (according to which the soul must go to Hades after death) and a physical doctrine (in accordance with which the elements that make up the soul’s body must seek for connatural areas themselves). Thus, Hades became the elevated area.

Christian theology added to this set of ideas the notion that the apostate angels, thrust down from the superior and purer realm of ether, are imprisoned up to Judgment Day in the lower atmosphere. Indeed, according to such New Testament pseudepigraph [the end of the 1st c. CE] as 2nd Epistle of Peter (2 Peter 2:4) “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (σπραίς ζόφου⁵ ταρταρώσας παρέδωκεν εἰς κρίσιν τηρουμένους)⁶. In conjunction with Ephesians 2:2, which speaks of “the prince of the power of the air” (τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος), it began to be interpreted in the sense that the fallen angels, along with their prince, had been thrust down from the superior and ethereal heaven to the lower turbid layer of ground air, where they were held in prison, awaiting Judgment Day. Similar theories are present in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Augustine, and John Cassian⁷.

⁴ Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* 1, 18-19 (42-43). Remarkably, the author of the *Book of Wisdom*, a Hellenized Jew (2nd half of the 1st c. BC), share the same view on the nature of the soul: “therefore, when it is extinguished, our body will be ashes, and our spirit will be diffused like a soft breeze, and our life will pass away like the wisp of a cloud, just as mist is dissolved when it is driven away by the rays of the sun and overpowered by its heat”; “quia extincta cinis erit corpus et spiritus diffundetur tamquam mollis aer et transiet vita nostra tamquam vestigium nubis et sicut nebula dissolvetur quae fugata est a radiis solis et a calore illius adgravata” (Wisdom 2:3 VUL).

⁵ Hesiodus, *Theogonia* 658: ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος; 730-731: ἔνθα θεοὶ Τιτῆνες ὑπὸ ζόφῳ ἠερόεντι κεκρύφαται βουλῆσι Διὸς νεφεληγερέταο; *Hymni Homerici*. In *Cereres* 482: ὑπὸ ζόφῳ εὐρώεντι; Homerus, *Ilias* XXI, 56: ὑπὸ ζόφου ἠερόεντος.

⁶ Ps.-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 1, 2, 1-4: “...having tied them, he threw them down to Tartarus (δήσας εἰς Τάρταρον ἔρριψε), the dark place located in Hades; its distance from earth is the same as the distance of the earth from heaven”.

⁷ Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* IV, 26; Tertullianus, *De anima* 54, PL 2, 742AB: apud illum (Platonem) in aetherem sublimentur animae sapientes; apud Arium, in aere; apud Stoicos, sub lunam... Reliquas animas ad inferos deiiciunt. Hos Plato uelut gremium terrae describit in *Phaedone*...; Origenes (Hieronymi translatio): *Homiliae in Ezechielem* IV, PL 25, 721BC: Aer quoque animalibus plenus est, secundum eiusdem Apostoli testimonium praedicantis: *In quibus aliquando ambulastis secundum saeculum mundi huius, secundum principem potestatis et aeris spiritus, qui nunc operatur in filiis diffidentiae* (Eph 2:1-2); Hieronymus, *In Epistolam ad Ephesios* I, PL 26, 466A: Princeps quippe aeris, et spiritus potestatis, qui in aere isto est, diabolus intelligitur, qui nunc operatur in filiis diffidentiae; Hieronymus, *In Epistolam ad Ephesios* III, PL 26, 546BC: de daemonibus quod in aere isto uagentur, Apostolus ait: “... (Eph 2:2). Haec autem omnium doctorum opinio est, quod aer iste qui coelum et terram medius diuidens, inane appellatur, plenus sit contrariis fortitudinibus; Joannes Cassianus, *Collatio* 8, 12, PL 49, 740-741: Tanta uero spirituum densitate constipatus est aer iste, qui inter coelum terramque diffunditur, in quo non quieti nec otiosi peruolitant, ut satis utiliter humanis aspectibus eos Providentia diuina absconderit atque subtraxerit; Augustinus, *Epistolae. Sex quaestiones contra paganos expositae* I, Ep. 102, PL 33, 378: daemonis, hoc est iniquae spirituali creaturae, quae in hoc proximo et caliginoso coelo habitans, tanquam in aereo carcere suo, praedestinata est supplicio sempiterno!; Augustinus, *Sermones de tempore* 222, PL 38, 1091: Sunt ergo ista spiritualia nequitiae in coelestibus; non ubi sidera disposita effulgent, et sancti Angeli commorantur; sed in huius aeris infimi caliginoso habitaculo, **ubi et nebula conglobatur**: et tamen scriptum est...; Augustinus *De civitate Dei* X, 11 (PL 41, 288-289): “iste Porphyrius, cum ad Anebonem scripsit Aegyptium... [daemones] dicit ob imprudentiam trahere humidum vaporem, et ideo non in aethere, sed in aere esse sub luna, atque in ipso lunae globo”.

Finally, another element of eschatological ideas, dating back to ancient philosophy, is the idea of a purifying fire or flood, in which the world will plunge at its end⁸. The notion that the end of the world will come in fire was extremely common. Heraclites was often quoted: the fire gave birth to everything, and everything will be resolved in a fire, the fire is the beginning and end of all⁹. At regular intervals the world turns into the fire, and then is formed out of the fire again. The Stoics associated the periodic conflagration of the world with repeated astrological cycles¹⁰. Elements are not destroyed, but transformed into each other during these cycles. Fire, condensing and cooling, successively turns into the air, water, earth, after which the reverse process of heating and dilution of the elements begins, in which everything returns into fire¹¹. Clement of Alexandria wrote about this in detail¹². The Stoics put forward the idea that some souls should perish in this conflagration while some should survive it¹³. Similar views on the death of the world by fire and water are present in the 1st-century Judaism. So Flavius Josephus (37–ca. 100) consequently reports that “Adam had predicted the death of the world partly from the fire, and partly from the abundance of water”¹⁴. Gnostic and Manichaean literature also relates to the eschatological fire. A New Testament pseudepigraph¹⁵ speaks of the fire of Judgment Day (2 Peter 3:5–12). Early theologians pointed out the continuity between Christian and pagan eschatology¹⁶. Christians explained these parallels by the fact that the Greeks had stolen their ancient wisdom from the Jews¹⁷.

If we are talking about the Venerable Bede, mention should be made that his thinking was also influenced by Irish sources. Starting from the 7th century, the interest in the physical world and cosmological issues had become a hallmark of Irish scientific thought (as opposed to continental scholarship which in general is characterized by higher spiritualism, which suppressed the natural science approach)¹⁸. According to the anonymous Irish treatise *De ordine creaturarum* (680–700)¹⁹, the space between the heavenly firmament and the earth is divided into two parts. The upper region (*excelsum spatium*) is the purest and finest; the reprobate angels with their prince had dwelled there before their fall. The Scriptures calls this region the heavenly paradise²⁰.

⁸ Plato, *Timaeus* 22cd; Seneca, *Quaestiones naturales* III, 38, 7.

⁹ Ps.-Plutarchus, *Placita philosophorum* 877CD.

