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## CUPRINS

Adriana NEACȘU, <i>Michel Foucault sur le souci de soi chez Platon et les néoplatoniciens</i>	5
Kathrin BOUVOT, Gianluigi SEGALERBA, <i>Knowledge of God, Empowerment of the Mind and Transformation of the Subject in Spinoza</i>	30
Darius PERSU, <i>Instrumentelle Rationalität und Skeptizismus. Lässt sich die Hume'sche Auffassung der praktischen Rationalität als Skeptizismus verstehen?</i>	71
Ionuț RĂDUICĂ, <i>Proprietatea ca postulat la Kant</i>	82
Ana BAZAC, <i>Up to a Point, the Dialectical Materialism is Dialectical Idealism, in Hegel's Meaning; but then It is More</i>	94
Anton ADĂMUȚ, <i>Un exemplu substanțialist: descoperirea Americii</i>	132
Constantin STOENESCU, <i>Could Paul Taylor's Biocentrism Be Interpreted as a Rawlsian Theory of Justice?</i>	143
Vasile VISOȚCHI, <i>Concepte fundamentale pentru o fenomenologie a transformării experienței</i>	159
Susana Miró LÓPEZ, Carmen de la CALLE MALDONADO, <i>A Christian Humanism vs. The Transhuman Approaches on Finitude and Death</i>	177
Miguel LÓPEZ-ASTORGA, <i>Heuristics, Dual-process Theories, Logic, and Mental Models</i>	191
Cristinel TRANDAFIR, <i>Considerații istorico-teoretice libertariene despre "obiceiul pământului" specific satelor devălmașe românești – sec. IV- XIX-lea. Un studiu de istorie socială și filosofia culturii. Partea a II-a</i>	203
<i>Recenzie</i>	
Laurențiu Staicu, <i>Socrate în blugi sau Filosofia pentru adolescenți</i>	223
Lorena STUPARU	
AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS	227
CONTENTS	229



# MICHEL FOUCAULT SUR LE SOUCI DE SOI CHEZ PLATON ET LES NÉOPLATONICIENS

Adriana NEACȘU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Analyzing the concept of care of the self in ancient Greco-Roman culture, Foucault pays special attention to Plato and the Neoplatonists. From his point of view, the first great elaboration of the concept of care of the self is found in the Platonic dialogues, and the Neoplatonists fit, in general, into the same theoretical framework established by Plato. Of course, due to the historical evolution of philosophical thought and collective mentality, Neoplatonists differ from Plato through some important aspects of their conception of care of the self. But these, though are clear enough to give the Neoplatonists an undoubted originality, nevertheless fail to give their theoretical position a radically different configuration from that of Plato. Therefore, what is essential in the concept of care of the self in Plato is kept intact in the Neoplatonists. In short, it's about the (approximate) identity between care of the self and self-knowledge, as well as about the access, through them, to the truth, by which reveals to the soul, that is, to that self that knows itself and takes care of itself, that it is of the same nature as divinity. These elements constitute a unity which, according to Foucault, will not be found as such in any other philosophical tradition of Antiquity. The conclusion is that although Michel Foucault analyzes only one dialogue of Plato, namely Alcibiades, as well as only the Neoplatonists' comments on it, all aspects that he highlights manage to give sufficient coherence and credibility to his hypothesis.*

**Keywords:** *care for oneself, self-knowledge, self-culture, truth, condition of spirituality, art to live, Plato, Neoplatonists.*

## Vérité et spiritualité chez Michel Foucault

Préoccupé par le problème de la connaissance, Michel Foucault a été intéressé par les rapports complexes entre le sujet de la connaissance et la vérité. En ce sens, il se demandait à quelles conditions le sujet peut atteindre la vérité. En fait, son intérêt a été d'étudier les formes historiques révélatrices

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à la façon dont les gens envisageaient qu'ils étaient en mesure d'atteindre la vérité.

Bien sûr, le concept de vérité est complexe, et suivant le contexte il peut signifier des choses bien différentes. Parfois, il est décrit ou défini en termes très techniques. Mais en général, la vérité exprime une relation entre le sujet et l'objet et implique que le sujet a été en mesure d'acquérir une bonne compréhension de la façon d'être de l'objet. À son tour, l'objet ne vise pas quelque chose de simple et sans équivoque, et la manière dont il est conçu par le sujet de la connaissance laisse sa marque sur le sens de la vérité. Enfin, la perception de soi du sujet de la connaissance est également essentielle pour configuration concrète de ses relations avec l'objet de la connaissance. Il est évident que, tout au long de l'histoire, tous ces éléments fondamentaux impliqués dans la réalisation de l'acte cognitif ont évolué et ont acquis de différentes formes, conduisant à diverses structures dans le processus de la connaissance.

Abordant la question de la vérité dans son cours au Collège de France en 1981-1982, *Herméneutique du sujet*, et en tenant compte de la diversité des formes de la connaissance, Michel Foucault admet que la philosophie antique et celle moderne diffèrent une de l'autre, entre autres choses, par le fait que chacun d'eux travaille avec son propre genre de vérité. Ainsi, la philosophie antique comprend la vérité comme une élévation et un accès à l'être, le fondement absolu de l'existence de toutes choses, y compris de la façon d'être du sujet connaissant. En outre, dans la vision ancienne, l'être est identifié avec la vérité, ainsi que l'accès à être signifie implicitement l'accès à la vérité. Au lieu de cela, la philosophie moderne comprend la vérité comme une acquisition de connaissances correctes sur un certain nombre de choses concrètes, circonscrites dans une région ou d'une autre de la réalité qui nous entoure.<sup>2</sup> Ceci n'est pas une nouveauté introduite par Michel Foucault dans l'exégèse philosophique, il avait déjà été souligné par

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<sup>2</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet, Cours au Collège de France, 1981-1982*, Seuil/Gallimard, 2001, pp. 15-20. (En fait, les modernes mettront de plus en plus l'accent sur la « vérité logique » plutôt que sur la « vérité ontologique », toutes deux déjà mises en évidence par Aristote et également fonctionnelles dans la philosophie médiévale).

Martin Heidegger.<sup>3</sup> Michel Foucault souligne, cependant, que la différence dans la compréhension de la vérité exprime un contraste radical entre l'attitude des anciens et celle des modernes vis-à-vis du processus de la connaissance. Cette différence réside dans le fait suivant: les anciens admettent que, pour arriver à la vérité, il est nécessaire un effort de transformation, même de transfiguration ou de « conversion » de la part du sujet, où il devient semblable à l'être absolu vers lequel il s'élève. Foucault appelle cette exigence « condition de spiritualité ». Mais les « cartésiens » ont supprimé cette condition de la spiritualité, estimant que le sujet peut atteindre la vérité par lui-même, telle qu'il était constitué déjà, sans qu'il soit nécessaire pour lui d'une transformation interne mais seulement de respecter certaines règles de la méthode.

Je crois que ça, c'est un thème fondamental (...) dans toute la philosophie antique. On ne peut pas avoir accès à la vérité si on ne change pas son mode d'être. Alors mon idée, ça serait qu'en prenant Descartes comme repère, mais évidemment sous l'effet de toute une série de transformations complexes, il est venu un moment où le sujet comme tel est devenu capable de vérité. (...) Il suffit que le sujet soit ce qu'il est pour avoir, dans la connaissance, un accès à la vérité qui lui est ouvert par sa structure propre de sujet. Alors il me semble qu'on a ça chez Descartes d'une façon très claire, avec, si vous voulez, chez Kant le tour de spire supplémentaire.<sup>4</sup>

Du point de vue de Michel Foucault, cette situation exprime quelque chose radicalement différent ainsi que, finalement, la connaissance dans le contexte de la philosophie moderne n'est plus caractérisée par « l'adhésion à la vérité », mais elle est réduite à une simple « connaissance d'un domaine d'objets ». Vraiment,

...avoir accès à la vérité, c'est avoir accès à l'être lui-même, accès qui est tel que l'être auquel on a accès sera en même temps, et par contre-coup, l'agent de transformation de celui qui a accès à lui. Et c'est ça, le cercle platonicien, ou en tout cas le cercle néoplatonicien : en me connaissant moi-même, j'accède à un être qui est la vérité, et dont la vérité transforme l'être que je suis et m'assimile à Dieu. (...) Alors qu'il est bien évident que la connaissance de

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<sup>3</sup> Voir Martin Heidegger, *De l'essence de la vérité. Approche de l'« allégorie de la caverne » et du Théétète de Platon*, texte établie par Hermann Mörchen, traduit de l'allemand par Alain Boutot, Gallimard, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 183.

type cartésien ne pourra pas être définie comme l'accès à la vérité: mais ça sera la connaissance d'un domaine d'objets. Alors là, (...) la notion de connaissance de l'objet vient se substituer à la notion d'accès à la vérité.<sup>5</sup>

En conséquence, l'intérêt philosophique de Michel Foucault ira vers les anciens, il étant particulièrement attiré par la « condition de spiritualité » pour l'accès à la vérité que nous l'avons mentionné ci-dessus, qui est une forme particulière de la relation entre la vérité et la spiritualité. Cela signifie que Michel Foucault sera intéressé de la manière dont le monde antique a conçu le sujet connaissant, en fait, homme dans la complexité des relations avec lui-même, dont l'exercice régulièrement et correctement effectués conduit à la connaissance mais également à un certain nombre d'autres choses tout aussi important. Ici surgit le concept de « souci de soi », dont traite la présente étude, en essayant de souligner la manière dont Michel Foucault l'a surpris dans le courant néoplatonicien.

### **Le souci de soi et la connaissance de soi**

Mais d'abord il faut préciser que Michel Foucault fait une claire distinction entre le souci de soi (*epimeleia heautou*) et le célèbre précepte de Delphi qui nous pousse à nous connaître nous-mêmes (*gnôthi seauton*), et qui est devenu emblématique pour l'approche socratique d'enquêter l'âme humaine pour trouver en elle toutes les valeurs qui guident notre vie. Fondée sur l'autorité de Socrate, la tradition philosophique moderne a estimé que toute la philosophie antique a été marquée par *gnôthi seauton*, qu'elle a exprimé par nombreuses et différentes manières.

En réalité, nous dit Michel Foucault, l'exhortation à la connaissance de soi n'est qu'une forme particulière dans laquelle peut s'exprimer le souci de soi, parfois comme un couronnement de ce souci et comme son effet le plus important mais en tout cas sans le remplacer dans son intégralité. Par conséquent, dans presque tous les contextes anciens dans lesquels il est rencontré, l'exhortation à la connaissance de soi vient accompagnée par le principe plus général du souci de soi par rapport auquel elle a une position subalterne et à partir duquel elle obtient sa justification.<sup>6</sup> Cela se voit clairement dans *l'Apologie de Socrate*, en trois passages significatifs (29d, 31a-c, 36b-c), dans lequel Socrate se définit comme l'homme providentiel envoyé

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 184.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.

par les dieux pour réaliser dans la cité une tâche essentielle: à savoir celle de pousser les gens à prendre soin d'eux-mêmes, tâche qui n'est pas quelque chose de temporaire mais qui nécessite une pratique constante.<sup>7</sup> Et Michel Foucault souligne que dans les textes anciens tardives Socrate est perçue principalement par sa mission de demander aux jeunes à être préoccupés par leur propre soi. Donc,

Socrate se présente bien essentiellement comme celui qui incite les autres à s'occuper d'eux-mêmes. (...) Le souci de soi-même est une sorte d'aiguillon qui doit être planté là, dans la chair des hommes, (...) un principe d'inquiétude permanent au cours de l'existence. (...) Socrate, c'est l'homme du souci de soi, et il le restera. Et on verra, dans toute une série de textes tardifs (chez les stoïciens, chez les cyniques, chez Épictète surtout), que Socrate, c'est toujours, essentiellement, fondamentalement celui qui interpellait dans la rue les jeunes gens et leur disait : « Il faut vous soucier de vous-mêmes. »<sup>8</sup>

Mais Foucault attire notre attention que non seulement chez Socrate, mais chez tous les philosophes anciens la préoccupation de soi a été un principe fondamental, qui les définit en tant que philosophes, dès le V<sup>e</sup> siècle avant notre ère jusqu'aux IV<sup>e</sup>-V<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère. En outre, le même souci de soi a également marqué le christianisme des premiers siècles, pour lequel il exprimait le début de la vie ascétique.<sup>9</sup> Il ne est pas moins vrai que, plus tard, le christianisme, qui a promu une morale qui marchait jusqu'au renoncement de soi, a valorisé d'une manière négative le précepte qui nous recommande à prendre soin de nous, qu'il comptait comme une expression du retrait de la vie de la communauté et du l'égoïsme qui exacerbe l'individualisme.<sup>10</sup>

Mais la principale raison de l'occultation du souci de soi et de la promotion du précepte de la connaissance de soi dans la tradition philosophique représente, à l'avis de Michel Foucault, le « moment cartésien », qui conditionne la connaissance et la vérité tout simplement de l'existence du sujet. Il s'ensuit de là que, par lui-même, ainsi qu'il est déjà structuré, le sujet peut atteindre la vérité, à laquelle le conduit naturellement la bonne connaissance de soi, en suivant quelques étapes rigoureusement établies.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 7-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 10-12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 14.

En d'autres termes, les conditions d'accès à la vérité et les critères de sa mesure résident dans l'activité de connaissance elle-même.

Je crois que l'âge moderne de l'histoire de la vérité commence à partir du moment où ce qui permet d'accéder au vrai, c'est la connaissance elle-même et elle seule. (...) Ce qui ne veut pas dire, bien sûr, que la vérité s'obtient sans condition. Mais ces conditions sont de deux ordres, maintenant, et aucun de ces deux ordres ne relève de la spiritualité. Il y a d'une part les conditions internes de l'acte de connaissance et des règles qu'il doit suivre pour avoir accès à la vérité: conditions formelles, conditions objectives, règles formelles de la méthode, structure de l'objet à connaître. (...) Quant aux autres conditions, elles sont extrinsèques. (...) culturelles (...) morales (...) elles ne concernent que l'individu dans son existence concrète, et non pas la structure du sujet en tant que tel.<sup>11</sup>

Cependant, dans l'antiquité, comme nous l'avons vu, les philosophes étaient convaincus que pour atteindre la vérité il faut d'abord atteindre l'être, et que cela exigeait au sujet l'effort de purification, de transfiguration, qui devrait conduire à sa plus grande ressemblance avec l'être, ce qui, d'ailleurs, équivalait à l'accomplissement ou à la récupération de soi, puisque la nature de l'âme appartient à l'intelligible et est identique au divin, c'est-à-dire, en dernière instance, à l'être absolu.<sup>12</sup> Cela ne pouvait être réalisé que dans le contexte plus large du souci de soi, qui décrit une variété de pratiques et de techniques suffisamment développées, qui comprenaient aussi des importants aspects théoriques et qui constituaient un type d'exercice spirituel complexe qui a pris une telle ampleur dans l'époque hellénistique et romaine chez les personnes d'un certain niveau intellectuel que Michel Foucault parle d'une véritable « culture de soi » qui a duré longtemps dans l'histoire du monde moderne.

Il me semble que si on appelle culture, donc, une organisation hiérarchique de valeurs, accessible à tous mais en même temps occasion d'un mécanisme de sélection et d'exclusion; si on appelle culture le fait que cette organisation hiérarchique de valeurs appelle chez l'individu des conduites réglées, coûteuses, sacrificielles, qui polarisent toute la vie; et, enfin, que cette organisation du champ de valeurs et cet accès à ces valeurs ne puissent se faire qu'à

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, pp.19-20.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 68-70; 75-76; 169-170; 201.

travers des techniques réglées, réfléchies, et un ensemble d'éléments constituant un savoir: dans cette mesure-là, on peut dire qu'il y a eu véritablement, à l'époque hellénistique et romaine, une culture de soi (...) qui connaîtra ensuite dans le christianisme (...) et puis ensuite à la Renaissance et au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, toute une série d'avatars et de transformations.<sup>13</sup>

En fait, les exercices spirituels, qui visaient la purification et la transfiguration de soi, représentaient seulement un aspect du souci de soi. Ils ne pouvaient pas avoir lieu que dans le cadre d'une certaine attitude « à lui-même, aux autres, au monde » et d'un certain type de respect ou d'attention portée sur soi. Par conséquent, ces deux éléments, à côté des exercices spirituels, sont également inclus dans la structure du souci de soi.<sup>14</sup> Mais bien que sa structure reste toujours la même, Michel Foucault souligne la variété des formules par lesquels il est désignée. Par exemple,

...« s'occuper de soi-même », « prendre soin de soi », « se retirer en soi-même », « faire retraite en soi », « trouver son plaisir en soi-même », « ne chercher d'autre volupté qu'en soi », « rester en compagnie de soi-même », « être ami avec soi-même », « être en soi-même comme dans une forteresse », « se soigner » ou « se rendre un culte à soi-même », « se respecter soi-même », etc.<sup>15</sup>

D'ailleurs, le contenu du souci de soi a connu un certain nombre des aspects particuliers, en fonction de la direction de la pensée à laquelle appartenaient les philosophes. Il y avait, par conséquent, dans l'antiquité, diverses formes de soucis de soi; les pythagoriciens, Platon, les épicuriens, les stoïciens, les sceptiques, les cyniques, les néoplatoniciens, tous ont développé des moyens spécifiques du souci de soi, qui envisageait la transformation intérieure pour devenir capable d'accéder à la vérité.

Il est vrai que les témoignages sur la vie des pythagoriciens sont tardifs et ils viennent du milieu néoplatonicien, mais ils expriment des traditions anciennes qui n'ont pas été réfutées comme inauthentiques. En outre, Michel Foucault nous met en garde que le précepte de souci de soi n'est pas une création des philosophes mais qu'il « était une vieille sentence de la

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 173.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 14.

culture grecque. C'était en particulier une sentence lacédémonienne »<sup>16</sup> sur laquelle nous informe un texte de Plutarque, qui nous raconte que les Spartiates ne cultivaient leur propre terre, qui étaient confiés aux hilotes, parce qu'ils voulaient avoir du temps pour s'occuper d'eux-mêmes, c'est-à-dire pour se former physiquement et militairement et pour participer à la vie politique de leur cité.