¹⁰ Nemesius, *De natura hominis* XXXVIII, 37, 76–91 Einarson; Seneca, *Quaestiones naturales* III, 39, 1.

¹¹ This notion was usually ascribed to Heraclitus (Frs. 30, 31, 60 Diels-kranz). It is repeated by Chrysippus, Diogenes Laertius, Clement of Alexandria, Arius Didymus, Stobeus, Cicero, Plinius, Martianus Capella and others.

¹² Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* V, 14, 103, 6, 1 – 105, 2, 1; Origenes, *De principiis* IV, 4, 6, (33), 236–238: ignem, aerem, aquam terramque mutari in semet ipsa inuicem ac resolui aliud in aliud elementum mutua quadam consanguinatione docuimus.

¹³ Diogenes Laertius VII, 157; Ps.-Plutarchus, *Placita philosophorum* 899 C 3–6; Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Phaedonem commentaria* 10, 2, p. 57, 27.

¹⁴ Josephus Flavius, *Antiquitates Judaicae* I, 70, 3–5.

¹⁵ Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, New York/Oxford 1997, pp. 394–396.

¹⁶ Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* V, 1; V, 9, 3; V, 14: “Empedocles speaks about turning of all things into the substance of fire”.

¹⁷ Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* I, 17; Tertullianus, *Apologeticus adversus gentes* 47, PL 1, 519B – 520B); 23, PL 1, 415A.

¹⁸ M. Smyth, “The Physical World in Seventh-Century Hiberno-Latin Texts”, *Peritia* 5 (1986) 233; Ibid., “The Body, Death, and Resurrection: Perspectives of an Early Irish Theologian”, *Speculum* 83/3 (2008) 531–571.

¹⁹ M. C. Diaz Y Diaz, *Liber de ordine creaturarum. Un anónimo irlandés del siglo VII*. Monografias de la universidad de Santiago de Compostela 10, Santiago de Compostela 1972. Furthermore — *De ordine*.

²⁰ *De ordine* VI, 5, 37–38: illud spatium primitus angelis qui lapsi sunt cum suo principe adserunt ad habitandum fuisse destinatum; VI, 6, 42–44: hunc locum... paradisum caelestem scriptura pronuntiat.

The souls of the saints awaiting the future resurrection, received temporary rest here²¹. The angels who sinned in this high and pure air, had been cast into the lower part of the air near the earth. They now had aerial bodies and lived in a turbulent and cloudy atmosphere²². The author of the anonymous treatise believed that certain crimes can be purified in the fire of the Judgment Day, and some should be subject to punishment by eternal fire²³. The Eternal Flame is a corporeal place where bodies of sinners are tormented²⁴. The Irish author situates this place, however, not into the air but under the ground, calling it '*infernus inferior*'²⁵.

Let us look at how these ideas are formulated in the writings of the Venerable Bede. Similarly to his predecessors, Bede convinced that there are a higher and lower heavens. When the Book of Genesis speaks of the firmament, the ethereal region, where the stars are placed, is assumed, but when it is spoken about heaven simply – it is the air area where the birds fly²⁶. In the natural philosophical treatise *On the nature of things* Bede wrote:

“Air is everything resembling empty space that pours forth the breath of life beneath the moon²⁷. It is capable of sustaining the flight of birds, and clouds and tempests²⁸. It is also where the aerial powers, which have been hurled down in torment from their celestial seat, await the Day of Judgment in order that they may be condemned more harshly.²⁹ From it, when they appear to men, they take for themselves aerial bodies which resemble their just deserts. For above the moon, which runs along the boundary between the air and the ether, the vicinity of which Mount Olympus is said to reach up and touch, all things are pure and filled with the light of day...³⁰ But the clear upper air is assigned to heaven, while the lower air, which assumes bodily shape with moist vapors, is assigned to the earth, where there are fire, hail, snow, ice, and stormy winds, which are ordered to praise the Lord from the earth.³¹ But sometimes this lower air is also called heaven: hence Peter says that the heavens perished in the Flood, when the tempestuous air was

²¹ Ibid. VI, 9, 71–74: humano generi eundem locum animarum sanctarum interim quieti, dum resurrectionem expectant futuram idem putatores opinantur, quem etiam caelestem paradysum autumant esse nominatum.

²² Ibid. VI, 7, 51–58: angelos, qui in superiore etiam aeris ipsius puriore spatio pecasse putantur, in inferiorem et ipsi aeris huius obscurioris et turbulentiorem locum deturbati de superni et puri aeris suaeque dignitatis felicissima sede... dum aerea corpora habent et in aere nunc commorantur, non inconuenienter aestimantur etiam priorem suae beatitudinis sedem in aere sed puriore et subtiliore pridem habuisse; VI, 8, 52–53: [Satana] deiectus, in inferioris spatii, hoc est nebulosi ac brumosi aeris huius, infelicem ac miseram habitationem destinatus est.

²³ Ibid. XIII, 1, 1–3: sunt quaedam crimina quae igne iudicii purgari possunt, quaedam uero aeterni ignis poena complectenda sunt».

²⁴ Ibid. XIII, 7, 47–49: De illius autem aeterni ignis loco, id est inferni ergastulo, multi dixerunt ut corporalis locus sit, ubi peccatorum corpora cruciabuntur.

²⁵ Ibid. XIII, 8, 61–63: perspicue patet hunc locum qualemcumque sub terra esse, qui infernus inferior et terra obliuionis uocatur.

²⁶ Beda, *Hexaameron* I, PL 91, 26CD: firmamentum coeli... hoc nomine etiam aether indicetur, hoc est, superius illud aeris spatium quod a turbulento hoc et caliginoso loco in quo aues uolant usque ad astra pertingit, et esse tranquillum prorsus ac luce plenum non immerito creditur. Nam et errantia sidera septem, quae in hoc aetheris spatio uaga ferri perhibentur, Scriptura in firmamento coeli esse posita dixit... Nec mirandum si aether firmamentum coeli nominetur, cum aer appellatur coelum, ut supra docuimus.

²⁷ Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 2.38.102.

²⁸ Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 3.2, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 28.1, 64, 16.

²⁹ *De ordine* VI 7, 124; PL 83, 927.

³⁰ Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 2.7.48; Isidore, *Etymologiae* 14.4.13.

³¹ Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 3.10, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 28.1, 73.12–74.2; Ps. 148:7–8.

converted into waves (2 Peter 3:6). And the starry heavens of these aerial regions are called *the heavens of heavens* (Ps 148:4), as if being the superior of the inferior³².

Bede composed this passage from quotations derived from Pliny's *Natural history*, the Second Epistle of Peter, Augustine's *De genesi ad litteram* and *De ordine creaturarum*³³.

As already mentioned, philosophers and theologians resorted to the theory of the interconversion of the elements into one another to explain the mechanism of the world cataclysms: it can be seen in their reasoning about the physical circumstances of Judgment Day. The flood or the fire do not come from outside — it is just one element transforming into another. In the same natural order the lower bodies and the elements pass into the superior ones³⁴.