Par conséquent, pythagoriciens savait déjà ce précepte qu'ils pouvaient emprunter de la mentalité commune, ou il désignait un privilège de classe, dérivé du statut de citoyen, pour lui donner un nouveau sens, spirituel, conformément à leurs aspirations vers la connaissance et l'accomplissement humain. En outre, pythagoriciens ont corrélé le précepte du souci de soi avec un certain nombre de pratiques archaïques de purification et de concentration de l'âme, de détachement du monde extérieur et de retrait en lui-même, utilisées pour entrer en relation avec les dieux et pour avoir accès à leur sagesse.<sup>17</sup>

Cependant, la première grande élaboration du concept de souci de soi se trouve dans les dialogues de Platon. En ce qui concerne les néoplatoniciens, Michel Foucault croient qu'ils s'intègrent principalement à cet égard dans la ligne de Platon et de la tradition platonicienne.

### **Le souci de soi chez Platon**

Le dialogue le plus important dans lequel Platon a abordé la question de la nécessité de souci de soi est, selon Michel Foucault, *Alcibiade*. Là Socrate discute avec Alcibiade, un jeune homme qui, par sa descendance d'une noble et riche famille d'Athènes, est considéré comme justifié d'obtenir des importants postes de direction dans la cité, et il souhaite vivement cette chose. Socrate souligne la responsabilité qu'il aurait en tant que leader de la cité et la supériorité des dirigeants des adversaires des Athènes: les Lacédémoniens et les Perses. En ce sens, en outre qu'ils sont beaucoup plus riches qu'Alcibiade, ils cultivent leur qualités guerriers et de l'esprit, avec des enseignants spéciaux pour le courage, la tempérance, la sagesse et la justice. Au lieu de cela, Alcibiade a reçu une éducation superficielle, effectuée sous la surveillance d'un esclave, ainsi qu'il ne sait pas grand-chose. En fait, il devrait savoir diriger la cité, mais il se rend compte qu'il ne pos-

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 47-48.

sède pas cette science ou cet arts, car lorsque Socrate lui demande en ce qui consiste la bonne gouvernance de la cité, Alcibiade répondre qu'en établir l'harmonie entre les citoyens, mais il ne peut pas dire comment faire cela.<sup>18</sup>

La démarche de Socrate montre à Alcibiade ses faiblesses, le fait qu'il ne connaisse pas lui-même et, en outre, qu'il ne se soucie pas de lui-même. Parce que, gouverner la cité signifie, essentiellement, prendre soin des autres. Mais on ne peut pas savoir comment prendre soin des autres si on ne prend pas soin de soi. Par conséquent, le souci de soi apparaît chez Platon comme lié à l'exercice du pouvoir politique, comme une conséquence d'un statut social privilégié, mais que l'individu ne reçoit pas automatiquement, mais qu'il doit obtenir en concurrence avec des autres aspirants au pouvoir.

Le souci de soi est nécessaire à tout jeune homme qui a de telles aspirations, mais il n'est plus utile pour un homme mûr ou vieux, et l'exemple d'Alcibiade montre que l'éducation athénienne était totalement défailant à cet égard, tant dans la forme de l'éducation institutionnelle que dans la forme de l'érotique, c'est-à-dire de la relation d'amour accepté ou toléré par la société entre les hommes matures et les garçons. Par conséquent, prendre soin de soi est un devoir de chacun, s'il veut diriger les autres et surtout si ceux qui devaient faire son éducation afin qu'il apprenne avoir soin de lui-même et des autres, n'ont pas accompli leur tâche.<sup>19</sup>

Mais ce que signifie prendre soin de soi-même ou se soucier de soi-même? « Quelle forme doit avoir ce souci, en quoi doit-il consister, étant donné que (...) si je dois me soucier de moi-même, c'est pour devenir capable de gouverner les autres et de régir la cité. »<sup>20</sup> Mais on ne peut pas répondre à cette question si on n'est pas clair sur la nature de l'objet sur lequel on doit d'exercer le souci de soi. Et cet objet est le soi. Il est donc nécessaire que je sais d'abord qu'est-ce que le soi, c'est-à-dire « quel est ce soi dont je dois m'occuper pour pouvoir m'occuper comme il faut des autres que je dois gouverner ? »<sup>21</sup> La réponse de Platon est simple : mon vrai soi n'est rien d'autre que l'âme<sup>22</sup>, mais pas l'âme en tant que substance mais comme le sujet de toutes mes attitudes, mes comportements et mes actions,

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 35-37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 51.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 53.

qui se sert de mon corps avec tous ses éléments pour établir diverses relations avec les autres et avec moi-même.<sup>23</sup>

L'identification du soi et de l'âme fait que chez Platon le souci de soi se distingue des autres types de soins qui pourraient prétendre à être intégré dans cette préoccupation de soi : les soins de la santé, que le médecin peut appliquer à lui-même, les soins du propriétaire de sa richesse et la préoccupation de l'amoureux pour la personne aimée. Mais l'avis de Michel Foucault c'est que tous ceux ne peut pas être classés comme des préoccupations de soi, parce que le médecin prend soin de son corps, pas de son âme, le propriétaire prend soin de ce qui appartient à lui-même, pas de soi-même, et les hommes mûrs amoureux des jeunes hommes quittent ceux-ci ces quand ils passent à un autre âge, dans lequel leur beauté pâlit.

En tous cas, on ne peut pas s'occuper de soi-même tout seul, sans bénéficier de conseils de quelqu'un qui est, dans le même temps, compétente et totale désintéressée, qui ne ferait que poursuivre le sain développement de votre soi. Et si aucun de ceux qui ont été nommés ci-dessus n'est pas approprié pour cela, ça signifie que seul un maître comme Socrate, qui aime uniquement les âmes des jeune gens, pas leur corps, et dont les relations avec eux sont simplement spirituelles, peut avoir soins de leur soi, en les guidant dans leur activité de souci de soi-même.

On ne peut pas se soucier de soi sans passer par le maître, il n'y a pas de souci de soi sans la présence d'un maître. (...) Le maître, c'est celui qui se soucie du souci que le sujet a de lui-même, et qui trouve, dans l'amour qu'il a pour son disciple, la possibilité de se soucier du souci que le disciple a de lui-même. En aimant de façon désintéressée le garçon, il est donc le principe et le modèle du souci que le garçon doit avoir de lui-même en tant que sujet.<sup>24</sup>

En ce qui concerne la deuxième question – qu'est-ce que signifie prendre soin de soi-même, donc de son âme? –, Platon trouve pour elle aussi une réponse bien simple: c'est connaître soi-même. Voilà donc ainsi le *gnôthi seauton* placé dans l'identité avec l'*epimeleia heautou*. Cela est une caractéristique de la pensée de Platon, qui subordonne au concept de la connaissance de soi toutes les techniques d'action sur l'âme visé par Platon dans ses dialogues, et qui, en fait, ont une portée plus large que celle de la connaissance

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 58.

de soi.<sup>25</sup> Mais Platon estime que le but en vue duquel il faut réaliser de diverses pratiques qui expriment une attention particulière accordée à l'âme, donc à soi, c'est la connaissance de soi. Par conséquent, Michel Foucault parle d'un « coup de force »<sup>26</sup> du *gnôthi seauton* dans *l'Alcibiade* de Platon, mais il souligne que cette chose n'a pas définitivement réglé les relations entre *gnôthi seauton* et *epimeleia heautou*, qui ont connu plus tard dans la philosophie ancienne diverses configurations.

Cet enchevêtrement, cet appel réciproque, est, je crois, caractéristique de Platon. On va le retrouver dans toute l'histoire de la pensée grecque, hellénistique et romaine, avec évidemment des équilibres différents, des rapports différents, des accents différemment portés sur l'un ou sur l'autre, une distribution aussi des moments entre connaissance de soi et souci de soi qui vont être différents dans les diverses pensées que l'on rencontrera. Mais c'est cet enchevêtrement qui est, je crois, très important, et où aucun des deux éléments ne doit être négligé au profit de l'autre.<sup>27</sup>

Revenant à Platon, après qu'il a subordonné le souci de soi à la connaissance de soi, qui est en fait la plus haute forme du premier, et de cette manière il les a identifiés, après qu'il a déjà établi que le soi est l'âme, il a dû expliquer comment réussit l'âme à se connaître. Pour répondre à cette question, Platon a été guidé par un vieux principe philosophique, à savoir que le semblable est connu par le semblable, ce qui nous suggère, par conséquent, que pour nous connaître nous-même e nous devons nous regarder dans une nature similaire à la nôtre.<sup>28</sup> En ce sens, il affirme que la technique et la condition de la connaissance de soi est l'orientation vers le divine, qui est de nature semblable à celle de l'âme humaine, du moment que l'âme a comme ses activités spécifiques la connaissance et la pensée, dont le principe est le divine. Par conséquent, lorsque l'âme va acquérir la vision divine, il va acquérir la sagesse et va mieux comprendre sa propre nature, qui est similaire au divine.

...pour s'occuper de soi, il faut se connaître soi-même; pour se connaître soi-même, il faut se regarder dans un élément qui est le même que soi; il faut re-

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 67.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 68.

garder dans cet élément ce qui est le principe même du savoir et de la connaissance; et ce principe même du savoir et de la connaissance, c'est l'élément divin. Il faut donc se regarder dans l'élément divin pour se reconnaître soi-même: il faut connaître le divin pour se reconnaître soi-même.<sup>29</sup>

En sachant sa vraie nature et possédant la sagesse, l'âme est alors capable de se gouverner soi-même de la plus correcte manière et, par ce fait, de gouverner les autres, à savoir les citoyens, parmi lesquels il va établi des relations harmonieuses, c'est-à-dire justes, équitables, et il se révélera ainsi un bon dirigeant de la cité.

Dès qu'elle sera en contact du divin, dès qu'elle l'aura saisi, qu'elle aura pu penser et connaître ce principe de pensée et de connaissance qu'est le divin, l'âme sera dotée de sagesse (*sôphrosunê*). Étant dotée de *sôphrosunê*, à ce moment-là l'âme pourra se retourner vers le monde d'ici-bas. Elle saura distinguer le bien du mal, le vrai du faux. L'âme saura, à ce moment-là, se conduire comme il faut, et, sachant se conduire comme il faut, elle saura gouverner la cité.<sup>30</sup>

Le passage du gouvernement de soi au gouvernement des autres est naturel chez Platon, puisque, de son point de vue, il y a une similitude incontestable entre la structure de l'âme et celle de la cité. Et de même que dans une cité bien gouvernée règne la justice, qui est l'essence de la sagesse, de même la justice caractérise aussi une âme bien gouvernée, car en elle se trouvent les relations les plus correctes ou les plus justes entre ses diverses parties, entre lesquelles il doit y avoir un certain ordre et une hiérarchie, qui conduisent naturellement à son harmonie. En conclusion, afin de prendre soin de soi-même comme il faut, c'est-à-dire pour se connaître et devenir capable de se gouverner et, en conséquence de cela, pour bien gouverner les autres, Alcibiade doit se préoccuper de ce que c'est la justice (*dikaïosunê*) et quels sont ses buts.

Lorsque Alcibiade, suivant la leçon de Socrate, va donc, s'il tient sa promesse, s'occuper de la justice, d'une part il s'occupera de son âme, de la hiérarchie intérieure de son âme, de l'ordre et de la subordination qui doit régner entre les parties de son âme; et puis en même temps, et par le fait même, il se rendra capable de veiller sur la cité, d'en sauvegarder les lois, la

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 69.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 69-70.

constitution (la *politeia*), d'équilibrer comme il faut les justes rapports entre les citoyens. Le souci de soi est donc (...) clairement instrumental par rapport au souci des autres.<sup>31</sup>

Donc, se soucier de la justice et prendre soin de lui-même signifie, pour Platon, la même chose. Cette identité est possible parce que chez Platon le souci de soi est inextricablement lié à l'activité politique, qui est le but de celui-là<sup>32</sup>. Cette préoccupation de soi est nécessaire seulement à une élite, représentée par ceux qui ont le droit, en vertu de leur statut, de gouverner la cité, mais qui, en même temps, ils veulent réellement atteindre dans le sommet du mécanisme de pouvoir. D'autre part, le souci de soi vise seulement les jeunes, dont l'éducation est déficiente précisément de ce point de vue. Enfin, il est réalisé dans le cadre d'une liaison érotique sublimée, dans lequel un maître « amoureux » uniquement de l'âme du jeune et totalement désintéressé de son corps, peut guider le garçon pour qu'il ait soin de son âme, après que les autres amoureux, préoccupés de son corps l'ont abandonné parce qu'il a dépassé l'âge auquel il pouvait incarner l'idéal de la beauté masculine trouvée au début.<sup>33</sup>

En fait, étant donné que Socrate rejette fermement la pratique érotique habituelle des amoureux de garçons, Michel Foucault exclue l'érotisme du souci de soi promu par Platon<sup>34</sup>, bien qu'il admet qu'il y a un lien entre eux<sup>35</sup>, du moment que le souci de soi se produit « dans ce creux institutionnel, dans ce déficit de la pédagogie, dans ce moment politiquement et érotiquement trouble de la fin de de l'adolescence et de l'entrée dans la vie »<sup>36</sup> en vue de remplir ce creux, pour enlever les jeunes de cet état de désorientation et de créer ainsi les conditions préalables à la bonne gouvernance de la cité.

### **Le souci de soi chez les néoplatoniciens**

En soulignant le rôle essentiel de Platon dans la théorisation du concept du souci de soi, Michel Foucault montre qu'il n'a pas gardé, le long de

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 168.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 156-157.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 74.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 84.

l'antiquité philosophique, les caractéristiques établies par Platon. L'époque hellénistique, depuis les épicuriens, mais en particulier l'époque romaine<sup>37</sup>, lui ont donné d'autres dimensions. Ceux qui ont restés fidèles, en général, à la conception de Platon du souci de soi n'étaient que les néoplatoniciens.<sup>38</sup> D'ailleurs, les néoplatoniciens ont donné une attention particulière au dialogue *Alcibiade* où Platon expose sa position théorique sur le souci de soi. En ce sens, Michel Foucault, en prenant les résultats de la recherche d'A.J. Festugière<sup>39</sup>, montre que les néoplatoniciens pensaient qu'*Alcibiade*, auquel ils ont accepté le sous-titre non platonicien *Sur la nature de l'homme*, soit le dialogue avec lequel il faut commencer l'étude de la philosophie platonicienne et, en fait, l'étude de la philosophie en général.

Proclus, par exemple, justifie cette position par les arguments suivants: premièrement, dans *Alcibiade* sont abordés, d'une manière concentrée, toutes les grands thèmes de la philosophie, qui sont, par ailleurs, ses parties principales, à savoir: la logique, la morale, la cosmologie, la théologie, ainsi que, de ce point de vue, il « est le principe de toute la philosophie »<sup>40</sup>; deuxièmement, il nous dévoile la condition principale pour l'étude de la philosophie, nous montrant que seulement ayant une connaissance de nous-mêmes nous serons en mesure d'aller sur son chemin.<sup>41</sup>

Mais déjà dans cette catégorique et enthousiaste adhésion de Proclus à Platon et à son travail, Michel Foucault souligne l'existence d'une différence par rapport à sa doctrine, parce que la division de la philosophie en quatre parties, n'est pas une création de Platon mais c'est une caractéristique de les époques hellénistique, romaine et l'Antiquité tardive.<sup>42</sup> Il était, en effet, difficile de concevoir qu'une si longue évolution philosophique, développée

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<sup>37</sup> La période romaine de la philosophie grecque, en particulier les I<sup>er</sup> et 2<sup>ème</sup> siècles après J.C., c'est, en effet, l'objet privilégié des analyses de Michel Foucault sur le souci de soi, tant dans *Herméneutique du sujet* que dans les tomes II et III de *l'Histoire de la sexualité*.

<sup>38</sup> C'est tout naturel, puisqu'ils ont eux-mêmes revendiqué Platon comme principale source de leur pensée.

<sup>39</sup> André Jean Festugière, « L'ordre des lectures des dialogues de Platon au V<sup>e</sup>/VI<sup>e</sup> siècles », *Études de philosophie grecque*, Paris, Vrin, 1971. (Voir Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 183, Note 2.)

<sup>40</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 164.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 164-165.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 165.

entre le moment de Platon et le moment des néoplatoniciens, ne pas mettre sa marque sur la vision de ceux-ci, ainsi que les néoplatoniciens, en gardant Platon comme repère fondamentaux ont assimilé des nombreux éléments étrangers à sa philosophie et, souvent, ils ont réinterprété Platon d'une manière originale, qui a dépassé ses intentions.

C'est justement le cas du problème de souci de soi, que les néoplatoniciens gardent entre les limites essentielles fixées par Platon, mais à laquelle ils ajoutent des corrections spécifiques, influencés en partie par des philosophes étrangers à la tradition platonicienne, mais dessinant une position qui les individualise la fois par rapport à Platon et par les philosophes non platoniciens. Dans ce qui suit, je vais présenter les éléments qui, selon l'analyse de Michel Foucault, font la différence entre les néoplatoniciens et Platon en ce qui concerne la conception du souci de soi.

Une première différence vise la relation entre le souci de soi et la connaissance de soi. Comme nous l'avons vu, Platon les identifie, mais dans cette identité il estime que le souci de soi ait une sphère plus large que la connaissance de soi, qui est seulement une forme particulière de la première, même si elle est sa plus haute forme et, en même temps, son but. Michel Foucault fait valoir que les néoplatoniciens, tout en maintenant cette identité, font une inversion et donnent une connotation plus large à la connaissance de soi, en mettant davantage l'accent sur elle.