One of the sources of Bede here is Augustine, who in his book *De Genesi ad litteram* incorporates his angelology into the natural-philosophical framework, stating that this is the two active elements, fire and air, that prevail in angels and demons, and not the two passive ones, earth and water. According to Augustine, the celestial bodies of the punished angels were turned into aerial quality, in order that at the time of the Judgement they may become subject to the effects of fire as an element of the higher nature³⁵.

³² Beda, *De natura rerum* 25 — *De aere*, PL 90, 244A – 246A: Aer est omne quod inani simile uitalem hunc spiritum fundit infra lunam, uolatus auium nubiumque, et tempestatum capax. Vbi etiam potestates aerae superna sede deturbatae cum tormento diem iudicii durius tunc damnandae praestolantur. Ex quo hominibus apparentes, aerea sibi corpora meritis similia sumunt. Nam supra lunam, quae aeris aetherisque confinio currit, omnia pura ac diurnae lucis sunt plena, cuius uicinia tangere fertur Olympus... Sed et ipse aliquando coelum uocatur; unde et Petrus ait coelos in diluuiio periisse, cum aer turbulentus esset conuersus in undas. Et coeli coelorum dicuntur siderei coeli istorum aereorum, tanquam superiores inferiorum. English translation: Bede, *On the Nature of Things and On Times*, translated with introduction, notes and commentary by Calvin B. Kendall and Faith Wallis, Liverpool 2010.

³³ See also Beda, *Hexaemeron* I, PL 91, 26CD; Beda, *De natura rerum* 25, PL 90, 244A – 246A; Augustinus, *De ciuitate Dei* VIII, 22: daemones... esse spiritus... qui in hoc quidem aere habitant, quia, de coeli superioris sublimitate deiecti, merito irregressibilis transgressionis in hoc sibi congruo uelut carcere praedamnati sunt. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* III, 1, 5, PL 42, 870: Sed fateor excedere vires intentionis meae, utrum angeli manente spiritali sui corporis qualitate per hanc occultius operantes, *assumant ex inferioribus elementis corpulentioribus, quod sibi coaptatum, quasi aliquam vestem mutant et vertant in quaslibet species corporales, etiam ipsas veras, sicut aqua vera in verum vinum conversa est a domino (Ioh 2:9); an ipsa propria corpora sua transformant* in quod uoluerint, accommodate ad id quod agunt.

³⁴ On the Judgment Day: Augustinus, *De ciuitate Dei* XX, 24, PL 41, 697–698: aer iste uentosus... conuersus fuerat in humidam qualitatem; Beda, *De natura rerum* 25, PL 90, 246A: aer turbulentus esset conuersus in undas»; Beda, *Commentarii in Pentateuchum*, PL 91, 198BD: in aquarum natura pinguiore huius aeris qualitate conuersa...; On the bodies of human beings and angels: Augustinus, *De ciuitate Dei* XX, 16, PL 41, 682: ipsa [nostra] substantia eas qualitates habebit, quae corporibus immortalibus mirabili mutatione conueniant; Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram* III, 9–10, PL 34, 283–285: coelestia corpora... conuersa sunt ex poena in aeriam qualitatem, ut iam possint ab igne, id est ab elemento naturae superioris aliquid pati.

³⁵ Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram* III, 9–10, PL 34, 284–285: Nec ignoro, ita quosdam philosophos sua cuiusque elementi distribuisse animalia, ut... dicerent... aerea... animalia daemones esse; coelestia, deos... Quapropter, etsi daemones aerea sunt animalia, quoniam corporum aeriorum natura uigent; et propterea morte non dissoluuntur; quia praeualet in eis elementum, quod ad faciendum quam ad patiendum est aptius; duobus subterpositis, aqua scilicet et terra, uno autem superposito, id est igne sidereo: distribuuntur enim elementa ad patiendum duo, humor et humus; ad faciendum autem alia duo, aer et ignis... Aer autem a confinio luminosi coeli usque ad aquarum fluida et nuda terrarum peruenit... Superior uero pars aeris, propter puram tranquillitatem, coelo... coniungitur... In qua fortassis parte si fuerunt ante transgressionem suam transgressores angeli cum principe suo, nunc diabolo, tunc archangelo... non mirum si post peccatum in istam sunt detrusi caliginem; ubi tamen et aer sit, et humore tenui contextatur, qui commotus uentos, et uehementius concitatus etiam ignes et tonitrua, et contractus nubila, et conspissatus pluuiam, et congelantibus nubilis niuem, et turbulentius congelantibus densioribus nubilis grandinem, et distentus serenum facit, occultis imperiis et opere Dei, a summis ad infima

The so-called “physical” approach is typical for Irish authors. Some 7th-century Irish theologians resorted to the doctrine of four elements as can be seen in *De ordine creaturarum*, in *De miraculibus sacrae scripturae*, and two commentaries on the *Apostolic Epistles*³⁶. It is assumed in these treatises that the structure of the universe as a whole corresponds to the natural order of elements and natural phenomena are explained in terms of possible interconversions of the elements or through the presence of certain element. The *De miraculibus sacrae scripturae* (*On the Wonders of Holy Scripture*) is particularly characterized by a tendency to explain rationally the biblical miracles. It explains, for instance, that when God decided to turn Lot’s wife into a pillar of salt, He just made the salt that is always present in the human body as a small part of it, to spread throughout the body³⁷. A number of other miracles, too, is explained through the interconversion of the elements³⁸.

Bede’s reasoning about the world fire is in line with this tradition as well. He observes that the conflagration will destroy only the two inferior elements (earth and water), but the two superior ones (air and fire) will pass into a better quality:

“*The elements dissolve by the heat. There are four elements of which the world is consisted: fire, air, water, and earth. This great fire will consume all of them (Deu 5:25). But it will consume them not in that degree that they will completely stop to exist: this will be the case for the two of them only. But the other two will be restituted in a better form. That’s why it is said further on: New heavens and a new earth (2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17). He did not say: another heaven and another earth, but the old and the ancient ones turned into better state... For as the fashion of this world passes away (1 Cor 7:31) and not its substance, so it is not the substance of our flesh that will perish but only a form when what was sown as animal body, will be raised as a spiritual body (1 Cor 15:44)*³⁹.”

Similarly to Augustine, Bede believed that only the aerial heavens will be destroyed by the fire, as once they had been absorbed by the waters of the Flood⁴⁰. It should be noted that Bede’s

uniuersa quae creauit administrantis... Si autem transgressores illi antequam transgrederentur, coelestia corpora gerebant, neque hoc mirum est, si conuersa sunt ex poena in aeriam qualitatem, ut iam possint ab igne, id est ab elemento naturae superioris aliquid pati: nec aeris saltem spatia superiora atque puriora, sed ista caliginosa tenere permissi sunt, qui eis pro suo genere quidam quasi carcer est, usque ad tempus iudicii. The distinction between the active and the passive in application to the elements goes back to the Stoics. Cf. Nemesius, *De natura hominis* V, 126, PG 40, 625B: “The Stoics tell that some of the elements are active (δραστικά) and the other are passive (παθητικά): to the former they attributed the air and the fire, to the latter — the earth and the water”.

³⁶ M. Smyth, “The Physical World in Seventh-Century Hiberno-Latin Texts”, p. 215.