On pourrait dire que, d'une façon générale chez Platon, le lien entre souci de soi et souci des autres s'établit de trois manières. Ou encore, (...) chez Platon la connaissance de soi est un aspect, un élément, une forme – capitale sans doute, mais une forme seulement – de l'impératif fondamental et général du « soucie-toi de toi-même ». Le néo-platonisme renverserait ce rapport.<sup>43</sup>

Par conséquent, pour les néoplatoniciens le principe de la connaissance de soi est universel, sans lui on n'est pas en mesure de pratiquer la philosophie, ni prendre soin de nous-même ou des autres, alors que le souci de soi représente un développement particulier de cette connaissance de soi, se réalisant sur le fondement de celle-ci. Donc, si dans la vision de Platon, pour obtenir la connaissance de soi, il faut prendre soin de soi-même, selon les néoplatoniciens, par contre, pour être capable à s'occuper de soi il faut premièrement se connaître soi-même. Bien sûr, les sphères des deux types

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 169.

d'activité se superposent encore largement chez les néoplatoniciens que chez Platon, mais l'accent est mis néanmoins différemment.

Cette chose est expliquée par Michel Foucault par le fait que dans l'histoire philosophique du souci de soi, à partir de l'époque hellénistique mais surtout dans l'époque romaine, le souci de soi-même devient une préoccupation autonome par rapport à la préoccupation politique, de sorte que le but ultime du souci de soi n'est pas, comme chez Platon, la meilleure capacité de prendre soin des autres, mais le salut de soi, c'est-à-dire l'accomplissement de soi, qui devient ainsi sa propre fin.

On se soucie de soi pour soi-même, et c'est dans le souci de soi que ce souci trouve sa propre récompense. Dans le souci de soi on est son propre objet, on est sa propre fin. Il y a, si vous voulez, à la fois une absolutisation (...) de soi comme objet du souci, et une auto-finalisation de soi par soi dans la pratique qu'on appelle le souci de soi. En un mot, le souci de soi qui était chez Platon très manifestement ouvert sur la question de la cité, des autres, de la *politeia*, de la *dikaiosunê*, etc., apparaît – (...), dans la période dont je parle, I<sup>er</sup>-II<sup>e</sup> siècle – comme refermé sur lui-même.<sup>44</sup>

Les néoplatoniciens sont réceptifs à cet important changement, et ils acceptent la distinction entre l'exercice individuel du souci de soi et l'exercice du pouvoir. Cela ne signifie pas qu'ils abandonnent ou mettent en arrière-plan l'engagement politique, du moment qu'ils donnent une place importante aux vertus politiques ou civiques dans leur conception<sup>45</sup>, mais seulement qu'ils le comptent comme autre chose que le souci de soi. En d'autres

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 170-171.

<sup>45</sup> Voir, en ce sens, la classification des vertus de l'âme faite par Porphyre dans son traité sur les intelligibles, dans lequel on trouve : les vertus civiques (politiques : ἀρεταὶ τοῦ πολιτικοῦ), qui sont des vertus pratiques, dont le but est de modérer les passions et d'harmoniser ainsi le comportement des individus avec la nature humaine ; les vertus purificatrices (καθαρτικαὶ ἀρεταὶ), par lesquelles l'âme se détache totalement des passions et des choses matérielles ; les vertus contemplatives, par lesquelles l'âme se dirige vers l'intelligence pure (ἀρεταὶ τῆς ψυχῆς νοερῶς ἐνεργούσης); et les vertus exemplaires, paradigmatiques (ἀρεταὶ παραδειγματικαί), par lesquelles elle devient semblable au Dieu suprême. Comme on l'a noté, les vertus politiques sont essentielles à une existence exemplaire au sein de la communauté humaine. (Porphyre, *Principes de la théorie des intelligibles*, in Plotin, *Ennéades*, Tome premier, Traduction française de M.-N. Bouillet, Paris, Hachette, 1857).

termes, le souci de soi et le souci pour les autres ne sont plus considérés indissociables et ne s'impliquent pas l'un l'autre.

Cela nous fait comprendre Olympiodore lorsqu'il justifié, à son tour, la place particulière du dialogue *Alcibiade* dans l'œuvre de Platon, place dont j'ai mentionné ci-dessus. Ainsi, Olympiodore nous dit qu'*Alcibiade*, portant largement sur la connaissance de soi, mis notamment l'accent sur la connaissance de l'âme réalisé dans la mesure où nous agissons politiquement. Mais la connaissance de soi, la base de toute activité cognitive, est la condition nécessaire non seulement pour être en mesure de développer ses vertus politiques, afin de prendre soin des autres, mais aussi pour l'exercice des vertus cathartiques, purifiantes, qui nous permettent de prendre soin de soi. Par conséquent, *Alcibiade*, qui développe si largement le thème général du *gnôthi seauton* doit inaugurer l'étude des dialogues de Platon. Et dans la mesure où on veut suivre la ligne des dialogues qui traitant sur le soin des autres, donc de la politique, il faut lire, après *Alcibiade*, le *Gorgias*, tandis que, si on veut voir comment est impliquée la connaissance de soi dans le développement de soi et dans l'exercice des soins pour soi-même, il faut suivre *Alcibiade* par la lecture du dialogue *Phédon*.<sup>46</sup> Pour Foucault, cette attitude résume les particularités de la conception néoplatonicienne du souci de soi par rapport à la position de Platon.

Donc, premièrement: privilège du « connais-toi toi-même » comme forme par excellence du souci de soi; deuxièmement, le thème que ce « connais-toi toi-même » introduit à la politique; troisièmement, le thème que ce « connais-toi toi-même » introduit aussi à une cathartique. Enfin, (...) Alors que (...) il n'y a pas pour Platon, en réalité, de différence d'économie entre la procédure cathartique et le chemin du politique, en revanche dans la tradition néoplatonicienne, on voit que les deux tendances se sont dissociées, et que l'usage du « connais-toi toi-même » à fin politique et l'usage du « connais-toi toi-même » à fin cathartique – ou encore : l'usage du souci de soi à fin politique et l'usage du souci de soi à fin cathartique – ne coïncident plus, et qu'ils constituent un embranchement [où] il faut choisir.<sup>47</sup>

Donc, ce que chez Platon était unie, c'est-à-dire le souci de soi et le souci des autres, qui se présupposent l'un l'autre par trois types de connexions intimes: l'une de finalité, l'autre de réciprocité et la troisième

<sup>46</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., pp. 166-167.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 167.

d'«l'implication dans la forme de la réminiscence »<sup>48</sup>, néoplatoniciens dissocient, mais ils accordent toujours une grande importance à tous les deux aspects. Ils expriment le souci de soi par le terme de « cathartique », et le souci des autres par celui de « politique ». Mais les deux types de soins se fondent également sur le même précepte, universel, de la connaissance de soi.

Mais bien que Foucault fait remarquer l'importance des deux aspects dans le néoplatonisme et souligne que le choix entre eux est le problème de chaque individu, parce que les vertus cathartiques sont supérieures aux vertus politiques, étant intégrés dans une hiérarchie (voir la hiérarchie des vertus de Porphyre) où dans le sommet sont placées les vertus théologiques et, commençant par Iamblique, les vertus théurgiques<sup>49</sup>, et sachant l'idéal de la vie promu par les néoplatoniciens, nous sommes en droit de dire que le souci de soi est plus prononcée chez eux que la préoccupation pour la politique. D'ailleurs, les néoplatoniciens ont un terme spécial pour nommer le retour de l'âme à soi, pour prendre soin de soi-même et obtenir le plus haut accomplissement, à savoir: la conversion (*metanoia*).

Un autre aspect qui sépare les néoplatoniciens de Platon, est que, influencés par les philosophes non platoniciens, ils n'admettent plus que le meilleur moment de prendre soin de lui-même soit celui de l'adolescence ou de la jeunesse ; à leur avis aucun âge n'est pas exclu de ces pratiques essentielles, ainsi qu'il est souhaitable qu'elles s'étendent par toute la durée de la vie de l'individu.

...il faut s'occuper de soi pendant toute sa vie, avec comme âge crucial, comme âge déterminant, l'âge de la maturité. Ce n'est plus la sortie de l'adolescence, c'est le développement de la maturité qui va être l'âge privilégié où le souci de soi est nécessaire. Avec pour conséquence que ce que prépare le souci de soi, ce n'est pas, comme c'était le cas pour l'adolescent, l'entrée dans la vie adulte et dans la vie civique. Ce n'est pas pour devenir le citoyen, ou plutôt le chef dont on a besoin, que le jeune homme va s'occuper de lui-même]. L'adulte doit s'occuper de lui-même – pour préparer quoi ? Sa vieillesse. Pour préparer l'accomplissement de la vie dans cet âge où la vie elle-même sera accomplie et comme suspendue, et qui sera la vieillesse. Le souci de soi comme préparation à la vieillesse se dégage très nettement du souci

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170.

<sup>49</sup> Voir Iamblique, *Les Mystères d'Égypte*, texte établi et traduit par Édouard des Places, S.J., Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1966.

de soi comme substitut pédagogique, comme complément pédagogique pour préparer à la vie.<sup>50</sup>

Le souci de soi devrait être une préoccupation de tous les hommes, quelle que soit leur condition sociale ou l'activité professionnelle, car il fait partie d'un art de vivre (*tekhnê tou biou*), ayant même la tendance à s'identifier à cela. Mais,

...depuis au moins les cyniques (...) à mesure que le soi s'affirme comme étant et comme devant être l'objet d'un souci (...) qu'il devait traverser toute l'existence, et conduire l'homme jusqu'au point d'accomplissement de sa vie (...) entre l'art de l'existence (la *tekhnê tou biou*) et le souci de soi (...) il y a une identification de plus en plus marquée. La question « Comment faire pour vivre comme il faut? » (...) va être de plus en plus nettement absorbée par la question: « Comment faire pour que le soi devienne et demeure ce qu'il doit être? » (...) De plus en plus maintenant la *tekhnê tou biou* (l'art de vivre) va tourner autour de la question comment est-ce que je dois transformer mon propre moi pour être capable d'accéder à la vérité?<sup>51</sup>

Ainsi, par son insinuation dans la sphère de l'art de vivre, dont elle s'est pratiquement emparée, le souci de soi s'est largement répandue chez les intellectuels des époques hellénistique et romaine, devenant une véritable «culture de soi ». Cependant, au-delà de l'analyse de Michel Foucault, nous devons souligner encore une fois que, si aux gens communs il est une question de choix personnel, pour celui qui veut pratiquer la philosophie d'une manière professionnelle le souci de soi représente une tâche principale, étant une partie intégrante du processus d'ascension vers le divin, par lequel notre âme retrouve son état originare, sa vraie nature.<sup>52</sup>

Bien que l'objet du souci de soi ne soit pas seulement l'adolescent ou le jeune, la condition de l'existence d'un maître pour guider le processus de souci de soi demeure valide. Mais contrairement à Platon, les néoplatoniciens n'acceptent plus la dimension érotique de la relation entre le maître et le disciple, tant sublimée et symbolique que cela puisse être. Quoiqu'elle présuppose un certain rapprochement, la familiarité et même l'amitié, elle est caractérisée par une grande sobriété et austérité. Ceci s'explique par le fait que les néoplatoniciens ont assimilé une tradition médicale fortement

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<sup>50</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 74.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>52</sup> Voir Jamblique, *Protreptique*, texte établi et traduit par Édouard des Places, S.J., Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1989.

développée pendant les premières deux siècles de notre ère, qui regardait avec suspicion l'activité érotique en excès, qu'elle jugeait capable à provoquer de graves perturbations dans le corps et l'esprit de l'individu, bien que l'érotique est incluse dans cette période dans le souci de soi par d'autres philosophes.

On aurait tort de ne voir dans la pensée grecque qu'une valorisation positive de l'acte sexuel. La réflexion médicale et philosophique le décrit comme menaçant, par sa violence, le contrôle et la maîtrise qu'il convient d'exercer sur soi ; comme minant par l'épuisement qu'il provoque la force que l'individu doit conserver et main tenir, et comme marquant la mortalité de l'individu tout en assurant la survie de l'espèce. Si le régime des plaisirs est si important, ce n'est pas simplement parce qu'un excès peut produire une maladie ; c'est parce que, dans l'activité sexuelle en général, il y va de la maîtrise, de la force et de la vie de l'homme. Donner à cette activité la forme raréfiée et stylisée d'un régime, c'est se garantir contre les maux futurs ; c'est aussi se former, s'exercer, s'éprouver comme un individu qui est capable de contrôler sa violence et de la laisser jouer dans des limites convenables, de retenir en soi le principe de son énergie et d'accepter sa mort en prévoyant la naissance de ses descendants. Le régime physique des *aphrodisia* est une précaution de santé ; c'est en même temps un exercice – une *askēsis* – d'existence.<sup>53</sup>

En même temps, les néoplatoniciens ont approprié une position philosophique de plus en plus forte au cours de la même période, qui repense les relations personnelles entre les époux, accordant plus d'attention aux droits des femmes et aux devoirs de l'homme en ce qui concerne leurs relations intimes. En fait, traditionnellement, les relations avec l'épouse faisaient partie de l'activité « économique », qui visait la façon dont l'homme organise sa maison et sa propriété, ce qui implique des relations avec tous les membres de sa famille et avec ses esclaves comptés comme des biens.<sup>54</sup> Cette activité, qui n'était pas incluse dans le concept de souci de soi chez Platon, occupe une place importante dans la philosophie romaine, en particulier chez les stoïciens. Voilà donc les néoplatoniciens attentifs à un aspect de l'économie, bien qu'ils ne prêtent pas attention, comme Platon, à l'économie comme un élément du souci de soi. Mais cet aspect était de plus en

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<sup>53</sup> Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité II. L'usage des plaisirs*, Gallimard, édition électronique, 2013, p. 77.

<sup>54</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., pp. 58-59.

plus reconnu à l'époque comme lié à la question de l'érotisme<sup>55</sup>, dans laquelle de nouveaux et très importants éléments apparaissent.

Une première nouveauté paraît consister en ceci que l'art de l'existence matrimoniale, tout en continuant à concerner la maisonnée, sa gestion, la naissance et la procréation des enfants, valorise de plus en plus (...) la relation personnelle entre les deux époux. (...) La seconde nouveauté résiderait dans le fait que (...) l'intensification du souci de soi va de pair ici avec la valorisation de l'autre ; la façon nouvelle dont la question de la « fidélité » sexuelle est parfois formulée témoigne de ce changement. Enfin, et c'est ce qui est le plus important ici, cet art du mariage dans la forme du lien et de la symétrie fait une place relativement plus importante aux problèmes des relations sexuelles entre époux ; (...) l'intérêt pour la procréation s'y combine avec d'autres significations et d'autres valeurs qui concernent l'amour, l'affection, la bonne entente et la sympathie mutuelle.<sup>56</sup>

Rejetant l'érotique des garçons et les pratiques homosexuelles, ils accordent des valeurs positives aux relations avec l'épouse, bien qu'elles sont subordonnées à la fois au but de la procréation et à l'objectif de la spiritualité maximale, poursuivie par eux en dernière instance, mettant en arrière-plan la question du plaisir.<sup>57</sup>

Cependant, Michel Foucault ne développe pas les questions des rapports avec l'économie et l'érotique chez les néoplatoniciens ; ils ne traitent pas de la relation avec la diététique, qui est également intégrée par les philosophes des premières deux siècles de notre ère dans le concept de souci de soi, parce qu'elle donne attention à la fois au corps et à l'âme et vise les soins qu'il faut accorder à ceux-ci pour offrir au soi les meilleures chances de développement, c'est-à-dire d'accomplissement spirituel. Mais connaissant la préoccupation des néoplatoniciens pour la subordination du corps à l'âme, mais aussi leur impératif de donner au corps l'attention nécessaire pour qu'il assure le bon déroulement des activités spirituelles, nous pou-

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<sup>55</sup> Aspect qu'ils rejettent cependant, comme Platon, comme faisant partie du souci de soi.

<sup>56</sup> Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité III. Le souci de soi*, Gallimard, 1984, p. 174.

<sup>57</sup> On peut considérer, en ce sens, que la lettre de Porphyre à Marcella, sa femme, est particulièrement éloquente, même si on ne peut pas dire que les relations entre époux dans le milieu néoplatonicien auraient été réglées par des pratiques unitaires obligatoires. (Voir Porphyre, *Vie de Pythagore. Lettre à Marcella*, texte établi et traduit par Édouard des Places, S.J., Paris, Les Bells Lettres, 1982.)

vons dire que les néoplatoniciens ont intégrés la diététique dans le concept de souci de soi, ce qui est un autre aspect par lequel ils diffèrent de Platon. Il est significatif à cet égard que les néoplatoniciens sont en général végétariens et, en ce sens, Porphyre a écrit un volumineux ouvrage qui plaide en faveur de l'abstention de la nourriture animale, et qui traite pleinement sur la nécessité et les avantages de ce mode de vie.<sup>58</sup>

Malgré ces différences, les néoplatoniciens maintiennent quelques aspects essentiels de la conception platonicienne de souci de soi, ce qui les place dans sa stricte continuité. Michel Foucault met en évidence ces éléments communs comme suit:

En effet, il me semble que ce qui va caractériser le souci de soi dans la tradition platonicienne et néoplatonicienne, c'est, d'une part, que le souci de soi trouve sa forme et son accomplissement dans la connaissance de soi, comme forme, sinon unique, du moins absolument souveraine du souci de soi. Deuxièmement, (...) le fait que cette connaissance de soi, comme expression majeure et souveraine du souci de soi, donne accès à la vérité, et à la vérité en général. Enfin, troisièmement, (...) le fait que l'accès à la vérité permet, en même temps, de reconnaître ce qu'il peut y avoir de divin en soi. Se connaître, connaître le divin, reconnaître le divin en soi-même. (...) Ces éléments-là, on ne les trouvera pas (...) dans les autres formes [du souci de soi] épicurienne, stoïcienne ou même pythagoricienne, malgré toutes les interférences qu'il a pu y avoir entre les mouvements néopythagoriciens et néoplatoniciens par la suite.<sup>59</sup>

Donc, ce qui gardent, principalement, les néoplatoniciens de la position de Platon, est la condition de spiritualité nécessaire pour l'accès à la vérité: pour que nous pouvons parvenir à la vérité, qui est le divine et qui représente également le divin dans notre âme, c'est-à-dire cette âme en tant que divine, nous devons transfigurer notre âme, le monter vers le divine, le faire ainsi digne du divine. Mais, en même temps, les néoplatoniciens continuent la tendance strictement rationnelle vers la connaissance que l'on trouve aussi chez Platon, et qui n'est pas conditionnée de point de vue spirituel. Cette tendance implique que la transfiguration de l'âme pour atteindre la vérité consiste précisément dans la connaissance de nous-mêmes, c'est-à-dire dans le fait de connaître la vérité. C'est que, en fait, la condition

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<sup>58</sup> Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, in *Select Works of Porphyry*, Translated by Thomas Taylor, London, Thomas Rodd (ed.), 1823.

<sup>59</sup> Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 75.

de spiritualité pour atteindre la vérité, donc pour savoir, est absorbée dans l'acte même de la connaissance, l'acte du savoir.

De sorte que le platonisme va jouer, tout au long, me semble-t-il, de la culture antique et de la culture européenne, ce double jeu : à la fois reposer sans cesse les conditions de spiritualité qui sont nécessaires pour avoir accès à la vérité, et résorber la spiritualité dans le seul mouvement de la connaissance, connaissance de soi, du divin, des essences.<sup>60</sup>

Du point de vue de Michel Foucault, ça c'est un paradoxe de la pensée platonicienne, qui se manifestera dans la pensée européenne jusqu'au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, et à sa perpétuation ont contribué aussi les néoplatoniciens, qui se sont maintenues, à cet égard, en toute cohérence, sur la ligne tirée par Platon en ce qui concerne le concept du souci de soi.

## Conclusions

Analysant le concept de souci de soi dans la culture gréco-romaine antique, Foucault porte une attention particulière à Platon et aux néoplatoniciens. Selon lui, la première élaboration majeure du concept de souci de soi se trouve dans les dialogues platoniciens, et les néoplatoniciens s'inscrivent généralement dans le même cadre théorique établi par Platon. Bien sûr, en raison de l'évolution historique de la pensée philosophique et de la mentalité collective, les néoplatoniciens diffèrent de Platon de plusieurs manières importantes dans la façon dont ils conçoivent le souci de soi. Mais celles-ci, bien qu'elles soient suffisamment claires pour conférer aux néoplatoniciens une originalité incontestable, échouent néanmoins à donner à leur position théorique une configuration radicalement différente de celle de Platon.

Par conséquent, ce qui est essentiel dans le concept de souci de soi chez Platon est conservé intact chez les néoplatoniciens. Il s'agit, en somme, de l'identité (approximative) entre le souci de soi et la connaissance de soi, ainsi que de l'accès, à travers eux, à la vérité, accès après lequel l'âme, c'est-à-dire exactement ce soi qui se connaît et prend soin de lui-même, reconnaît son identité de nature avec le divin. Tous ces éléments constituent une unité qui, selon Foucault, ne se retrouvera comme telle dans aucune autre tradition philosophique de l'Antiquité.

Il est fort possible que Michel Foucault n'ait pas mis en évidence tous les aspects qui distinguent les néoplatoniciens de Platon en matière de la

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 76.

compréhension du souci de soi. Par exemple, il n'insiste pas suffisamment sur leur différence en ce qui concerne la dialectique des rapports entre le souci de soi et la connaissance de soi, se contentant de parler seulement d'une sorte de renversement ou de déplacement d'accent au sein de leur identité principielle. Il oublie aussi assez facilement que les néoplatoniciens expriment dans leurs écrits un rapport au divin beaucoup plus étroit et plus complexe que celui qui apparaît dans les dialogues de Platon. Il n'analyse pas les différences réelles entre Platon et les néoplatoniciens concernant le statut de l'âme dans le processus d'ascension et de fusion avec le divin. De plus, il attribue à Platon vis-à-vis du divin, des intentions qui ne se manifestent dans leur plénitude que dans les œuvres des néoplatoniciens. Ainsi, l'identité de nature entre l'âme humaine et l'âme divine est une question trop peu développée chez Platon, mais c'est l'un des thèmes favoris des néoplatoniciens.

De plus, ce que Foucault compare, c'est la position de Platon – exprimée uniquement dans le dialogue *Alcibiade*<sup>61</sup>, qu'il analyse à plusieurs reprises et en détail – et la position des néoplatoniciens, en général, sans faire de références précises à leurs œuvres, mais seulement à leurs commentaires sur le dialogue *Alcibiade*.

Cependant, le tournant de l'âme vers l'intelligible à travers un processus de purification afin de connaître la réalité authentique et donc la vérité, la parenté entre l'intelligible suprême et le divin, ainsi que la similitude entre notre âme et l'intelligible sont des éléments communs chez Platon et chez néoplatoniciens, et ils forment le contexte général grâce auquel l'hypothèse de Michel Foucault gagne une cohérence et une crédibilité suffisantes.

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<sup>61</sup> Dialogue à propos duquel Foucault lui-même dit qu'il n'exprime pas toute la conception platonicienne du souci de soi, bien qu'il le considère comme exemplaire pour celle-ci : « cette question du souci de soi chez Platon, question fort importante, (...) n'est pas simplement dans *l'Alcibiade* qu'on le voit évoqué, même si c'est dans *l'Alcibiade* seulement qu'il y en a la théorie complète. » (Michel Foucault, *Herméneutique du sujet*, ed.cit., p. 65.)

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# KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, EMPOWERMENT OF THE MIND AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE SUBJECT IN SPINOZA\*

Kathrin BOUVOT, Gianluigi SEGALERBA

**Abstract:** *A central theme of Spinoza's Ethica is the description of the individual's exposition to the emergence of passions. Passions bring the individual to a condition of mental enslavement. Spinoza tries to find a way out of the passions: through the analysis of the structure of reality and through the inquiry into the structure of the individual's mind, Spinoza shows that the development of knowledge of reality in the mind is the solution to the process of liberation of the mind. The possibility, for the individual, to reach an authentic power of mind consists in the acquisition of the knowledge of reality. This acquisition needs to be developed through the appropriate education. The knowledge of the whole reality increases the power of the individual's mind, thus contemporarily diminishing the influence of passions on the individual's mind. Through the knowledge the individual can emendate his mind: thereby the individual becomes able to eliminate in his mind the already present confused ideas on reality, on the one hand, and to oppose the formation of new confused ideas, on the other hand. The main text of our investigation will be Spinoza's Ethica; we shall refer also to the Tractatus Theologico-Politicus and to the Tractatus Politicus.*

**Keywords:** *Knowledge, Spinoza, Liberation, Ethica, Imagination, Substance, Mode, Affect, Mind.*

## a) Introduction

'A free man thinks of nothing less than of death, and his wisdom is not a meditation of death, but of life.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Spinoza's original text is: 'Homo liber de nulla re minus, quam de morte cogitat, et eius sapientia non mortis, sed vitae meditatio est.' We decided to begin our analysis with this quotation since this statement of Spinoza seems to us to be a good presentation of his whole meditation. In Spinoza's *Ethica*, any proposition is followed by a demonstration. In this study, we are not going to expose the demonstrations of the propositions which we shall quote; we are not going to discuss

(*Ethica*, Part 4., Proposition LXVII)

A central theme of Spinoza's *Ethica* is the description of the individual's exposition to the emergence of passions: the individual's mind is constitutively liable to being passive in relation to the influences exercised on the mind by reality since the mind is a part of the whole nature. Since he is a part of nature, the individual is exposed to the influences of the outside reality; he is constitutively passive in relation to nature. Being passive means having passions: passions bring the individual to a condition of mental enslavement due to the influence coming from the external reality. The individual is acted on by the external reality through passions. Thus, any individual was born a slave as regards the constitution of his mind.

Spinoza tries to find a way out of the passions: through the analysis of the structure of reality and through the inquiry into the structure of the individual's mind, Spinoza shows that the development of knowledge of reality in the mind is the solution to the process of liberation of the mind. The power of the individual's mind consists in the knowledge of reality: therefore, the possibility, for the individual, to reach an authentic power of mind consists in the acquisition of the knowledge of reality. The acquisition

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whether these demonstrations function or do not function. We shall concentrate our attention on Spinoza's description of the individual's condition. We shall inquire into the limits naturally connected to the individual's condition. We shall investigate Spinoza's proposals for a partial liberation from these limits.

As we shall see, one difficulty which is to be faced while interpreting Spinoza's thought consists in Spinoza's ambivalence of some concepts such as the affects. Affects can be active or passive, thus being actions or passions. In particular, affects such as desire and gladness can be active and passive, thus having profoundly different senses in the whole complex of Spinoza's thought. The difference between active affect and passive affect has consequences even for the essence of the individual: Since, for instance, as we shall see in this analysis, desire is the essence of the individual, if the individual's desire is passive, his essence will be a passive essence. If, on the contrary, an individual has, as his essence, desire as active affect, his essence will be active. Correspondingly, the first individual will have a generally passive life, as he will be led in his life by a desire which is founded on passion and not on reason. The second individual, whose essence is desire in the active value of desire, will have a generally active life, founded on knowledge and on reason. The two individuals will conduct lives which will be very different from each other. Hence, the seemingly same concept can have in Spinoza profoundly different senses.

of this knowledge means the acquisition of a new nature: this acquisition lies in the potentiality of the individual since the individual possesses a disposition for knowledge; this acquisition needs nonetheless to be developed through the appropriate education.

The knowledge of God, which corresponds to the knowledge of the whole reality, immediately increases the power of the individual's mind, thus contemporarily diminishing the influence of the passions on the individual's mind. Reaching the knowledge of God means, for the individual, the empowerment of the mind against the individual's constitutive exposition to passions. Through the knowledge, the individual frees himself from ignorance: he becomes able to counteract his being acted on by the external reality and, correspondingly, he becomes able to independently act on: he can conduct his own life instead of being steadily conducted by the influences coming from outside.

The knowledge transforms the individual from a completely passive entity into being an entity which is able to emendate its mind: thereby the individual becomes able to eliminate in his mind the already present confused ideas on reality, on the one hand, and to oppose the formation of new confused ideas, on the other hand. Through the process of acquisition of knowledge, the individual is transformed step after step from the condition of being limited by a fragmentary vision of reality to the condition of possessing a complete interpretation of reality. Hence the individual needs to know his essence, his functions, his position in the reality and his faculties in order to discover the road to self-development: he needs to become aware of his constitution.

Through the knowledge of reality, the subject changes and the subject's understanding of reality changes: the individual changes since he lets grow in himself a whole disposition of being active; the individual's comprehension of reality changes, since the individual sees that he is a mode, i.e., an affection of the whole reality: hence, the individual cannot consider himself as being an entity independent of the reality itself. The individual needs to be aware that he is a part of reality: at the beginning, he is not acquainted with anything regarding both the structure of reality, in general, and his position in the reality, in particular.

Thus, in our contribution, we shall show aspects of the process through which, in Spinoza's view, the individual can find a form of liberation from his passions, thereby being transformed into an at least partially

active entity<sup>2</sup>: Spinoza's programme proves to be a programme for the development and enlightenment of the mind. The main text of our analysis will be Spinoza's *Ethica*<sup>3</sup>; we shall refer also to the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and to the *Tractatus Politicus*<sup>4</sup>.

## b) Scheme of interpretation

The present scheme represents the guideline of the interpretation which we shall propose throughout this analysis.

- Reality consists of the substance, the modes, and the attributes as proprieties of the substance.
- The individual is a mode, i.e., a dependent entity.

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<sup>2</sup> Our intent is directed to the analysis of the programme for the education of the individual and for the modification of his understanding of reality. As a consequence, our analysis will not primarily deal with the foundations of Spinoza's ontology such as substance, attribute, mode, or God. We shall for sure mention the definition of substance and God, but we shall concentrate our attention rather on the process of transformation of the individual from his being passive to his reaching a progressively higher level of being active. We shall mention the notions of substance, attribute, mode, or God in order to have elements for the interpretation of the individual's essence.

The responsibility for the interpretation which we present in our paper is, of course, ours alone.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of Spinoza's works we used the following edition: *Spinoza Opera. Im Auftrag der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften herausgegeben von Carl Gebhardt*, 2. *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione. Ethica*; *Spinoza Opera. Im Auftrag der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften herausgegeben von Carl Gebhardt*, 3. *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Adnotationes ad Tractatum Theologico-Politicum, Tractatus Politicus*.

<sup>4</sup> The translations of the *Ethica* which we consulted for our study are the following: *The Chief Works of Benedict De Spinoza, Translated from the Latin, with an Introduction by R. H. M. Elwes. Vol. I. Introduction, Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Tractatus Politicus. Revised Edition*; *The Chief Works of Benedict De Spinoza, Translated from the Latin, with an Introduction by R. H. M. Elwes. Vol. II. De Intellectus Emendatione – Ethica (Select Letters). Revised Edition*; *The Collected Works of Spinoza Princeton. Edited and Translated by Edwin Curley. Volume I*; *The Collected Works of Spinoza. Edited and Translated by Edwin Curley. Volume II*. We consulted the mentioned translations of Spinoza's *Ethica* without, however, entirely following any of them: we always tried to come up with our own translation of the passages of Spinoza quoted in our study. The mention of pages of Spinoza's works refers to Elwes' translations.

- Since he is a mode, the individual is passive. Being a mode means, among other things, being a mentally limited entity.

- To be passive means, for the individual, having passions such as desire (cupiditas), gladness (laetitia), and sadness (tristitia), thus being continuously exposed to vacillations of mind.

- The individual's first form of knowledge, imagination, is fragmentary, confused, and inadequate: it consigns the individual to the condition of passivity, of vacillation, of ignorance.

- Since passions are confused and inadequate ideas, liberation from passions consists in the acquisition of adequate ideas, i.e., in the acquisition of knowledge.

- In order to be able to liberate himself from passions, the individual needs authentic knowledge.

- Through knowledge, the individual becomes aware of his mental dispositions, of his conditions and of his position in the reality. He becomes aware that his initial condition of interpretation of reality is the condition of imagination.

- The knowledge brings about the emendation of the intellect. Through and thanks to the inquiry into the structure of reality and into the necessity of this structure, the individual frees himself from the condition of incertitude in which he is originally relegated by his ignorance.

- The individual needs to be aware of his constitution and his limits in order to be able to fight against them: Spinoza proceeds to the analysis of imagination, of knowledge, of passion, of adequate and inadequate ideas in order to clarify the structures which belong to the individual as such.

The human condition appears, in Spinoza's *Ethica*, to be constitutively disadvantaged, since men are, due to their essence, only modifications or only modes of the substance, God: as a consequence, men are only ontologically dependent entities. The individual's being a mode implies his being a part of nature: as a consequence, the individual is exposed to external causes which he does not know, at least not immediately. A long way of mind education is needed in order that the mind acquires knowledge. The mind's condition of the individual is exposed to an at least initial condition of ignorance of the external causes which exercise an influence on him. Therefore, the individual is liable to form confused and inadequate ideas of the processes of reality. Since inadequate ideas are, for Spinoza, as such, passions, the individual is constitutively exposed and subjected to passions.

This disadvantaged condition is constitutive of men; it is, as such, not eliminable, since it is a direct consequence of the individual's being a mode.

Throughout Spinoza's *Ethica*, the process of transformation of the individual consists in the development of the individual constitution from having only inadequate ideas as regards the structure of reality<sup>5</sup> to acquiring adequate ideas as regards the structure of reality: thus the individual becomes an entity which has greater and greater levels of being active. The individual develops himself through knowledge: the component of his mind represented by the active part increases: therewith the proportion existing between being active and being passive progressively changes to the advantage of being active. The condition of the individual is therefore not statical: it is not immutable. Likewise, the essence of the individual is not immutable: the transformation brought about by the acquisition of knowledge changes the constitution of the individual.

The individual has specific limits which correspond to his being a mode; nonetheless, through the process of acquisition of knowledge, the individual can limit his being passive and can progressively increase his being active. The individual's condition is to be seen as a potentially dynamic one. Liberation is a process, it is not a definitive condition: since the individual is a part of nature, and since the individual is in nature, the individual cannot reach a condition of perfect liberation. The individual will always be and always remain an entity having elements of passivity and exposed to the formation of passions.

In order to develop a programme of education for the individual, an investigation into the whole reality, therein including the individual's mind, is needed. For instance, the individual needs to learn the organisation of reality in substance, modes and attributes; he needs to learn what he constitutively is; he needs to learn the notion of adequate and of inadequate ideas; he needs to know the definition and the formation of passions and of actions. The individual needs to learn the way of functioning of his mind: the notion of imagination, reason and intuitive science should necessarily belong to the individual's orientation as regards his relation to reality and his cognitive development. Any aspect of reality must be inquired in its completeness: the duty of the individual, as long as he is ready to walk on the road of intellectual and ethical development, consists in becoming aware of his condition and his position in the reality.

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<sup>5</sup> In this case the individual is a completely passive entity.