³⁷ *De miraculibus sacrae scripturae* I, 11, PL 35, 2161–62. See also. D. Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400–1200*, London 1995, p. 187–188.

³⁸ For the explanation of the water turning into wine see in *De miraculibus sacrae scripturae* I, 18 (2164–65), the discussion of the properties of the elements see *Ibid.*, II, 31 (2189–90).

³⁹ Bede, *Super epistolas Catholicas*, PL 93, 82BD: *Elementa uero calore soluentur. Quatuor sunt elementa, quibus mundus iste consistit: ignis, aer, aqua, et terra, quae cuncta ignis ille maximus absumet. Nec tamen cuncta in tantum consumet, ut funditus non sint, sed duo in tantum consumet, duo uero in meliorem restituet faciem. Vnde in sequentibus dicitur: Nouos uero coelos et nouam terram. Non dixit alios coelos et aliam terram, sed ueteres et antiquos in melius commutandos... Praeteriit enim figura huius mundi, non substantia, sicut et carnis nostrae non substantia perit, sed figura immutabitur, quando quod seminatur corpus animale, surget corpus spirituale (I Cor. XV).*

⁴⁰ Bede, *Commentarii in Pentateuchum*, PL 91, 198BD; Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XX, 18, PL 41, 684; XX, 24, 697–698.

cosmography is a Christian one, consequently above the corporeal world — above the firmament — the spiritual heavens are located⁴¹.

Bede portrays a comprehensive picture of the Last Judgment, similar to that of Augustine, in his treatise *The Reckoning of Time* (*De temporum ratione*). He states that:

— heaven and earth which exist now shall perish by fire, while the ethereal sky and the firmament will endure;

— the Last Judgment will be held in the air: this is where the saints will meet the Lord, as also those resurrected from the dead and those who at that time will be still living in the flesh on earth (1 Thessalonians 4:17);

— it is not known whether the reprobate will ascend in the air towards the Judge as well, or, in spite of the fact that their bodies will become incorruptible, they will remain on the ground, unable to rise, because of the burden of their sins. It seems, says Bede, that the excluded will wait for the verdict, standing on the ground, covered by a flame, while the righteous, rapt into the air, will not be hurt by the universal conflagration:

“The heavens, [St Peter] says, *shall pass away...* and *the elements shall melt with fervent heat* (2 Peter 3:10). What these heavens are which shall pass away?... Not, therefore, the firmament of heaven in which the fixed stars revolve, nor the ethereal heaven, that is, that great empty space between the starry heaven and our troubled atmosphere, full of pure and tranquil diurnal light, in which it is believed that the seven wandering stars roam, but this heaven of air, the one close to the Earth... which the waters of the Flood once destroyed when they overflowed the annihilated Earth — this [heaven] the fire of the Last Judgment will destroy, extending as far as [this heaven] and battenning upon it... At that time the airy heaven will shrivel up in fire, [but the heaven] of the stars will remain undamaged⁴²... There will be a new heaven and a new Earth after the Judgment — which is not one [heaven and earth] replacing another, but these very same ones [which] will shine forth, having been renewed by fire and glorified by the power of the Resurrection...

Whether the sea will be dried up by that mighty heat, or whether it will also be transformed into something better, is not evident...

When the resurrection of all the dead takes place *in the twinkling of the eye* (1 Cor 15:52), at the descent of the Lord to judgment, the saints will be immediately caught up *to meet Him in the air* (I Thessalonians 4.14–16)... But whether the reprobate as well will be lifted above the earth to meet the Judge when He comes, or whether the deserts of the sinners will weigh so heavily that even though they have immortal bodies they will be incapable of rising on high, it would appear more likely that, with the Lord presiding in judgment, the saints would take their place on high at his right hand, and [the reprobate] lower down on his left. But if at that time that lofty

⁴¹ Bede, *De natura rerum* 8, PL 90, 201A – 202A: Aquas, firmamento impositas, **coelis** quidem **spiritualibus** humiliores, sed tamen omni creatura corporali superiores...; Ps.-Macarius, *Sermones* 64 [*collectio B*] (ed. H. Berthold) 33, 3, 1: “In the same way as there exists a visible heaven (οὐρανός φαινόμενος) called the firmament (στερέωμα), so above it there exists another heaven which nature is the light (φωτοειδής), where abide the heavenly host and surely God and the angels... All this is divine, ineffable and similar to light, since it is spiritual and substantial (ὑποστατικά), belonging not to this world but to some another... When this firmament convolves then another one, which is invisible (τὰ μὴ φαινόμενα), will receive the elected”; Gregorius Nyssenus, *Apologia in Hexaemeron*, PG 44, 121D: “[Apostle Paul] left the air behind, crossed the paths of orbiting stars that fill up that region, he passed the higher arc of ethereal ambits and, being placed in the **immovable and intelligible nature** (ἐν τῇ στασίμῳ καὶ νοητῇ φύσει), he saw the beauties of **paradise**”; *De vita Mosis* II, 178: “when the apostle was... raptured to the sanctuaries that are **above heaven** (ὑπερουρανόις ἀδύτοις), the Holy Ghost revealed to him the mysteries of paradise”.

⁴² Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XX, 24, 744.15–745.71.

and mighty fire covers the whole surface of the Earth, and if the wicked who rise from the dead cannot be caught up on high, it is understood that, as one might expect, they would await the Judge's verdict standing on earth and surrounded by fire...

But if the fire of the furnace which surrounded them failed to touch the mortal bodies of the three children (Daniel 3.19-94), then it is amply plain that the world-wide conflagration will not harm His perfect servants who are caught up at the sound of the trumpet to meet the Lord in the air⁴³."

As we have seen, the main features of Bede's eschatological views bear a distinct shade of the natural-philosophical theories of his time. In general, they are consistent with the spirit of such of his sources as Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram* and the Irish anonymous treatise *De ordine creaturarum*. Ancient theories of the four elements play a significant role in Bede's eschatology including his theory of the "aerial purgatory". The fact itself that the reasoning on the Last Judgment is placed by Bede in the final chapter of his natural-philosophical treatise *De temporum ratione*, supports the suggestion that the eschatological events were perceived by him within the framework of the teachings on the nature of the world, its origin and its end.