**c) On the definition of substance and mode**

The organisation of reality needs to be analysed in order that the individual's condition in the reality could be immediately clear. First of all, we aim to show the difference which exists between the substance and the mode, since the difference between substance and mode can immediately deliver elements for the comprehension of the individual's condition in the reality. Substance, on the one hand, is not a dependent entity: the mode is, on the other hand, a dependent entity. Thus, between the two kinds of entities, there is a rigid difference due to their mutually incompatible features. The definition of substance which we find in *Ethica*, Part 1., Definition III is as follows:

'Under substance, I understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, i.e., that whose concept does not need the concept of another thing by which it must be formed.'<sup>6</sup>

The substance is an independent entity. It is an entity which is in itself and not in something else: therefore, it does not need another entity in order to exist and in order to be conceived. The substance is not referred to another entity as the cause and as the basis of its existence. On the other hand, through the definition of mode, we can read the definition of a dependent entity. Spinoza's definition of mode is the following one (*Ethica* Part 1., Definition V):

'Under mode, I understand the affections of substance or that which is in something else, through which it is conceived too.'<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The original text is as follows: 'Per substantiam intelligo id quod in se est et per se concipitur hoc est id cujus conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei a quo formari debeat.'

<sup>7</sup> The original text is the following one: 'Per modum intelligo substantiae affectiones sive id quod in alio est, per quod etiam concipitur.' In the Proposition XV of Part 1. of the *Ethica* Spinoza states that everything which is, is in God and that nothing can be or be conceived without God: the Proposition clearly expresses the dependence of all entities from the only substance, God. Proposition XIV of Part 1. of the *Ethica* expresses that besides God no substance can be granted or conceived.

Modes are affections; they are constitutively in something else. As they are in something else, they depend on another substance in order to exist. Modes are, therefore, constitutively dependent entities<sup>8</sup>.

Through the two quoted definitions we can observe the incompatibility existing between substance and mode. In particular, the status of the individual is not the status of the substance<sup>9</sup>. The individual ought to understand that he is constitutively in something else, i.e., that he constitutively depends on something else: only by understanding his position in the reality can the individual understand the possible way out of his limitations<sup>10</sup>. Becoming aware of one's condition proves to be, for the individual, an indispensable step in order to see whether and how this condition can be improved. The whole exposition of the *Ethica* leads the individual to become acquainted with and aware of his nature. The incompatibility between the way of being of substance and the way of being of man is clearly expressed in *Ethica*, Part 2., Proposition X:

'The being of substance does not belong to the essence of man, or substance does not constitute the form of man.'<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The definition of attribute too is important, even though we are not going to investigate it. In Definition IV of Part 1. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza exposes the essence of the attribute as follows: 'Per attributum intelligo id quod intellectus de substantia percipit tanquam ejusdem essentiam constituens (Under attribute I understand that which the intellect perceives, as regards the substance, as constituting the essence of it).'

<sup>9</sup> In the Corollary of the Proposition XXV of Part 1. of the *Ethica* we can find some further explanations regarding the modes: 'Particular things are nothing but modifications of the attributes of God, or modes by which the attributes of God are expressed in a fixed and definite manner.'

<sup>10</sup> The condition of dependence of the individual is already implicit in Definition I of Part 1. of the *Ethica* when Spinoza expresses the definition of cause of itself: 'Per causam sui intelligo id cujus essentia involvit existentiam sive id cujus natura non potest concipi nisi existens (Under cause of itself I understand that whose essence involves existence, or that whose nature cannot be conceived save as existent).'

Since the essence of any individual does not involve the existence and since the nature of any individual can be conceived as non-existent, the individual is not the cause of himself. The road to the consideration of the individual as a dependent entity is already open.

<sup>11</sup> The original text is:

The being of substance is not the being of man: the essence of man does not consist in being substance. In the corollary of the X Proposition of the 2. Part of the *Ethica* Spinoza furthermore states, as regards the elements constituting the essence of man:

‘Hence it follows that the essence of man is constituted by certain affections of the attributes of God.

For (by the preceding proposition) the being of substance does not belong to the essence of man. That essence therefore (by the proposition XV of part 1.) is something which is in God, and which, without God, can neither be, nor can be conceived, whether it be an affection (by the Corollary of proposition 25 of part I), or a mode which expresses God’s nature in a certain and determined manner.’<sup>12</sup>

The essence of the individual corresponds to affections of the attributes of God. Individuals are, as such, exclusively modes of the substance (i.e., of Nature or God<sup>13</sup>). To be a mode means that the individual is only an

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‘Ad essentiam hominis non pertinet esse substantiæ sive substantia formam hominis non constituit.’

<sup>12</sup> The original text expresses the following contents: ‘Hinc sequitur essentiam hominis constitui a certis Dei attributorum modificationibus. Nam esse substantiæ (per propositionem præcedentem) ad essentiam hominis non pertinet. Est ergo (per propositionem 15 partis I) aliquid quod in Deo est et quod sine Deo nec esse nec concipi potest sive (per corollarium propositionis 25 partis I) affectio sive modus qui Dei naturam certo et determinato modo exprimit.’

<sup>13</sup> See, for the definition of God as substance, the Definition VI of Part 1. of the *Ethica*: ‘Under God, I understand a being absolutely infinite, i.e., a substance consisting of infinite attributes, any of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence.’ Spinoza demonstrates in the Proposition XIV of Part 1. of the *Ethica* that only one substance possessing infinite attributes exists: hence, God is the only substance of reality. In the reality only substance, attributes and modes exist, therefore all entities, including the individuals, are modes of God. Through a specific definition of substance, Spinoza identifies the substance with God: since exclusively the entity which is in itself can be regarded as substance, only God can be rightly considered as being substance since only God is an entity which is in itself. All other entities cannot be considered as being substances since they are in other and are conceived through other. Spinoza considers God and nature as equivalent, as it emerges from the Preface of Part 4. of the *Ethica* and from the Proposition IV of Part 4. of the *Ethica*. As regards the relation of God with the other entities, the following statements of Prop. XV, Part 1. of the *Ethica* are useful: ‘Whatever is, is in God, and, without God, nothing can be, or can be conceived.’ Modes are in God: they depend on God

affection of the substance. Individuals are not independent entities; they are not autonomous entities. On the contrary, individuals are constitutively dependent entities: therefore, they are constitutively exposed to the influence exercised from outside. This condition of dependence is not eliminable for the individual, since it is a feature as such of being a mode<sup>14</sup>. From the individual being a mode derives the condition of the individual as being a part of nature and, as a consequence, the condition of the individual as a passive entity, i.e., an entity which is subdued to the influence of nature<sup>15</sup>. A first example of the individual's condition in the reality can be given by the following statement of Spinoza, which correspond to the Proposition 2 of Part 4. of the *Ethica*:

'We are inasmuch passive as we are a part of Nature, a part which cannot be conceived by itself and without other parts.'<sup>16</sup>

The individual is a part of nature which cannot be conceived as such by

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for their being and for their existence. Without God, modes cannot be conceived. Applied to the particular condition of the individual, the definition of mode implies that the individual cannot be conceived without God.

<sup>14</sup> The Axiom I of Part 1. of the *Ethica* can be useful as regards the way of existence of the entities: 'Everything which is, is either in itself or in something else.' From the first axiom of Part 1. of *Ethica* onwards, there is a rigid separation between kinds of entities: entities which are in themselves are independent entities; entities which are in something else are dependent entities. The substance, God, is the only entity of Spinoza's ontology which exists in itself. All other entities exist in God, i.e., they are dependent on God. In particular, individuals as modes exist in God, i.e., they are dependent on Him: the constitution of an individual is a dependent constitution. Therefore, the individual must be aware of the influences which come from outside his essence: he is constitutively exposed to being passive. The whole process of acquisition of knowledge is an antidote to this congenital exposition.

<sup>15</sup> As alluded to, the condition of passivity is constitutive for the individual, since he is a mode. To be a mode, nevertheless, does not imply that the individual cannot have a development towards becoming active and progressively diminishing his passivity.

<sup>16</sup> The original text is: 'Nos eatenus patimur quatenus Naturae sumus pars quae per se absque aliis non potest concipi.' The individual is passive constitutively, not accidentally. If something of which the individual is only a partial cause comes about in the individual, the individual is passive. All affects depend on the influence of the external influence: since the individual cannot eliminate the external influence, the individual will always have elements of passivity.

itself and independently of other parts: thence, the individual is in another entity, is dependent on another entity, and is subjected to the influences exercised by the other entity on him.

The individual finds himself in a passive condition since the individual was born passive and remains passive up to the point of the development of the individual's reason. Thus, individuals do not start their lives and their possible development from a neutral condition; they begin their development from a passive condition. Spinoza reinforces his considerations with the following assertions, contained in the initial steps of Part 4. of the *Ethica*. In Proposition 4 of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza asserts:

'It cannot be that man is not a part of Nature and that he could undergo no changes save those which can be understood through his nature alone and of which he is the adequate cause.'<sup>17</sup>

The individual is a part of nature: it is impossible that the individual is not a part of nature. Individuals are constitutively dependent entities: therefore, they are exposed to being passive<sup>18</sup>. It is not an accident that they are exposed to being passive. The individual undergoes changes which are not due to his nature: a part of the changes which the individual experiences is due to external factors. Thus, the individual undergoes changes which cannot be referred to his being an adequate cause. The individual is subdued to the influence coming from outside because of the limitations which are inherent in his being a mode. The individual undergoes changes which are due to external causes: he cannot be the cause of all the changes that he experiences. The knowledge of the individual alone would therefore not be sufficient for the comprehension of the changes experienced by the individual. The sphere of the individual cannot be explained with exclusive reference to the individual.

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<sup>17</sup> The original text is: 'Fieri non potest ut homo non sit Naturae pars et ut nullas possit pati mutationes nisi quae per solam suam naturam possint intelligi quarumque adaequata sit causa.'

<sup>18</sup> Men are not and cannot become a kingdom in a kingdom; they cannot be and cannot become a kind of autonomous dimension within a greater system. This is not the human condition (see, for an explanation of these aspects, the preface of Part 3. of the *Ethica*; see also *Tractatus Politicus*, Chapter II, Paragraph 6). The individual is not able and will never be able to separate himself from reality: hence, he cannot be independent of reality.

The individual's initial condition, the condition preceding the process of knowledge of reality, is a condition of total passivity. The absence of knowledge strongly limits the individual's capacity of forming adequate ideas. The individual's becoming active can be initiated and then developed only through the activity of reason and only through the consequent increase of knowledge of reality: therefore, the individual initial condition, before the beginning of the process of learning, is a condition of total passivity<sup>19</sup>.

The individual is from the beginning exposed to the emergence of

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<sup>19</sup> The Definition VII of Part 1. of the *Ethica* expresses the notion of freedom for Spinoza: 'That thing is called free which exists solely by the necessity of its own nature and is determined to act by itself alone. On the other hand, that thing is necessary, or rather constrained, which is determined by something else to exist and to operate in a particular and determined manner.' In Spinoza's view, freedom has no connection with free choice. For an entity, being free consists in being determined by itself alone and not by other factors. The substance is the only entity which is free within Spinoza's conception of freedom: substance is the only entity which, since it is in itself, does not depend on any other entity: hence it is not exposed to the influence of other entities; substance is determined to act by itself alone. Entities which are determined by factors which are external to themselves exist, on the contrary, in a condition of constriction. In particular, individuals, due to their being modes of the substance, are always necessitated by factors existing outside themselves. Thus, the individual ought to be aware of the fact that his condition is not a condition of self-determination, but a condition of determination through external factors. The individual is determined by something else to exist and to operate in a specific way. Spinoza clearly states in the Proposition XXIX of Part 1. of the *Ethica* that, in the reality, there is no space for contingency. Everything is necessitated either by itself or by something else: 'In the reality there is nothing contingent, but all things are determined to exist and to operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the divine nature.' In the Corollary I. of Proposition XLIV of Part 2. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza states that individuals are led by their imagination to consider the existence of contingency in the reality. In the Proposition XLIV of Part 2. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza states that Reason lets individuals regard things not as contingent, but as necessary. A problem for Spinoza is to justify how the individual can be the author of the modifications of his dispositions if everything in the reality is necessitated. Modes are necessitated: therefore, the individual is already determined to do what he does. It seems, therefore, that there is no space for the individual choice. On the contrary, Spinoza's *Ethica* gives the impression that the individual can change his condition of passivity if he chooses to acquire knowledge: the individual can choose to acquire knowledge.

passions; the capacity to be active comes about later since it can come about exclusively through the development of knowledge. Being active needs, on the contrary, the development of knowledge: hence, being active needs the engagement of the individual. To be active is a condition within the range of potentiality of the individual, but is not immediately actual: it needs to be realised through education. Education, which consists in the knowledge of the structure of reality will progressively liberate the individual from confused ideas and therewith from passions. The contents of this education are not immediately given, though; the individual must gain them step after step: the whole exposition of the *Ethica* illustrates how long, complex and difficult the road to education for any individual is. The main difficulty for the individual lies therefore in the fact that the individual finds himself at the beginning in a condition of total passivity, whereas he needs to develop the active part of himself through knowledge. Spinoza strengthens his positions regarding the individual's being liable to passions through the contents which he expresses in the Corollary of the Proposition IV of Part 4. of the *Ethica*:

‘Hence it follows that it is necessary that man is always liable to the passions and that he follows the common order of Nature and that he obeys the same order and that he accommodates himself to the same order, as much as the nature of things demands.’<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The exposition of the individuals to passions emerges from the original text: ‘Hinc sequitur hominem necessario passionibus esse semper obnoxium communemque Naturae ordinem sequi et eidem parere seseque eidem quantum rerum natura exigit, accommodare.’ In the Note of Proposition LIX of Part 3. of the *Ethica* Spinoza describes the effects on the individual produced by the passive affects: ‘And I think that I thereby explained and displayed through their primary causes the principal affects and vacillations of spirit which arise from the combination of the three primary affects, to wit, desire, gladness and sadness. It is thereby evident that we are in many ways driven about by external causes and that, like waves of the sea driven by contrary winds, we toss to and fro unwitting of our issue and of our fate.’ All affects derive from the basic three affects. The condition of the individual in the reality is that of an entity which lives under the influence of external causes: he is constitutively driven by the force of affects and fluctuations. Spinoza’s detailed inquiry into affects shows the way in which the individual can become acquainted with the functioning of his mind. He, first of all, comes to know that he has affects. To counteract affects, the individual needs first of all to become aware that he has them. The individual is able to learn to counteract this initial condition;

Individuals are necessarily subdued to passions: the constitutive dependence of the individual on Nature brings about a condition of continuous liability towards passions. The coming about of these passions does not lie in the power of the individual. This aspect means that the sphere of the individual's being active is strongly limited. The individual can never be free from passions since the individual is a part of nature: the individual is constitutively passive since the individual is only a mode. Spinoza does not stop at the description of the initial condition of the individual, though: he analyses this condition in order to modify it. Passivity is for sure the initial condition of the individual, but it does not represent a condemnation. The individual can have a development against his being passive: the source of the change is knowledge.

#### d) Affects

We would now like to investigate the effects of being passive for the individual: therefore, we would like to analyse the definition of affect given by Spinoza. The following is the definition of affect exposed by Spinoza in Definition 3 of Part 3. of the *Ethica*:

'Under affect<sup>21</sup>, I understand the affections of the body by which the power of the same body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and at the same time the ideas of such affections.

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the condition in which he begins to live is nonetheless a condition of being influenced by the passive affects. This condition is constitutive for the individual. Spinoza's whole analysis of affects and of human servitude aims to expose the ways of the individual liability to passions. The extension of Spinoza's inquiry demonstrates that the individual is exposed to many affects in many ways. The individual ought to become aware of this aspect since only through being aware of his liability can the individual find a solution to at least partially counteract this liability itself.

<sup>21</sup> At the end of Part 3. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza gives a definition of the affects, listing as affects the following states of mind: desire, gladness, sadness, wonder, contempt, love, hatred, inclination, aversion, devotion, derision, hope, fear, confidence, despair, joy, disappointment, pity, approval, indignation, partiality, disparagement, envy, sympathy, self-approval, humility, repentance, pride, self-abasement, honour, shame, regret, emulation, thankfulness or gratitude, benevolence, anger, revenge, cruelty or savageness, timidity, daring, cowardice, consternation, courtesy or deference, ambition, luxury, intemperance, avarice, lust. Not all these affects can have an active value. Already through observing the nature and

## Explanation

Therefore, if we can be the adequate cause<sup>22</sup> of any of these affections, I then understand under affect an action, I understand the other affections as passions.<sup>23</sup>

We can immediately see that the notion of affect has a plurality of meanings. Affects can be both actions and passions. Correspondingly, the mind can be both active and passive as regards affects. If the mind is the adequate cause of the affection, the affect is an action. In case that the mind is

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the multiplicity of the mentioned affects, we can see that the individual is exposed in many ways to the affects.

<sup>22</sup> For the definition of adequate and inadequate cause, see, for instance, the definitions given by Spinoza in Definition 1 of Part 3. of the *Ethica*: 'Causam adaequatam appello eam cujus effectus potest clare et distincte per eandem percipi. Inadaequatam autem seu partialem illam voco cujus effectus per ipsam solam intelligi nequit. I name adequate cause that cause whose effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived through the cause itself. I call inadequate or partial cause, on the other hand, that cause whose effect cannot be understood through it alone.' The individuals cannot be the adequate cause of their passive affects, since these affects depend on the external nature as their cause. Passive affects cannot be understood only through the essence and the action of the individual. Moreover, since the individual is a part of nature, the condition of inadequacy as cause is not eliminable. Individuals are inadequate causes constitutively, not accidentally, since the individuals are exposed to the influence of external factors. In the immediately subsequent Definition II, Spinoza adds the following considerations regarding our being active and our being passive: 'I say that we act then, when something takes place, either within us or externally to us, of which we are the adequate cause, i.e., (by the foregoing definition) when, through our nature, something takes place, within us or externally to us, which can, through our nature alone, be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand, I say that we are passive when something takes place within us, or follows from our nature, of which we are only the partial cause.'