⁴³ Bede, *The Reckoning of Time*, translated, with introduction, notes and commentary by Faith Wallis, Liverpool 1999, p. 243–246. However, Bede, *De temporum ratione* 70 — *De die iudicii*, PL 90, 575A – 576D: Non ergo firmamentum caeli, in quo sidera fixa circumeunt, non caelum aetherium... sed caelum hoc aerium, id est terrae proximum... quod aqua quondam diluuii deletis terrestribus transcendendo perdidit, hoc ignis extremi iudicii eiusdem mensurae spatio procrecens occupando disperdet... Nunc autem caelum quidem aereum igni marcescet, sidereum manebit inlesum... Cum descendente domino ad iudicium in ictu oculi fuerit omnium resurrectio celebrata mortuorum... Vtrum autem et reprobi tunc sublimius a terra leuentur obuam iudici uenturo, an meritis peccatorum ita praegrauentur ut quamuis immortalia corpora habentes ad altiora nequeant eleuari et praesidente ad iudicandum domino sancti in sublimi a dextris eius, ipsi autem in inferioribus adsistant a sinistris, tunc potius apparebit... [*Iniustos*] utpote in terra positos igni circumdatos iudicis expectare sententiam... Raptis ad uocem tubae obuam domino *in aera perfectis* seruis illius conflagratio mundana non noceat... Cf. Bede, *Commentarii in Pentateuchum*, PL 91, 198BD; *Super epistolas Catholicas*, PL 93, 82AD; Augustinus Hibernicus, *De mirabilibus sanctae Scripturae* III, 8, PL 35, 2197: resurrectionis corpora in tantum leuigabuntur, ut non solum crassa aqua, sed etiam nubibus et aere sustineantur, ut Apostolus ait, "Rapiemur ad occurrendum Christo in aera" (1 Thes 4:16).

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In Search of the Unity of Contemplative and Active Life: Thomas Aquinas' Theory of Music

Abstract | The text below was originally a paper which I gave at the SIEPM International Conference in Palermo in 2007. It was meant to be published afterwards but arrived one day too late and missed its chance. Then it travelled for a time from hand to hand and would have eventually found its life harbour in the drawer of my desk if Dr. Jozef Matula had not asked me for a "nice" text for the *Philosophica*. If it is of any value, please judge for yourself. My intention was to demonstrate the Platonism of the metaphysical aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas with the particular problem of the combined life of a human individual intellect and will. According to Aquinas, human intellectual work is either contemplative and active at the same time, and therefore infinite, or completely absent, irrelevant and closed.

.....

The subject of my present talk, *In Search of the Unity of the Contemplative and Active Life – Thomas Aquinas' Theory of Music*, is extraordinarily hard for me because suddenly I am forced by myself to refer to the whole of my past and contemporary philosophical investigations.¹

At the outset, I should say that Thomas Aquinas' theological philosophy is not a closed system, it is: «a sustained, ongoing conversation and reflection within the great traditions of philosophy and theology»². Aquinas thinks in terms of the far-reaching harmony of Aristotelianism, Platonism, Neoplatonism and the Christian strains of interpretation of the Bible. His theological philosophy and philosophical theology introduced an outstanding theory of art or music. His approach wisely makes human thought open for all possible valuable inspirations. Indeed, the history of the theory of ideas and therefore of music as well, cannot be completed, as it is constantly being continued. And more over, whether we are listening or not, it goes onwards, it plays on.

Thomas Aquinas built his philosophical thought on a special relationship to Plato and the three great medieval Platonisms: Boethian, Augustinian and Pseudo-Dionysian. In the texts of Aquinas there are constant references to Plato, Plotinus (via Proclus), to the Greek and Latin Church Fathers and to Augustine. Augustine was for him an unquestionable authority. He wrote apart from a set of separate comments upon the texts of Boethius (*In Boetium De trinitate et de hebdomadibus expositio*), Pseudo-Dionysius (*In librum Beati Dionysii De divinis nominibus expositio*), Peter Lombard (*Scriptum Super libros Sententiarum*) and of the *Liber de causis* (*Super Librum*

¹ At first I published a book on music and philosophy, based on the source studies of texts by Plato and Thomas Aquinas, entitled: *The Work of Art Well Done and Badly Done – A Critique of Irony as the Rule in Art* (G. Kurylewicz, *Dzieło sztuki i jego brak – Krytyka ironii jako zasady w sztuce*, Warszawa 1996). Eight years later I published another book on mystical love, metaphysical philosophy and music, that is, *Knowing and Not Knowing Being: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's Quest for the Metaphysical Harmony of All Existing Things* (G. Kurylewicz, *Poznanwanie i niepoznawanie istnienia – Giovanni Pico della Mirandola w poszukiwaniu metafizycznej zgodności wszystkiego, co istnieje*, Warszawa 2004).

² V. Boland, *Ideas in God according to St. Thomas Aquinas*, Leiden 1996, p. 332.

de causis expositio). In accordance with the historical knowledge of the time, he believed that Aristotle was the author of the *Liber de causis*. He additionally wrote a number of comments upon the actual texts of Aristotle, who was then newly being discovered and transmitted to the Latin world by the Arabian and Jewish philosophers. And perhaps perversely but accurately it might be said that Aristotle – the creative critic of Plato – was a Platonist himself, then Aquinas, writing comments upon the main texts of Aristotle (*Metaphysica, De anima, Physica, Ethica Nicomachea*), indeed was absorbing an Aristotelian Platonism, in particular the Platonic vision of the transcendent goodness and beauty and of human art which aims to such unconditioned beauty. In Aquinas' thought there is also deeply present the Platonism of Plato. He read – as is known – Plato's *Menon, Phaedo* and *Timaeus*. Aquinas' aesthetics, his theory of art, in which all composed art works search for their unity and human art is understood as a movement towards the form and as a deep spiritual desire to know the beauty and goodness of the divine art, is profoundly Platonic.

Thomas Aquinas inherited, from Plato and Boethius, a theory of music in its three main dimensions: a) as humanly performed vocal and instrumental music and poetry, b) as the whole of all arts understood as a special service for the Muses and the divine, which is the source of all music, c) as a sum of the principles (laws) essential for all kinds of divine creativity and also for human thoughts and works, which exist only because they are taking part in the divine. Aquinas much more frequently uses the word 'art' (*ars*) than the word 'music' (*musica*). But there is a point, I believe, in naming his art theory essentially a musical theory.³ For him the aim of art is material beauty or the higher one – spiritual beauty. The principle of beauty is a harmonious, purposeful and functional cooperation of the elements, a special, internal, based on numbers, music, which causes, for example, the building bricks to sustain the structure of a huge edifice: a castle, cathedral, city wall, bridge, road. There is artistic beauty and moral beauty. All beauty seems an effect of the three metaphysical conditions: *consonantia, integritas* and *claritas*, which originate from the art of music.⁴ Beauty is knowable by a human intellect according to the rule of *adaequatio rei ad intellectus*. Its mystery consists in proportion.⁵ The proportion, the numerical music proportion is the metaphysical principle of the unity of the created universe.⁶ And the Creator of the universe is recognised as the best, most powerful, good and wise musician (*summum virtuosus agens*), whose perfection is so radical, that we only can know that He exists, without possibility, in this our life, of knowing anything positive about His essence. Aquinas is a master of negative theology of the positive transcendence.⁷

The key words of Thomas Aquinas' theory of music are: 'idea' or 'forma'. They denote essentially the original Platonic words: ἰδέα or εἶδος. For Aquinas, as for Plato, the idea means the true epistemic and causal principle of things, the principle which belongs to the broad, distinguished group of transcendent principles: exemplar, formal (or formative) and final causes (*exemplaris, formalis ac finalis causa*). The transcendent ideas are clear in a rather limited way for the human mind. Only by them and through them, however, do things exist and are knowable. For Aquinas there are no ideas outside God, for ideas are in God. By means of philosophy, it is rather difficult to prove the existence of ideas as completely real and completely simple ultimate principles of

³ U. Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, translated by H. Bredin, Harvard 1988, pp. 122–163.

⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 39, 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 5, 4.

⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *In De divinis nominibus* IV, 6.

⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 2, 1 n.

natural things (spiritual or material substances) and of the products of culture. In this context, culture is understood as the prolongation or following of the rules of nature and using them with a better or worse effect for the soul and body of a human being. Thomas Aquinas nevertheless managed to demonstrate that transcendent ideas are transcendent causal forms, and more precisely, they are one simple and omnipotent form present in the Divine Mind and identical with Him. Long before Aquinas, the Middle Platonists, and subsequently Philo of Alexandria and Origen, bound ideas tightly with God. Plotinus and after him Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius attempted to define the mode of presence of ideas in God. It was finally Augustine and Boethius who first formulated statements saying that transcendent ideas are present (exist) in the Mind of God.⁸ Thus, Aquinas' investigations of transcendent ideas rank with the longer Platonic and Neoplatonic tradition of connecting or identifying ideas – the first causes of all reality – with God, with the Divine Mind. Through the Neoplatonist texts of Boethius, of Ps. Dionysius, through the *Liber de causis* and the Proclus' commentaries on Plato's late dialogues (*Parmenides*, *Sophist*, *Timaeus*) Aquinas could learn the late and most interesting version of Plato's theory of ideas, with its special shifts and uncertainties.⁹ This matters, because the Platonic "experienced" and hypothetical description of ideas assumes that being, or existence, centred on the transcendent divine ideas, is attached to everything and is the very basis and source of all things, which „have“ being and, by participation in it, exist. In Aquinas' own words, Plato reached such a metaphysical cognition under the „compulsion“ or „coercion“ of the truth itself. He thereby says it was a pagan philosopher who, as if swayed by the truth, formulated the theory of ideas.¹⁰ It is not the case, however, as is suggested in Plato's *Symposium*, *Phaedo* or *Republic*, or particularly *Sophist* (248e and 254d), that man by means of his ideas or notions (λόγοι) can know directly divine ideas (ιδέαι παντελείς, ὄντα ἀπλᾶ), ideas as aspects or contents of the maximally actual, intensive and simple being. Speaking about man, Aquinas states that the human will, the individual, human spiritual power of desiring, is open to the infinite, and the will wishes that the intellect knows, and the intellect knows that the will wishes (*voluntas vult quod intellectus cognoscit et intellectus cognoscit voluntatem velle*), although it does not know all that the will intends. In the human being the will is always "before" the intellect. No decision of the will is made, however, without the knowledge and interaction of the intellect. The will and the intellect are as if two sides of the same thing, thus they cannot work separately, thereby the vice of the one weakens the other, and the strength of the one strengthens the other. The psychological norm is, however, that the human will wishes more than the human intellect can grasp, since human intellectual cognition is hypothetical and gradual. The first is the simple perception of the existence of a concrete, material thing, and putting it into notions, which are already the internal words of the intellect known by it through the first principles of cognition (*prima principia intellectus*

⁸ Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*, LXXXIII, A. Mutzenbecher (ed.), Opera, v. 2, CCSL, 44A; Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae* IV, W. Heinemann (ed.), London 1968.

⁹ No doubt Aquinas knew the content of Plato's *Sophist* (esp. fr. 266–268) and *The Laws* (fr. 897). The following dialogues by Plato were translated into Latin: Chalcidius (*Timaeus*, about 350), William of Conches (*Glossae super Platonem*), Henricus Aristippus (*Phaedo and Meno*, Palermo, about 1156) and William of Moerbeke who did the translation of Proclus' comments on Plato's *Parmenides* and *Sophist* (*Expositio in Parmenidem and Theologia Platonica*) and also Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus* (*Commentum in Timaeum*). See: *Identifier Sources et Citations*, J. Berlioz et collaborateurs (eds.), Turnhout 1994 (p. 49 n).

¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 11, 3, c: antiqui philosophi, quasi ab ipsa coacti veritate, ponentes principium infinitum, posuerunt unum tantum principium; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 6, 4: [Plato] ponebat ideam entis et ideam unius separatam quam dicebat *per se ens et per se unum*: et eius participatione unumquodque dicitur ens vel unum. Hoc autem quod est per se ens et per se unum, ponebat esse summum bonum. Et quia bonum convertitur cum ente, sicut et unum, ipsum per se bonum dicebat esse Deum, a quo omnia dicuntur bona per modum participationis.

or *prima intelligibilia*). This is how Aquinas regards contemplation: it is for him an intellectual catching or grasping of a material or abstract thing (*simplex apprehensio*). Secondly comes the act of judging, in Aquinas' words, the moving from one thing to the other (*processus de uno ad aliud*). It is because the human intellectual form of cognition presents something in such a way that it does not present something else. Thus, all that the human intellect perceives, fragmentary and in parts, has to be reduced to a unity by means of making statements, whether affirmative (by putting notions together – *compositio intellectus*) or negative (by dividing notions – *divisio intellectus*). The formulated “statements” of the intellect turn into speech or any other expression. The third and final operation of the intellect is a rational argument (*rationatio*) that leads to knowing (*visio*) or not. Human cognition, both deductive and inductive, relies on a certain “way” of accomplishing knowledge by means of recollecting, imagining, thinking, considering, regarding, and reasoning. And nothing in intellectual cognition may happen that is not admitted and intended by the will. In effect, the human intellect, by means of affirmation and negation, can form things, which are not perceived by the senses (primarily watching and hearing) and can imagine things, which are not even expected by them. Human cognition, however, is a certain spiritual movement the parts, or stages, of which are individualized by non-spiritual and complex material substances (*composita*) and their features (*accidentia*). This is why man writes his thoughts and expresses them in words. Or, starting from the music of words and of more abstract music sounds, for the art of music is here considered as the basis of all, man seeks additional forms of complex, material expression, finds other tools of expression and invents new disciplines of art and their new combinations.

The process of human cognition is natural, but not necessary and self sufficient or subsistent. Human knowledge is not the cause of its own existence (*cognitio intellectus humani non est causa sui esse*) and advance (*et eius processio*). Human cognition – confused, fragmentary and temporal – if it succeeds, does so rather by means of participation in a cognition which is clear, complete and non-temporal. Participation (*participatio*) does not mean here ‘to be a part of’, but the non-mutual relation of similarity, the relation with the analogy of being which links every effect with its cause. And that in which human spiritual cognition (incomplete and involved in multiplicity and division) participates analogically is a simple and perfect clarity of ideas, which are known, completely and actually, by the intellect of God. This statement of Aquinas refers to his wider, and Platonic, vision of the causality and similarity of beings, of their different modes of existence: the simple and complete existence or partial and complex. All true intellectual cognition is from God (*omnis intellectus apprehensio a Deo est*) and since every effect resembles its cause, for every cause effects things similar to it, there is a possibility of an intellectual return to God and of a true knowledge of things. Aquinas, continuing the traditional Platonic and neo-platonic (Pseudo-Dionysian in particular) theory of cognition and creation through similarities, states that: «sapientia dicitur mobilis esse similitudinariae, secundum quod suam similitudinem diffundit usque ad ultima rerum. Nihil enim esse potest, quod non procedat a divina sapientia per quamdam imitationem, sicut a primo principio effectivo et formali; prout etiam artificata procedunt a sapientia artificis. Sic igitur in quantum similitudo divinae sapientiae gradatim procedit a supremis, quae magis participant de eius similitudine, usque ad infima rerum, quae minus participant, dicitur esse quidam processus et motus divinae sapientiae in res»¹¹.