<sup>23</sup> The first definition of affect introduces us to the plurality of values for affect. Affects can be actions or passions depending on the individuals being the adequate cause or on their not being the adequate cause for the emergence of the affects: 'Per affectum intelligo corporis affectiones quibus ipsius corporis agendi potentia augetur vel minuitur, juvatur vel coercetur et simul harum affectionum ideas explicatio

Si itaque alicujus harum affectionum adaequata possimus esse causa, tum per affectum actionem intelligo, alias passionem.' Hence, affects do not need to be necessarily evaluated negatively. On the contrary, the affects of which the individual is an adequate cause can oppose passive affects.

no adequate cause of the affection, the affect is a passion: in this case, the individual cannot master the affects. In Proposition I of Part 3. of the *Ethica* further elements are given as regards the being active and the being passive of the mind:

‘Our mind is in certain cases active, and in certain cases passive. In so far as it has adequate ideas<sup>24</sup>, it is necessarily in certain cases active, and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily in certain cases passive.

Corollary.

Hence it follows that the mind is the more liable to passion, the more it possesses inadequate ideas, and, conversely, it is the more active, the more adequate ideas it possesses.’

Affects resulting from the individual’s passivity will bring the individual to a condition of fluctuation: the individual does not master what is happening in himself. Therefore, if the individual wants to master himself, the individual needs to diminish the influence of passive affects and to eliminate them. If possible, the individual needs to increase the extension of adequate ideas and to diminish the extension of inadequate ideas present in his mind. A change in the mind, obtained through education, turns out to be necessary in order to diminish the extension of inadequate ideas.

Since passions are inadequate ideas, the battle for the liberation of the minds is a battle taking place in the mind of the individual. The individual needs to find a way for eliminating or at least for limiting the force and the number of inadequate ideas. The acquisition of knowledge will step after step emendate inadequate ideas. The liberation from inadequate ideas needs to be arrived at: it is not something given. The disposition to the development of reason is constitutively given since the individual has specific faculties which enable him to reach the levels of reason and of intuitive science. The development of reason as such is, on the contrary, not given: it needs to be reached through a long road of education<sup>25</sup>. The development

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<sup>24</sup> In Definition IV of Part 2. of the *Ethica* Spinoza expresses the concept of adequate idea: ‘Under adequate idea, I understand an idea which, in so far as it is considered in itself, without relation to the object, has all the properties or intrinsic marks of a true idea.’

<sup>25</sup> The individual does possess the capacity of developing good dispositions, but they must engage themselves to develop them. For instance, in the *Tractatus Politicus*, Chapter V, Paragraph 2, Spinoza asserts that men were not born civil; they become civil.

of reason depends on the choice of the individual: the individual ought to become aware of his condition in the reality and ought to choose the road to education. Thus, the development of reason does not come about by itself: the individual's continuous engagement is needed. The individual has therefore the whole responsibility regarding the decision of beginning and then continuing the road to knowledge.

In *Ethica*, Part 3, General Definition of the Affects, Spinoza gives the following definition of affect, in this case limiting the definition of affect to the being passive of the individual:

'Affect, which is called a passivity of the soul, is a confused idea, by which the mind affirms, concerning its body, or any part thereof, a force for existence greater or less than before, and by the presence of which the mind is determined to think of this rather than of that.'<sup>26</sup>

It is interesting, in our opinion, that Spinoza does not say that the affect is the consequence of a confused idea: he says that the affect is as such a confused idea; affects are directly confused ideas. The definition of affect as a confused idea implies that the affect can be eliminated in case of the transformation of the confused idea into an adequate idea. If an individual has confused ideas, he is already in the condition of being affected by passions. As a consequence, the elimination of the confused ideas would amount to the elimination of the affects. The road to the limitation of affects has been thereby indicated. Immediately thereafter, Spinoza adds the following observation in the section which deals with the explanation of the General Definition of the Affects:

'I say, first, that affect, or passion, of the soul is a confused idea. For we showed that the mind is inasmuch passive (see Proposition 3 of this part), as it has inadequate or confused ideas.'<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The quotation of the original text illustrates Spinoza's vocabulary: 'Affectus, qui animi pathema dicitur, est confusa idea, qua mens maiorem vel minorem sui corporis vel alicuius eius partis existendi vim, quam antea, affirmat, et qua data ipsa mens ad hoc potius, quam ad illud cogitandum determinatur.'

<sup>27</sup> Passion is a confused idea. The correspondence between the being passive of mind, on the one hand, and the mind's having inadequate and confused ideas, on the other hand, clearly emerges: 'Dico primo affectum seu passionem animi esse "confusam ideam". Nam mentem eatenus tantum pati ostendimus (vide propositionem 3 huius), quatenus ideas inadaequatas sive confusas habet.' Inadequate or

Having confused ideas is equivalent to being passive. Being passive means not having control over oneself. An individual who is passive steadily lacks autonomy in acting. Only the individual who has at least begun to proceed and to advance in the experience of knowledge succeeds in blocking passions and in organising his own life. To consider passions as inadequate ideas means opening the way for the control of passions since to eliminate inadequate ideas means eliminating passions.

The difference between God as substance and individuals as modes should always be considered: the individual is not God, the individual is both active and passive. Since the individual is a part of nature, the individual has very many ways in which he is passive. For the individual, freedom from passions is not a state, it is not a definitive condition: freedom from passions consists in the continuous process of emending the mind. Individuals cannot be or become isolated from external influences: since they are modes, they will be always under the influence of nature, i.e., of the whole reality. Hence, being passive is a constitutive feature of men. Since the position of man in the reality condemns him to be a passive entity, men will always be liable to passions, i.e., to affects which as such prove to be negative for the stability of the mind. Liberation from passions consists in the steady emendation of the mind: emendation of the mind means analysis of ideas, recognition of adequate and inadequate ideas and elimination of inadequate ideas.

### e) Kinds of knowledge of reality

The only way to achieve an active condition is, in Spinoza's view, the process of acquisition of the knowledge of reality. Spinoza distinguishes between three forms of knowledge in Part 2., Proposition 40, Note 2 of the *Ethica*:

- i. imagination,
- ii. reason,
- iii. intuitive science.

Imagination is rather a negative form of knowledge since imagination is a form of ignorance of the authentic constitution of reality. Imagination must be distinguished from reason and from intuitive science, since imagination directly consigns the individual to the vacillations of the mind,

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confused ideas are passions: therefore, the way out of passions consists in the acquisition of knowledge of reality.

whereas reason and intuitive science liberate the mind from vacillations. Imagination consists of inadequate ideas, whereas both reason and intuitive science consist of adequate ideas.

In the following passage, Spinoza points out the negative aspects of imagination, on the one side, and the positive aspects of reason and intuitive science, on the other side:

‘From all that has been said above it is clear that we perceive many things and form universal notions (1.) from particular things represented through our senses fragmentarily, confusedly and without order to our intellect<sup>28</sup> (see the Corollary of the Proposition XXIX of this part), and therefore I use to call such perceptions knowledge which originates from inconstant experience<sup>29</sup>. (2.) From symbols, e.g., from the fact that, having read or heard certain words, we remember things and form certain ideas concerning them similar to those through which we imagine things (see Note of Proposition 18 of this part). I shall call henceforth both these ways of regarding things knowledge of the first kind, opinion, or imagination<sup>30</sup>. (3.) Finally, from the fact that we

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<sup>28</sup> The original text witnesses the defects of representation of the imagination:

‘ex singularibus nobis per sensus mutilate, confuse et sine ordine ad intellectum repraesentatis.’

<sup>29</sup> The kind of experience mentioned in the passage is inconstant: ‘et ideo tales perceptiones cognitionem ab experientia vaga vocari consuevi.’ As experience is not part of an order given by reason, experience produces a condition of instability in the mind. The work of the mind should be a steady engagement in the interpretation, ordering and emendation of the experience. The Proposition XXXV of Part 2. of the *Ethica* expresses that falsity is, as such, a privation of knowledge. The privation of knowledge originates from defects characterising the ideas of the mind: ‘Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge which inadequate, or fragmentary, or confused ideas involve.’ Moreover, the Proposition XLI of Part 2. of the *Ethica* Spinoza states that the imagination is false, whereas reason and intuitive science are necessarily true: it is impossible to make mistakes through reason and through intuitive science. To free the mind from falsity or to diminish the component of falsity present in the mind, a reform of the mind is necessary through which inadequate, fragmentary or confused ideas are eliminated. The process of extension of the knowledge of reality is the way to eliminate inadequate, fragmentary or confused ideas.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Utrumque hunc res contemplandi modum cognitionem primi generis, opinionem, vel imaginationem in posterum vocabo.’ Spinoza calls imagination a form of knowledge in spite of the fact that he recognises that imagination is a privation of the authentic knowledge of reality.

have notions common to all men<sup>31</sup> and adequate ideas of the properties of things (see Corollary of the Proposition XXXVIII, and Proposition XXXIX with the Corollary of this Proposition, and Proposition XL of this part), I shall call this way of regarding things reason and knowledge of the second kind<sup>32</sup>. Besides these two kinds of knowledge there is, as I shall hereafter show, another, a third kind of knowledge, which we shall call intuitive science<sup>33</sup>. And this kind of knowledge proceeds from the adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things<sup>34</sup>.

We can note the following characteristics for the three forms of knowledge described by Spinoza, whereby only negative characters are assigned to the imagination:

- Imagination is fragmented, confused, and without order<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> The common features of reality enable the individual to go beyond his particularity: to acknowledge the common features of reality is to be in the condition of recognising the structure of reality as such.

<sup>32</sup> Reason is therefore the second form of knowledge, as the original text tells: 'Atque hunc rationem, et secundi generis cognitionem vocabo.'

<sup>33</sup> Intuitive science is the third form of knowledge: 'Praeter haec duo cognitionis genera datur, ut in sequentibus ostendam, aliud tertium quod scientiam intuitivam vocabimus.'

<sup>34</sup> The way of proceeding of intuitive science functions in the following way: 'Atque hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adaequata idea essentiae formalis quorundam Dei attributorum ad adaequatam cognitionem essentiae rerum.' From the knowledge of the essence of God the essence of things can be correctly derived.

<sup>35</sup> It is of course possible that imagination is a stage which belongs the whole process of knowledge and which the individual cannot help experiencing. Coming into contact with affections means, for the individual, coming into contact with not immediately clear data of experience: the first form of knowledge of new data of experience cannot but be incomplete, and therefore cannot but be confused, fragmented, without order. Only reason and intuitive science will be able to transform the incomplete interpretation of experience into a clear and adequate knowledge of reality. The first contact with the external reality is probably always an incomplete contact in the sense that the individual is not immediately able to interpret all the elements in the right way; a certain degree of inadequateness and confusion will always be present in the individual experiencing the reality. At the same time, it is not to be forgotten that the contact with the reality of the individual who has remained at the level of the imagination is profoundly different from the contact with reality which the individual that has reached the level of reason and of the

- Reason is characterised by the presence of common notions and by the presence of adequate ideas of the properties of things.

- Intuitive science goes from the adequate essence of attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things<sup>36</sup>. Intuitive science, proceeding from the inquiry and discovery of the attributes of God, reaches the knowledge of the essence of the things since things are modifications of God.

Since imagination, reason and intuitive science lead the activity of the mind, they are the foundation of the individual way of living. Imagination, reason and intuitive science are therefore not only forms of knowledge of reality: they constitute ways of living; they constitute principles for the organisation of one's own life. The individuals living in the condition of imagination will organise their lives on the basis of imagination, whereas those living under the other forms of knowledge will organise their lives on the basis of the other forms of knowledge<sup>37</sup>.

We can observe that imagination is characterised by a condition of confusion in the mind: imagination is connected to confused ideas. Imagination is therefore the mind's disposition of an individual who lives under the dominance of passions. The individual who lives in the dimension of the imagination is an individual who has no stability and no authentic foundations: the condition of imagination belongs to an individual who

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intuitive science has: the individual who is able to reach reason and intuitive science has a whole apparatus of science elements at his disposal; he is, in any case, less vulnerable to the data coming from experience. The mind constitution of the individual living in the imagination is different from the mind's constitution of the individual who has reached the level of reason and of intuitive science. Since imagination is a fragmentary knowledge, the individual who lives under the power of imagination is exposed to manipulations: he does not dispose of authentic knowledge which enables him to distinguish between true and false opinions.

<sup>36</sup> In the Proposition XXVII of Part 5. of the *Ethica* Spinoza states that the third kind of knowledge brings to the individual the highest mental contentment that the individual can reach.

<sup>37</sup> The difference existing between the kinds of knowledge emerges through Prop. XLI of Part 2. of the *Ethica*: 'Knowledge of the first kind is the only cause of falsity, knowledge of the second and third kind, on the other hand, is necessarily true'. Imagination brings to falsity, whereas reason and intuitive science are true. The individual should therefore try to increase the forms of knowledge represented by reason and intuitive science and should try to diminish imagination.

steadily fluctuates between the elements of his imagination<sup>38</sup>. The individual who has only a fragmentary knowledge of reality cannot see the cause of his passive affects. He cannot understand the cause which produces the affects and, therefore, he has no way to counteract this cause.

Before the emergence and development of reason and of intuitive science, the individual is only passive; after the beginning of reason, the individual is both passive and active. The individual is transformed through knowledge: there is not only one kind of individual and there is not only one kind of relation of the individual to reality. The individual who lives in the imagination lives another kind of life than the subject who lives in reason. Imagination and reason are ways of life. The reality for the individual with reason is another entity than for the individual with imagination: the interpretation of reality of an individual who has developed his reason is completely different from the interpretation of reality of an individual who has remained at the level of imagination. The individual who has reached reason is not completely exposed to passions: reason is a way of living different from the way of living given by imagination. The individual who lives under imagination is the prey of the passions: he has no way to counteract passions since he is not aware of his position in the reality. For the individual, to be acquainted with his position in the reality means being aware that he is constitutively limited and therefore always exposed to passions; it means having acquired a full apparatus of concepts regarding reality. The formation of the individual means a complete transformation of the mind.

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<sup>38</sup> The ignorance which regards the authentic essence of God and which is produced by imagination leads the individual to a false conception of God as it is exposed in the Appendix of Part 1. of the *Ethica*. The demasking of the final cause at the end of the first part of the *Ethica* is an example of liberation from false views: the reaching of the view that God does not do anything following a final cause frees the individual from all false representations of God in which God is presented as doing something for an end. The analysis of the absence of final causes can free the individual from all fears connected to the belief in the unforeseeable actions of God. The interpretation of reality changes through the knowledge of reality, and correspondingly the way of living in the reality changes too. The emendation of the inadequate ideas of the mind involves the whole interpretation of reality: hence, the interpretation of God's essence too belongs to Spinoza's project of the emendation of the confused ideas of the mind: one of the aims of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* consists in the correction of false interpretations of God's essence.

The fundamental characteristic of Spinoza's way towards knowledge is Spinoza's conviction that, to become moral, the individual needs to know the structure of reality. The individual needs to reach the knowledge of reality and of his position in the reality<sup>39</sup>. Being active means having adequate ideas, i.e., reaching the knowledge of reality. The passivity of the individual can be eliminated through the process of learning the structures and the organisation of reality.

- The individual who does not know the structure of reality is the prey of his passions: he fluctuates since he has no fixed point.

- The individual who knows the structures of reality is able to understand the cause and origin of his affects and is in the condition of putting his affects under control.

The individual begins to master himself by becoming aware that he has affects. The individual, before the investigation on the structure of reality, does not know what imagination is, what affect is, and what his mind limits are: if he does not know that he has passive affects, he does not know that he is exposed to these affects. The first step for the transformation of the individual consists in becoming aware of his position in the reality.

The progressive acquisition of knowledge of the principles of reality, which brings about the transformation of inadequate ideas into adequate ideas, changes the condition of the individual. The individual whose mind has inadequate ideas is more exposed to passivity than a mind which has adequate ideas. A mind which has inadequate ideas fluctuates in ignorance: it is not master of itself; it cannot react to the influence from outside. A mind which knows the structure of reality is, on the contrary, able to control and neutralise passions. Knowledge of reality means control of reality since it is awareness of the external influences and therewith elimination of them.

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<sup>39</sup> Through the Proposition XXVIII of Part 4. of the *Ethica* we can see that the highest good and the highest virtue of the mind consists in the knowledge of God: 'Summum mentis bonum est Dei cognitio et summa mentis virtus Deum cognoscere (The mind's highest good is the knowledge of God, and the mind's highest virtue is to know God).' The knowledge of God is described by Spinoza as the highest happiness or beatitude in the last Note of Part 2. of the *Ethica*. In the IV Heading of the Appendix of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza defines beatitude as the contentment of spirit which originates from the intuitive knowledge of God.

The individual possesses a disposition for knowledge and for the development of the mind. Through the knowledge, the individual becomes able to understand how his mind functions, which his dispositions are, what imagination is, and how the affects are produced: the knowledge consists, among other things, in the analysis of the individual mind's structures. Thereby, he becomes able to understand his position in the reality. Through the hard work employed in understanding the mechanism of this own affects, the individual can see whether and how affects can be controlled.

Being active is caused by knowledge. Knowledge will not come to the individual alone: to have a development in one's mind, the individual ought to be engaged in the acquisition of knowledge. No development of knowledge will come about without the due engagement of the individual. The engagement of the individual will be always needed.

#### **f) The power of knowledge**

Coming back to the description of the power of knowledge, we can see a first example of the power of knowledge from the following quotation, which corresponds to the Proposition III of Part 5. of the *Ethica*:

'An affect, which is a passion, ceases to be a passion, as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea thereof.'

Affects are no longer passions when the individual understands them. The cause of the passions is the privation of knowledge which consists in the formation of inadequate ideas: therefore, improvement in the knowledge is as such a diminution of passivity; it is a constant process of liberation. Adequate ideas do not come about by themselves: adequate ideas come about in the mind only after and only through the development of reason and of intuitive science. The process of forming a clear and distinct idea of an affect is as such an emendation of the mind.