¹¹ Ibid., I, 9, 1, ad 2: Wisdom is called mobile by way of similitude, according as it diffuses its likeness even to the outermost of things; for nothing can exist which does not proceed from the divine wisdom by way of some kind of following of it, as from the first effective and formative principle; as also works of art proceed from the wisdom of the artist. And so in the same way, inasmuch as the similitude of the divine wisdom proceeds in degrees from the highest things, which participate more fully in the likeness, to the lowest things which participate

Aquinas' reflection on art, with music at its centre, is connected with his metaphysics and theory of transcendentals and of being in particular. Being is first because, says Aquinas, the human intellect first discovers the being of a thing (*esse rei*), then, having already such a preliminary cognition, the human intellect goes with further definitions, and it finds the thing: as this one and unique (*unum*), as congruent with the thought (*verum*), as attractive and desirable (*bonum*), as something which the human intellect, in the process of cognition, begins to like and admire (*pulchrum*). In a metaphysical sense the sequence: being, one, true, good, beauty is interchangeable, but irreplaceable by any other sequence. For Aquinas, being is the core of each thing. Being as existence (*esse*) is something which is most internal, intimate and profound in each individual thing, it shapes or forms each thing from within. It is the very act of everything that exists or may exist. Therefore being as existence is the authentic, hidden, own and true reality of the thing.¹² The metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas is based on the Platonic-Aristotelian axiom of priority of being as existence. This axiom states that something is possible or potential because something is real or actual. What makes a thing possible is its existence and, in particular its relation to its individual form. Existence forms the thing and makes it by the agency of its one and individual form. Or, more precisely, form gives existence (*forma dat esse*) to the thing; form is an agent by which being shapes the thing. Forms of the substances and of their essential and secondary or accidental features are composed of essence (*essentia*, i.e. of what the thing is) and of being (*esse*, i.e. of that the thing is). All the forms refer to the composed things and their composed features and relations. The exception is being which is absolutely simple and perfect and not made either by something else or by itself. It is being for which its existence is its essence. Such being is the form, which is absolutely simple, and both intellectual and spiritual. In the metaphysical sense it is God. And this is the chief metaphysical discovery and the central subject of Thomas Aquinas' theological philosophy and philosophical theology. In terms of philosophy, God is for Aquinas a most exceptional and most individual and unique being whose existence is its essence (*ens famosissimum cuius esse est essentia sui*). Being identical with what one is, is consequently only possible for one perfect being. All other beings, which constitute the whole innumerable multitude of beings, are only on their way to their identity and authenticity.

The theory of art, or music precisely, is, for Aquinas, no less important than the theory of nature. And the problem of art, or music, can be considered as an entrance, narrow and uncertain, to the immense reality of all things and all relations. For the consideration of every action, which is adequate to the ontological status of the human being, can be regarded as a way towards the first and absolute being of God. The material substance and its features are called by Aquinas the adequate objects of human cognition, whereas its proper objects are spiritual and simple things, with the divine mind at the top, beyond the scope of all categories which the human intellect can discover or invent. Art is parallel to philosophy as practical cognition is parallel and related to theoretical cognition. Art (*ars*) is an intellectual cognition of that aspect of being which affects the mind's liking, namely beauty. There is beauty of shoes, a bridge, a syllogism, a song and a pure idea. Music preserves its special status as the art of awakening the human mind to the spiritual

in it in a lesser degree, there is said to be a kind of procession and movement of the divine wisdom to things. Compare: Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Coelesti Hierarchia* 1: *Omnis processus divinae manifestationis venit ad nos a Patre luminum moto.*

¹² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 8, 1, c: *Esse autem est illud quod est magis intimum cuilibet, et quod profundius omnibus inest: cum sit formale respectu omnium quae in re sunt. (...) Unde oportet quod Deus est in omnibus rebus et intime;* Thomas Aquinas *In I Sent.* d. 8, q.1 ad 1m: *Deus est supra omnia per excellentiam suae naturae, et tamen est in omnibus rebus ut causans omnium esse;* Thomas Aquinas *In I Sent.* d. 37, q. 1, ad 1m: *Essentia divina (...) est intra rem quasi operans et agens esse uniuscuiusque rei.*

life, but constantly depends on the particular conditions and advantages, which are provided by the material. The matter (*materia*) means the potentiality of receiving shapes, and is related to its non-material, defining form. Every material has a form to which it is related. The work of the human artist consists in the invention of the relations of forms to the materials, which must be congruent with natural forms and their actions. Architecture must fit the natural shape of the surroundings. Human music cannot be made apart from the scale of human hearing, and only being limited to the extent of natural human perception and production of sounds can start its proper movement towards the divine and supranatural music of transcendent ideas.

Aquinas chooses music for similar reasons as Plato and Boethius. Music concerns the forms, or ideas; thus making music ranks with intellectual cognition. Form has a first range meaning in theoretical (contemplative) and practical (active) cognition or knowledge. Aquinas writes: “An agent acts on account of the form, insofar as the likeness of the form is in the agent” (*agens non ageret propter formam, nisi in quantum similitudo formae est in ipso*)¹³. The artist intends to bring the form of the thing which is to be made (*forma rei fiendae*) as close as possible to the form which he conceived in his mind (*[artifex] intendit rem assimilare formae quam mente concepit*). It is consequently only through lacking the notion of art, more precisely, through misunderstanding the notion, or idea, of art, that one fails to recognise false art, or an artist departs from his true intention and ignores the original and inner word of his intellect (*verbum cordis*). The proper function of art is following truth or even the fulfilment of truth (*veritatem facere*)¹⁴, which may be more clear in regard to what is said in *John* 3:21: «he who fulfils the truth comes to the light» (*qui facit veritatem venit ad lucem*). The need or necessity for truth does not constrict the human mind but it is a wise path of thought, it delivers the mind to the open sea of reality. The true notion of an intellect of an individual human “reaches” being and through such a notion, or idea, he or she enters the light and this is, precisely, what Thomas means by *claritas* – brightness and power without which there is no true art.

The aim of art is the recollection of the object of desire, which is lacking (*desideratum*). In the weaker art this occurs by chance (*a casu*), in the more powerful art essentially (*principaliter*). No human work of art, however brilliant, can replace the very object of intellectual desire, which is a truly needed “thing”, the transcendent idea. Attached to that most desirable object (*desideratum*), it is like a stained-glass window, which, although designed relatively well, fades because of the lack of light from outside. Beauty appears on every level of theory and contemplation. For the human intellect, beauty is knowable because it is convertible with truth (*pulchrum respicit vim cognoscitivam*) and it is not knowable, because it is convertible with the good and is the desired infinite object of the will (*respicit appetitum*)¹⁵.

¹³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 15, 1, c: In omnibus quae non a casu generantur, necesse est formam esse finem generationis cuiuscumque. Agens autem non ageret propter formam nisi in quantum similitudo formae est in ipso...

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17, a.1, c.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 5, 4, ad 1: pulchrum et bonum in subiecto quidem sunt idem, quia super eandem rem fundatur, scilicet super formam, et propter hoc bonum laudatur ut pulchrum. Sed ratione differunt. Nam bonum proprie respicit appetitum: est enim bonum quod omnia appetunt. Et ideo habet rationem finis: nam appetitus est quasi quidam motum ad rem. Pulchrum autem respicit vim cognoscitivam: pulchra enim dicuntur quae visa placent. Unde pulchrum in debita proportionem consistit: quia sensus delectatur in rebus debite proportionatis, sicut in sibi similibus; nam et sensus ratio quaedam est, et omnis virtus cognoscitiva. Et quia cognitio fit per assimilationem, similitudo autem respicit formam, pulchrum proprie pertinet ad rationem causae formalis.

For Aquinas' philosophy and his understanding of the analogy of divine and human art, the Platonic theory of ideas plays the crucial part. Only according to the theory of ideas can one see the metaphysical reasons why a creature cannot be identical with its Creator, why the created world cannot be absolutely perfect. The theory of ideas also provides reasons why a human work of art cannot be equal to its author, why the author cannot be equal to his art, and why his art cannot be equal to the pure form of transcendental beauty. And this may be read as a suggestion addressed to an artist to persuade him to form his work so as to keep it open to further formation in the intellectual ascent. In this sense, for instance, a musical text should be the starting point for the endless work of seeking better, different sounds of the sets of qualities (harmonies, rhythms, melodies and words/thoughts) enclosed in the notes of the concrete musical composition. In the view of the Platonic theory of ideas, one can see that the true artist, or musician, is a performer and the performer is an artist, as a knower is at the same time the lover of the object of his cognition, and he knows insofar as he assimilates himself to that which he is intending in his intellectual love. This is actually perennial music (*musica perennis*). The artist on his way to it receives, potentially, proper satisfaction. His joy is a joy of passing, successfully, through the stages of the wholly impassable and completely unimaginable and unconceivable way. Art, and music especially understood as the movement towards the form (*motus ad formam*)¹⁶ is proportional to the moving intellect (*actus proportionatur eius cuius est actus*)¹⁷, and therefore is proportional to the knower, to his dreams, abilities and craft. It is the "place" in which the human practical and theoretical reason can meet with the divine. If this happens, it can be compared to a miracle.¹⁸

A human being, as every complex being, is composed of "parts": of a soul and body, of essence, existence and accidents, of form and matter. The human search for perfection and goodness for wise reasons means the search for unity of intellect and will, of theoretical and practical cognition and knowledge and of a contemplative and active life. Aquinas' vision of human dignity requires from a man an undertaking of an individual search for the connection or, possibly, the unity of virtues (*connexio seu unio virtutum*)¹⁹. In this perspective, music in the partial sense demands an acceptable performance of a musical work from a musician with no regard how his work may be further used and how it affects his own soul. Music, however, in the perfect and completed sense demands the unbearable from a musician – a mission of leading his own soul and the souls of other people, and other creatures, towards goodness in general. Music in its maximum sense must be and make good in the deep metaphysical sense of participation in the divine idea of goodness and truth.

Aquinas assumes, in keeping with the ancient Greek Platonic and Pythagorean traditions, and after Boethius in particular, that music made by a man – vocal and instrumental – is the precise art of leading a human soul towards the idea of goodness or towards its opposite. Vocal and instrumental music, however, using the principles of mathematics, in a precise accordance with the complicated numeric and formal proportions – because the entire world was made according to numbers and forms, which God-Creator has invented – is part of human and cosmic music. Given this, it becomes evident that the power of effective cognitive and ethical leadership upon the human soul can only be found in music which leads towards the good. In other words, only music, which leads toward goodness, is true music. This is how Thomas Aquinas continues the

¹⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *De potentia Dei*, q.10, a.2.

¹⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 12, 3, c.

¹⁸ F. Pouliot, *La doctrine du miracle chez Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris 2005.

¹⁹ Moral virtues: prudence, moderation, courage, justice; theological: love; intellectual: wisdom.

Platonic theory of music, i.e. creation in the realm of sounds and words, according to which irony, that which is intellectual and musical dissonance, is a useful rule in human art and thought (irony increases the human conscience and diminishes naivety) but it needs to be completed with a higher rule, that is the rule of harmony.²⁰ Harmony, being a concordance of dissonance, a combination of structural consonance and congruence with spiritual clarity and power, harmony evoked by cognitive love, is the only way for the conversion of the human soul, together with the entire world, towards the transcendent ideas of being, truth, unity and goodness, which, for Aquinas, is of greatest importance, because it is identical with the being of God.

The passionate, love-like seeking for harmony and what is more, for unity of *praxis* and *theoria*, action and contemplation, moral, intellectual and theological virtues, although it seems hard and unattainable, does make essential sense. According to Thomas Aquinas, true art, true music (on its every level: instrumental, human, cosmic and divine) is intellectual knowledge. Divine music is maximum knowledge, whereas music humanly performed, in human measure made, is, proportionally a smaller act of knowing, limited to a concrete, individual man. In comparison with divine music, human music begins low, but there is nothing wrong in it if only it is a real, individual and honest knowledge, a real, individual and just way of trying to go beyond toward contemplation of the vast, immense and outstanding Divine reality. In this sense the highly structured, polyphonic motet equally with the short prayer delivered in a poem or a song may stay low or explode high, straight “to the ear of God”.

I wonder which music – in Notre Dame or on a river bench along the Seine,²¹ or that music he could not have heard perfectly – inspired Aquinas later, in his *Treatise on God*, to write: «Universum non potest esse melius propter decentissimum ordinem his rebus attributum a Deo in quo bonum universi consistit. Quorum si unum aliquod esset melius, corrumperetur proportio ordinis; sicut si una chorda plus debito intenderetur, corrumperetur citharae melodia»²²

²⁰ U. Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas* and G. Kurylewicz, *Krytyka ironii jako zasady w sztuce*.

²¹ Aquinas was chosen twice for teaching theology, as Magister in Sacra Pagina, in the University of Paris, in 1256 and before 1273. At the time there were students and followers of the two famous cantors and composers in the Notre Dame Cathedral: Leoninus and Perotinus. They played either the more complex three or four voice *moteti* and *rondelli* or the simple one voice *sequentiae*, *hymni*, *laudi*. Whereas in other parts of the city could be heard the one voice and much more simple *cantigas* or, more likely, *carmina*.

²² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 25, 6: The universe cannot be better than is, due to the decent order given to the things from God, on which relies the whole goodness of the universe. So, if one thing was made better, it could ruin the proportion of the order. Just like the tightening of the one string higher could interrupt and break completely the melody (and music) of the cithara.