An emendation of the mind turns out to be indispensable in order that the individual could become aware of his limits: without this emendation, there cannot be any liberation of the mind from inadequate ideas. Even though the individual is never free from affects – since he is a part of nature and since, as a part of nature, he will be always passive –, through the acquisition of the knowledge of reality the individual will be able to react to the affects. Knowledge is, among other things, an instrument of defence: it is a barrier against passions. Before the development of

knowledge, the individual's mind is only constituted by passions; after the development of knowledge, there is a disposition of reason in the individual which can limit the birth of passions, on the one hand, and can eliminate a part of the passions, on the other hand. A new faculty, which as such belongs to the potential dispositions of the individual, grows step after step. The process of knowledge completely changes the individual: it gives the individual the instruments to oppose his passions and his natural being passive. The knowledge blocks immediately the formation of confused ideas and uncovers the confused ideas of the individual as false. The knowledge of reality brings about an emendation of the intellect in the sense that knowledge implies the discovery of the individual's inadequate ideas as inadequate. As regards the mind's control of the affects, in the Corollary of the Proposition III of Part 5. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza asserts:

'An affect, therefore, is the more under our control, and the mind is the less passive in respect to it, the more known it is to us.'

Herewith the power of the knowledge is illustrated: the knowledge of the affects diminishes the power of the affects. Through the last statement, the relationship between the acquisition of knowledge and the extension of passivity in the mind is clear: the growth of knowledge implies a diminution of passivity of the mind. The growth of knowledge is proportional to the diminution of passivity. The way to put the affects under control is to know them. In the Proposition VI of Part 5. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza affirms:

'The mind has greater power over the affects or is less subject to them, inasmuch as it understands all things as necessary.'

Finally, in Proposition XXXVIII of Part 5. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza says:

'The more things the mind understands by the second and the third kind of knowledge, the less subject it is to those affects which are evil, and the less it is afraid of death.'

Knowledge is a process of limitation of passive affect and of the imagination<sup>40</sup>. The individual needs authentic knowledge in order to be able to give the external influences the importance which they deserve. This does not mean that individuals stop being passive because of knowledge: actually,

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<sup>40</sup> At the beginning of the Preface of Part 5. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza states that the individual cannot have absolute dominance of the passions. The individual ought to become aware of his limits.

individuals are and remain passive despite the degree of knowledge at which they can arrive; being passive is not completely eliminable. Only the individuals who have reached the due level of knowledge have their conditions under control since they can direct their lives on the basis of the knowledge which they have reached.

The progressive condition of controlling and opposing passive affect is not, even at the end of the *Ethica*, a condition of complete freedom. It is, on the contrary, a process of continuous liberation. At the end of the *Ethica* Spinoza says, for instance, that the individual can control his lusts since he has reached the condition of Beatitude. See *Ethica*, Part 5., Proposition 42:

'Beatitude is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself, neither do we rejoice in it because we control our lusts but, on the contrary, because we rejoice in it, therefore we are able to control our lusts.'<sup>41</sup>

The statement shows that passions are always present since beatitude serves to fight against lust. Beatitude consists in love towards God which comes about in the subject thanks to the third kind of knowledge<sup>42</sup>. To adequate ideas corresponds the condition of being active: the more adequate ideas the mind has, the more active the mind is and the more active affects it can produce. Beatitude does not derive from the individual's capacity of controlling lusts but from the individual's capacity of reaching knowledge: beatitude is a direct consequence of reaching knowledge; it is an affect which comes about because of the being active of the mind. The knowledge produces a structure of affects which are independent of the passive affects and counteract them.

In general, the individual obtains the development of a new nature through the development of knowledge: knowledge represents the formation of a new constitution within the individual. This new constitution forms a nucleus of power against imagination, confused ideas and passions: it brings about a brightening of the obscure zone represented by in-

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<sup>41</sup> The original text is as follows: 'Beatitudo non est virtutis praemium sed ipsa virtus nec eadem gaudemus quia libidines coercemus sed contra quia eadem gaudemus, ideo libidines coercere possumus.' In Chapter III, *Of the vocation of the Hebrews, and whether the gift of prophecy was peculiar to them*, of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 48, Spinoza says that the authentic beatitude consists in wisdom and in the knowledge of the truth.

<sup>42</sup> The definition of Beatitude is exposed by Spinoza in the Demonstration of the Proposition XLII of Part 5. of the *Ethica*.

adequate ideas. The mind which knows is a mind engaged in the activity of inquiring into the reality: it is a mind which acts; it is not a mind which is led by the external sphere. The active affects counteract the presence of the passive affects. Before fulfilling the process of education, the subject has only passive affects. After the fulfilment of this process, the individual has active affects too: the formation of active affects can come about exclusively after the faculty of reason has been developed. Active affects come about independently of the other affects.

The difference between the condition of the individuals before the process of knowledge and the condition of the individuals after the process of knowledge is not a condition of elimination of the passive affects: since the individual is a part of nature and is affected in many ways, new passions come steadily about. The difference between the individual before the process of knowledge and the individual after the process of knowledge is that the knowing individual can understand himself, his essence, his position in the reality, the significance of imagination and of knowledge. He can understand the affects and their mechanism: he is thus able to oppose passive affects. Individuals possessing knowledge can react to the passive affects, can understand their origin, can see their cause and can dominate them. Liberation from the passive affects is a continuous action.

### **g) Transformation of the individual**

As alluded to, we can observe, throughout the *Ethica*, a process of transformation of the individual. To give some examples of the transformation of the individual, we would like to begin with *Ethica*, Part 3., Proposition III:

‘The actions of the mind arise solely from adequate ideas; the passions, on the contrary, depend solely on inadequate ideas.’<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Spinoza’s original text clarifies that the separation between actions and passions is due, among other things, to their different origin: ‘Mentis actiones ex solis ideis adaequatis oriuntur, passiones autem a solis inadaequatis pendent.’ Adequate ideas are necessary to have actions of mind. Passions are inevitable since the individual has inadequate ideas until he succeeds in developing the second and the third kind of knowledge, i.e., reason and intuitive science. In the Proposition XXIII of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza states that the individual does not act by following

The distinction between adequate ideas and actions, on the one hand, and inadequate ideas and passions, on the other hand, is therewith clear. In the Note to this last Proposition, Spinoza adds some important elements concerning the relations between the individual's mind having passion and the individual's mind having elements of negation in itself. The condition of having passions refers to the individual mind since the individual's mind has elements of negation in itself, i.e., since the individual's mind is considered as being a part of the nature:

'Thus we see that passions are not referred to the mind, except in so far as it contains something involving negation, or in so far as it is regarded as a part of nature which cannot be clearly and distinctly perceived through itself without other parts...'

For the individual mind, to have passion is due to its being a part of nature; insofar as the individual's mind is a part of nature, the individual's mind is negated, i.e., limited as to its being active by the nature. Having passions amounts, therefore, for the individual, to having a minor degree of reality and a minor degree of perfection.

Only the process of knowledge, fulfilled through reason and intuitive science, can increase the being active of the mind since only those affects which derive from knowledge are a form of being active.. An increase in the being active of the mind means a greater percentage of self-mastery of the mind; it cannot mean, though, that the human mind can be, or become, completely active. A certain amount of passivity will always remain in the individual<sup>44</sup>. The individual begins his way towards at least a partial liberation from passive affects from a disadvantaged point: individuals are immediately submerged by passions. Only step after step can the individual produce adequate ideas, i.e., only little by little can the individuals use reason and reach authentic knowledge. Some passages in the Note of the Proposition 20 of Part 5. of the *Ethica* are illuminating:

'For the strength of any affect is defined by the power of an external cause compared with ours (by the proposition V of part 4.). Now, the power of the

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virtue if he acts due to inadequate ideas; only the individual who possesses intellectual knowledge acts by following virtue.

<sup>44</sup> In the *Tractatus Politicus*, Chapter I, Paragraph 5, for instance, Spinoza confirms that individuals are necessarily exposed to passions.

mind is defined only by knowledge<sup>45</sup>; its impotence or passion is assessed, on the other hand, only on the basis of the privation of knowledge<sup>46</sup>, i.e., on the basis of the factor through which ideas are said to be inadequate; from this it follows that that mind is most passive whose greatest part is made up of inadequate ideas<sup>47</sup>, so that that mind is discerned more through that which it undergoes than through that which it does<sup>48</sup>, and it follows that, on the contrary, that mind is most active whose greatest part is made up of adequate ideas<sup>49</sup>, so that, although in this mind are present as many inadequate ideas as in that mind, it is discerned more through those ideas which are attributed to human virtue than through these ideas which reveal the human impotence<sup>50</sup>. Then it must be observed that the spiritual illnesses and misfortunes originate above all from the excessive love for a thing which is liable to many variations and which we can never be master of. For no one is solicitous or anxious about anything save about that which he loves, neither do wrongs, suspicions, enmities and so on arise except in regard to things of which no one can be really master. From these considerations we easily conceive what the clear and distinct knowledge, and especially that third kind of knowledge, whose foundation the knowledge itself of God is, can do against the affects<sup>51</sup> (see on this the note of the proposition XLVII of part 2.):

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<sup>45</sup> The power of the mind exclusively consists in the knowledge of reality.

<sup>46</sup> As we can see through the following quotation, Spinoza clearly states that impotence or passion exclusively derives from the privation of knowledge: *'impotentia autem seu passio a sola cognitionis privatione'* The impotence of the individual derives from the lack of knowledge. Spinoza interprets the opposition between the power of mind and impotence of mind as exclusively consisting in the presence or absence of knowledge in the mind. Knowledge is therefore the field in which the possibility of development of the individual's mind resides.

<sup>47</sup> Spinoza's statement clarifies the connection between the extension of passions and the extension of inadequate ideas: *'Ex quo sequitur, mentem illam maxime pati, cuius maximam partem ideae inadaequatae constituunt'*

<sup>48</sup> *'ita ut magis per id, quod patitur, quam per id quod agit, dignoscatur'*

<sup>49</sup> *'et illam contra maxime agere, cuius maximam partem ideae adaequatae constituunt'*

<sup>50</sup> *'ita ut, quamvis huic tot inadaequatae ideae, quam illi insint, magis tamen per illas, quae humanae virtuti tribuuntur, quam per has, quae humanam impotentiam arguunt, dignoscatur'*

<sup>51</sup> The clear and distinct knowledge of God is knowledge of the whole reality: since this knowledge is knowledge of the whole reality it enables the individual to eliminate inadequate ideas.

if, without doubt, it does not eliminate them completely (see proposition III with the Note of the proposition IV of this part), in so far as they are passions<sup>52</sup>, at least it brings about that they constitute the smallest part of the mind<sup>53</sup> (see proposition XIV of this part).’

The passage clarifies the causes and origins of the power of the mind:

- The power of the mind is defined only by knowledge, whereas the impotence of the mind is defined only by the privation of knowledge.
- The more inadequate ideas the mind has, the more characterised by passive states the mind is.
- The more adequate ideas the mind has, the more characterised by virtue the mind is.

The mind can be and is both active and passive. The mind is active when it has adequate ideas: through adequate ideas, the mind can master reality. The mind is passive when it has inadequate ideas, since in that case the mind does not give order to reality, but is compelled to consign itself to imagination and fluctuation.

The third kind of knowledge arrives at the knowledge of God and, from this knowledge, at the knowledge of all things. In this way, this kind of knowledge arrives at the knowledge of the order of the whole reality and is therefore in the condition of limiting his passivity<sup>54</sup>. The mind is not condemned to become and to be the slave of passions: to be free from the influence of the passions, the human mind has, however, to go through a long process of self-emendation. Only the conquest of higher degrees of knowledge, and only the growth of reason in the individual can lead the individual towards a progressive liberation from passions. The acquisition of knowledge is necessary in order to transform inadequate ideas into ade-

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<sup>52</sup> ‘quos nempe, quatenus passiones sunt, si non absolute tollit’

<sup>53</sup> ‘saltem efficit, ut minimam mentis partem constituent’

<sup>54</sup> In Chapter II, Of Prophets, of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 27, Spinoza considers imagination and intellect as being inversely proportional in individuals: the greater the imagination is in an individual, the littler is the capacity for abstract reasoning and, conversely, the more developed the capacity for abstract reasoning is, the weaker the force of imagination is. The cause of this is that the individuals who have developed their intellect want to check the force of imagination since they want to avoid that the imagination disturbs their reason. The way to the limitation of the imagination, which, as such, keeps the individuals in the servitude of the passions, ought to go through the growth of the intellect.

quate ideas: only knowledge makes the power of the mind. The power of the mind will be stronger if knowledge is stronger. A mind in which the privation of knowledge dominates is a mind which fluctuates without stability.

An active mind can contain as many inadequate ideas as a passive mind. Both the active and the passive mind contain inadequate ideas. The difference existing between the two minds is that the passive mind contains only inadequate ideas, whereas the active mind contains adequate ideas too: hence, the percentage of inadequate ideas in relation to the total amount of the ideas which are present in the mind diminishes. The wider the learning of the mind is, the greater the extension of adequate ideas is; the more the percentage of inadequate ideas diminishes, the weaker the influence of the inadequate ideas is<sup>55</sup>. The mind which has been transformed by the acquisition of the second and of the third kind of knowledge has inadequate ideas as any other mind has: it does not have only inadequate ideas, though. Without knowledge the individual cannot have any possibility to reach a condition of mind which is able to oppose passive affects; anyway, knowledge cannot do everything, since knowledge cannot transform the individual into a substance. Reason produces its affects, thereby radically changing the internal composition of the mind. Increasing levels of being active correspond to increasing levels of perfection, as it is clearly stated in *Ethica*, Part 5., Proposition XL:

‘The more of perfection each thing possesses, the more active and the less passive it is, and, conversely, the more active it is, the more perfect it is.’

Being active is the perfection of the mind. To become active, the work of transformation of the ideas is necessary. To understand the difference between those who do not know and those who know, we can take into consideration the description contained at the end of the *Ethica*: the ignorant is possessed by the external causes, has no contentment of the soul, ignores the structures of the reality; his way of living is a way of passion and of instability. Only the individual who knows the necessity of nature reaches the contentment of the soul: for the mind, to know the necessity of nature

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<sup>55</sup> See on this theme, for instance, also the Proposition XXXVIII of Part 5. of the *Ethica*: Spinoza states that the more things the mind understands by the second and the third kind of knowledge, the less the mind is exposed to the affects which are evil since the part of the mind which is not touched by the negative affects becomes greater.

means becoming free from all feelings of uncertainty caused by the mind's uncertainty. Spinoza's statements regarding the differences between the ignorant man and the wise man in *Ethica*, Part 5., Proposition XLII, Note are the following:

'Thus I completed all I had wished to show on the mind's power over the affects and on the mind's freedom. From these considerations it is evident how strong the wise man is and how more powerful he is than the ignorant man, who is driven only by his lust. For the ignorant man, apart from being moved in many ways by external causes and apart from never possessing the true contentment of spirit, lives, moreover, practically unwitting of himself, and of God, and of things, and, as soon as he ceases to suffer, he at the same time ceases also to be. The wise man, on the contrary, in so far as he is regarded as such, is scarcely disturbed in spirit, but, being conscious of himself, and of God, and of things by a certain eternal necessity, never ceases to be, but always possesses true contentment of spirit<sup>56</sup>.'

On the kind of life of the ignorant individual we can see the following aspects:

- The life of the ignorant is passivity.
- The life of the ignorant is driven by lust.
- The life of the ignorant is moved by external causes, i.e., it is being in the power of external causes.

The difference of mind between the ignorant and the wise man is clear. The ignorant man is characterised by fluctuation and by the absence of contentment. The wise man is characterised by the absence of disturbance in his spirit and by true contentment with himself. The individual who has reached the second and third kind of knowledge is an individual who is no longer completely passive. His constitution is the constitution of an active entity.

The notion of God is common to all individuals in the sense that the notion of God is accessible to everybody as long as the individual is ready to walk on the road of knowledge. The knowledge of God is common: hence, this knowledge can unify individuals with each other. Whereas passions are a source of division of the individuals from each other, the knowledge of God is a source of emendation of the confused ideas in each individual and of unification of the individuals with each other, since it is common to all individuals.

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<sup>56</sup> 'vera animi acquiescentia'.

The knowledge of God is the supreme beatitude<sup>57</sup>: this knowledge is the origin of adequate ideas; it is the principle of enlightenment of the individual's mind and the cause of the emendation of the mind from inadequate ideas. Since the knowledge of God can be common to all individuals, the knowledge of God represents the origin of a process of liberation from the passions and therewith from the cause of divisions between the individuals<sup>58</sup>: the knowledge of God is the foundation of the power of the mind and the foundation of the process of liberation from passions, i.e., of liberation from all factors which leads to the reciprocal hostility between individuals<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> In the Proposition XXVIII of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza asserts that the highest good and the highest virtue of the mind consists in the knowledge of God: 'Summum mentis bonum est Dei cognitio et summa mentis virtus Deum cognoscere (The mind's highest good is the knowledge of God, and the mind's highest virtue is to know God).' Spinoza likewise defines the knowledge of God as the highest happiness or beatitude in the last Note of Part 2. of the *Ethica*.

<sup>58</sup> In the Proposition XXXII of Part 4. of the *Ethica*, Spinoza states that the individuals, since they are the prey to the passions, cannot be said to be in harmony with each other as regards their being the prey to passions. In the Proposition XXXIII of Part 4. f the *Ethica*, Spinoza adds that individuals can differ in nature since they are the prey to passions. Furthermore, in the Proposition XXXIV of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza states that individuals can be contrary to each other since they are liable to passions. Thus, the presence of passions is a ground for division between individuals. Thereafter, Spinoza asserts in the Proposition XXXV of Part 4. of the *Ethica* that individuals agree in nature with each other when they follow reason. In *Tractatus Politicus*, Chapter II, Paragraph 14, p. 296, Spinoza states that, since individuals are liable to negative passions, they are natural enemies: this assertion confirms that the power of passions can produce a negative condition as regards the relationships which hold between individuals. Passions are bound to the experiences which are peculiar to an individual: therefore, they cannot be the origin of notions which are common to everybody. On the contrary, the knowledge of God, being accessible to everyone and common to everyone, is a factor of unity for all individuals.

<sup>59</sup> Spinoza states in Chapter V., *On the ceremonial law*, of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, p. 73, that, if the individuals followed reason, laws would not be necessary. In the *Tractatus Politicus*, Chapter II., Paragraph V., p. 292, Spinoza asserts that if the individuals lived following reason, the natural right would exclusively consist in the power of reason. Both passages show that the majority of individuals is not able to follow reason: therefore, laws are needed.

To sum up, the individual who possesses intuitive science becomes acquainted with the necessary structure of reality. He knows how reality is organised: therewith he becomes able to eliminate his confused ideas. He is no more condemned to incertitude, vacillations, doubts and fluctuations.

### **h) Active affects**

Spinoza aims to diminish the influence of some of the affects, but, at the same time, aims to increase the influence of the affects which come from reason. The structure of the mind is complex: affects can be negative since they expose the individual to passivity. Affects can be positive since they strengthen the power of the mind. The being positive and the being negative of affects for the individual depend on the origin and on the cause of these affects. If affects are a product of reason, affects are positive; if affects are a product of imagination, i.e., if they are a product of the individual's ignorance, they are negative. Only affects produced by the individual's reason, i.e., only affects originating in the individual as an effect of his being active, can be positive; all affects caused by the individual's passivity are negative for the mind since they produce vacillations, instability, fluctuations, i.e., a condition of servitude of the mind. Reason opens, for the individual, the possibility of having active affects; it is only through reaching the level of reason that the individual can have active affects since it is only through reason that the individual can have adequate ideas, can become an adequate cause and can be active.

A plurality of significances for affects is therefore present in Spinoza. The plurality of significances depends on the different causes of affects. Affects, insofar as they are produced by reason, are completely different from affects, insofar as they are produced by imagination. Positive affects fulfil an indispensable role in the moral development of individuals. In the Note of Proposition LIX of Part 3. of the *Ethica* we can see some examples of active affects:

'I refer all actions following from the affects, which are referred to the mind insofar as it understands<sup>60</sup>, to the fortitude<sup>61</sup>, which I divide into courage<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> 'quatenus intelligit'.

<sup>61</sup> 'ad fortitudinem refero'.

<sup>62</sup> 'animositatem'.

and highmindedness<sup>63</sup>. Now, under courage, I understand the desire by which everyone strives to preserve his own being in accordance solely with the dictate of reason<sup>64</sup>. Under highmindedness, on the other hand, I understand the desire through which everyone strives, in accordance solely with the dictate of reason, to aid the other men and to unite them to oneself in friendship. I refer, then, to courage those actions which aim solely at the good of the agent, and I refer to highmindedness those actions which aim at the good of others too. Thus temperance<sup>65</sup>, sobriety<sup>66</sup>, and presence of mind in dangers<sup>67</sup>, and so on, are species of courage; modesty<sup>68</sup>, clemency<sup>69</sup> and so on, on the other hand, are species of highmindedness.’

The development of reason brings about the production of positive affects: courage and highmindedness are examples of active affects, since they are produced by reason. In *Ethica*, Part 4., Prop. LII, we can see another example of an affect which, since it is produced by reason, represents an active affect: ‘Contentment of oneself<sup>70</sup> can arise from reason, and only that contentment which arises from reason is the highest possible.’<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> ‘generositatem’.

<sup>64</sup> ‘ex solo rationis dictamine’.

<sup>65</sup> ‘temperantia’.

<sup>66</sup> ‘sobrietas’.

<sup>67</sup> ‘animi in periculis praesentia’.

<sup>68</sup> ‘modestia’.

<sup>69</sup> ‘clementia’.

<sup>70</sup> For the definition of Contentment of oneself see the xxv Definition in the Definition of Affects in Part 3. of the *Ethica*: ‘Acquiescentia in se ipso est laetitia orta ex eo quod homo se ipsum suamque agendi potentiam contemplatur.’ (Contentment of oneself is the gladness arisen from the fact that the man contemplates himself and his power of acting). The translation of Spinoza’s expression *Acquiescentia in se ipso* is a problem. We opted for the translation “Contentment of oneself” since we interpret the condition of *Acquiescentia in se ipso* as the condition of mind which arises when the individual, having reached the knowledge of himself in relation to the whole structure of reality, finds himself, in virtue of this acquisition of knowledge, in a condition of peace with himself and with his own nature. Spinoza states in Proposition XXVII of Part 5. of the *Ethica* that the highest possible contentment of mind arises from the third kind of knowledge since reaching the third kind of knowledge brings about the contentment of having reached this level of knowledge.

<sup>71</sup> The connection between the contentment of oneself and reason as the source of the contentment of oneself comes out clearly in the original text: ‘Acquiescentia in

The contentment of oneself is an example of an affect which arises from reason. It is an example of an affect which comes from the action of reason and that, therefore, is an active affect. In *Ethica*, Part 3., Proposition LVIII we can read Spinoza's declaration stating that gladness<sup>72</sup> and desire<sup>73</sup> can be both active and passive affects:

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se ipso ex ratione oriri potest et ea sola acquiescentia quae ex ratione oritur, summa est quae potest dari.'

<sup>72</sup> The definition of gladness expressed by Spinoza in the II Definition of the Definitions of Affects in Part 3. of the *Ethica* is as follows: 'Laetitia est hominis transitio a minore ad maiorem perfectionem (Gladness is the transition of a man from a less to a greater perfection).' The opposite of gladness is sadness, which is defined in the III Definition of the Definition of Affects in Part 3. of the *Ethica* in the following way: 'Tristitia est hominis transitio a maiore ad minorem perfectionem (Sadness is the transition of a man from a greater to a less perfection).'

<sup>73</sup> The definition of desire given by Spinoza in the I Definition of the Definitions of Affects in Part 3. of the *Ethica* is as follows: 'Cupiditas est ipsa hominis essentia quatenus ex data quacunquē ejus affectione determinata concipitur ad aliquid agendum (Desire is the actual essence of man, in so far as it is conceived as determined to a particular activity by some given modification of itself).' As we can see, Spinoza states that the essence of the individual consists in desire. In the Demonstration of the Proposition LXI of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza confirms the definition of desire as the essence of man, therein adding that the desire which arises from reason is the desire determined to that kind of acting which is conceived exclusively through the essence of man. This aspect shows that, in spite of the fact that desire is the essence of man, the definition can have different implications depending on whether the desire derives from reason or whether the desire is a passion; the individual will conduct profoundly different lives depending on his essence being a desire derived by reason or on his essence being a desire as passion. The definition of the essence of a thing given by Spinoza can however be different within the *Ethica*: in the Proposition VII of Part 3. of the *Ethica* the actual essence of a thing is defined as the striving with which a thing strives to persist in its being; in the Proposition XXVI of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza asserts that the striving for self-preservation is the essence of the thing. As regards specifically the essence of the mind of the individual, Spinoza says in the Note to Proposition XXXVI of Part 5. of the *Ethica* that the essence of the mind consists in knowledge: God is, in Spinoza's view, the principle and the foundation of this knowledge. The supreme striving of the mind and the supreme virtue or power of the mind consists in understanding things by the third kind of knowledge.

'Besides gladness and desire which are passions, there are other affects of gladness and of desire which are referred to us in so far as we are active.'<sup>74</sup>

Moreover, in *Ethica*, Part 3., Proposition LIX Spinoza explains that active affects are those which derive from gladness or desire:

'Among all the affects which are referred to the mind in so far as it is active, there are no affects save those which are referred to gladness or desire.'<sup>75</sup>

The Proposition LXI of Part 4. of the *Ethica* confirms that desire can be brought about by reason<sup>76</sup>. In particular, the highest desire of the individual who is guided by reason is described in the IV Heading of the Appendix of Part 4. of the *Ethica* as leading the individual to conceive adequately himself and all the things which can be the object of his intelligence. The opposition to passions comes about through the knowledge of the passions and of their causes, through the elimination of inadequate ideas and through the active affects. If active affects increase, the relative quantity of the passive affects diminishes.

The process of development in Spinoza's conception of the mind could be compared, in our opinion, with a process of clarification of the obscurity present in the mind due to inadequate ideas. At the same time, the process of knowledge of the mind consists in the production of active affects which diminishes the power of the passive affects. The individual is transformed through the passage from passions to actions: his constitution becomes something else through the acquisition of knowledge since reason modifies and transforms into an active affect the desire, which is the essence of the individual and which, in the ignorant individuals, remains a passive affect.

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<sup>74</sup> 'Praeter laetitiam et cupiditatem quae passiones sunt, alii laetitiae et cupiditatis affectus dantur qui ad nos quatenus agimus, referuntur.'

<sup>75</sup> 'Inter omnes affectus qui ad mentem quatenus agit referuntur, nulli alii sunt quam qui ad laetitiam vel cupiditatem referuntur.'

<sup>76</sup> The fact that desire can be brought about by reason can open the way to a further question. Since desire is the essence of man, and since Desire can be both a passive and an active affect, it seems to follow that the essence of the individual can change depending on the presence or absence of active desire in the individual. In other words, the essence of the individual who, having reached the knowledge of the second and of the third kind, is able to promote the emergence of active desire, is different from the essence of the ignorant.

## i) Conclusions

Spinoza's *Ethica* turns out to be, among other things, an analysis of the condition of the mind and a programme for the change of the initial condition of the mind. The power of knowledge is the central point. The knowledge enables the individual to successfully oppose the affects. Knowledge is the antidote to passions: knowledge leads the individual to a radical transformation and to a complete change as regards his vision of reality. The condition of servitude represented by the dominance of passions is constitutive of the individual essence: this condition represents, though, no absolute condemnation. An at least partial way out from the condition of servitude exists: this way out from servitude and towards freedom is the knowledge of reality. Knowledge of reality entails, at the same time, knowledge of the foundations of reality, of the individual's condition in the reality, of the individual constitutive exposition to passions and of the way of limitation of passions.

The development of knowledge of reality brings about a programme for the individual liberation from the servitude represented by passions: the acquisition of this knowledge and the progress in the extension of this knowledge have, as their consequence, the process of emendation of the individual's mind and the progressive liberation of the mind itself from the condition of servitude. Since passions are inadequate ideas, i.e., inadequate notions, any development in the knowledge of reality represents a neutralisation of inadequate ideas and, as a consequence, a form of liberation from the passions.

The process of acquisition of knowledge turns out to be, therefore, a process of acquisition of a new constitution in the individual: the development of reason and of intuitive science in the individual is a process of acquisition of new orientations towards the passions present in the individual. Individual liberation can be only partial, though, since the passive constitution of the individual can never be completely eliminated. The individual can never reach a condition of complete dominance of passions.

The aspects of the *Ethica* we have been dealing with are the following:

- The condition of men is that of modifications (modes) of the substance. As a consequence, men are dependent entities. Men are, constitutively, exposed to passions and, therefore, they are exposed to the constitutive danger of servitude imposed on them by passive affects: they can always fall into the condition of the vacillation of mind.

- The fact that the individual is a part of nature and, as a consequence, is passive, does not mean, though, that the individual is exclusively passive. Through the development of knowledge, the individual can reach higher and higher levels of being active, thus opposing his condition of passivity.

- The individual will always have a component of passivity, but the presence of knowledge is a barrier against the dominance of passions.

- Knowledge (i.e., the second level of knowledge, reason, and the third level of knowledge, intuitive science) is the only form, the only way of liberation from passive affects. Knowledge is the only key to self-mastery<sup>77</sup>.

- Before the development of knowledge, the mind has only inadequate ideas, i.e., passive affects. After the development of knowledge, the mind has adequate ideas too, i.e., active affects.

- Since passions are inadequate ideas, the acquisition of knowledge of reality represents a process of brightening in the mind of the obscurity represented by inadequate ideas.

- Liberation from passive affects is a continuous process. This means that liberation is not a definitive condition. There is no definitive liberation from passions; there is no definitively acquired autonomy from passions and no definitively acquired independence of passions: since individuals, because of their constitution, are passive in relation to nature, passions will always come about again. The individual's being passive cannot be eliminated.

- The process of acquisition of knowledge will not come about by itself: the individual's engagement is needed for the development of reason. The development of the individual lies within the range of responsibility of the individual.

- The subject is not given, at least not completely. The subject who develops active affects is profoundly different from the subject who remains in the condition of passive affects. The subject who develops the active af-

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<sup>77</sup> At the beginning of the Preface of Part 4. of the *Ethica* Spinoza describes the condition of the individual who is liable to his passions as the condition of servitude: 'I name servitude the human impotence in moderating and checking affects; for the man liable to his affects is not his own master, but lies in the power of fortune in whose authority he is so that, although he sees that which is better for him, he is nevertheless often compelled to follow that which is worse.'

fects leads, at least partially, his own life, whereas the subject who remains in passivity is the slave of external influences.

- Knowledge of reality gives stability since reality has a necessary order. The vision of reality as an ordered realm governed by necessity eliminates fluctuations.

- The subject proceeds from an initial condition of ignorance, passivity, and fluctuation, through his education and knowledge process, up to his process of liberation from his passions. We have a transformation of the subject from a totally passive subject to a partially active subject.

- Imagination and knowledge are ways of living since they are connected to the affects. Imagination is connected to passive affects; knowledge is connected to active affects.

We would like to end this investigation by quoting Spinoza's final considerations of the *Ethica*, expressed in Part 5, Proposition XLII, Note:

'Hence, if the way which I pointed out as leading to this result seems extremely hard, it may nevertheless be found. And certainly that which is discovered so seldom must be hard. If salvation were ready to our hand and could without great labour be discovered, how could it happen that it be neglected by almost all men? But all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare.'

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# INSTRUMENTELLE RATIONALITÄT UND SKEPTIZISMUS. LÄSST SICH DIE HUME'SCHE AUFFASSUNG DER PRAKTI- SCHEN RATIONALITÄT ALS SKEPTIZISMUS VERSTEHEN?

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**Abstract:** *This essay examines the question of whether the Humean view of instrumental rationality, i.e., rationality in the sense of acting optimally to achieve given goals, should be understood as skepticism. The analysis draws on two classic texts on the problem of practical rationality, namely K. Setiya's essay "Hume on Practical Reason" and J. Hampton's essay "Does Hume have an Instrumental Conception on Practical Reason?".*

*The text contains three parts. The first part is dedicated to some terminological distinctions regarding the question of skepticism and practical rationality. The second part outlines the arguments offered by the two authors in relation to the question posed in the title. The third part of the analysis points out the most important ideas that, in my opinion, make K. Setiya's argumentation more convincing than J. Hampton's.*

**Keywords:** *Hume, skepticism, practical reason, J. Hampton, K. Setiya.*

## Einleitung:

Die kurze Antwort auf die im Titel aufgestellte Frage lautet: *Nein*. Meine Antwort entspricht damit der oben erwähnten Argumentation von K. Setiya, die ich im Vergleich zu der von Jean Hampton, die für die *Ja*-Variante argumentiert, überzeugender finde. Im Folgenden werden die wichtigsten Argumente ausführlich dargestellt und kritisch diskutiert, die in Bezug auf das im Titel genannte Problem meiner Meinung nach für die Bevorzugung der Argumentation von K. Setiya sprechen.

## 1. Ausgangspunkt: Was ist instrumentelle Rationalität? Was ist Skeptizismus?

### 1.1. Instrumentelle Rationalität

Die instrumentelle Rationalität ist eine Art von praktischer Rationalität. Diese kann laut C. Korsgaard<sup>2</sup> in Bezug auf drei Prinzipien definiert werden:

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a) *das instrumentelle Prinzip*, das man als eine Art von hypothetischem Imperativ verstehen soll: *Wenn ich das Ziel Z erreichen will und wenn das Mittel M zu Z bestmöglich führt, dann soll ich M tun.*

b) *das sogenannte „Prinzip der Klugheit“* („the principle of prudence“), das sich auf die Maximierungsmöglichkeiten bezüglich der Erreichung einer gewissen Menge von Zielen, oder sogar aller unseren möglichen Zielen bezieht, was in den Worten D. Parfits so viel bedeutet wie „to try to satisfy our present desires, projects, and aims to as great an extent as possible.“<sup>3</sup>

c) *den kategorischen Imperativ*, der wie ein allgemein gültiges Gesetz der Moral präsentiert wird. Es wird behauptet, dass dieses Gesetz der Moral seine universelle Gültigkeit aufgrund der Tatsache behält, dass es vom gutem Willen jeden Individuums vorgegeben wird. In den Worten I. Kants wird diese universelle Regel der Moral folgendermaßen aufgefasst: „Handle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die deinen Willen zum allgemeinen Naturgesetz werden sollte.“ Oder auch: „Handle so, dass der (dein) Wille durch seine Maxime sich selbst zugleich als allgemein gesetzgebend betrachten könne.“<sup>4</sup>

Im Sinne der oben dargestellten Prinzipien handeln wir unvernünftig, immer wenn wir nicht die nötigen Mittel zu unseren Zielen nehmen, oder wenn wir die Befriedigung jetziger Wünsche auf Kosten unseres Gesamtwohles vorziehen, oder wenn wir unmoralisch handeln. Am häufigsten wird die praktische Rationalität in der Fachliteratur aber im Sinne des instrumentellen Prinzips thematisiert. Das Hauptargument, das diese theoretische Perspektive unterstützt, lässt sich mit den Worten J. Hamptons folgendermaßen zusammenfassen:

The instrumental approach of reason [...] seems to be able to explain the force and strictures of its rational directives in a way that is scientifically acceptable. This is because, on the instrumental approach, reason dictates only hypothetical imperatives, and these imperatives seem to be reducible to be-

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<sup>2</sup> Christine M. Korsgaard 1997, „The Normativity of Instrumental Reason“, in *Ethics and Practical Reason*, Edited by Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Parfit 1984, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), esp. Ch. 6, Sect. 45, zitiert nach Ch. Korsgaard 1997, S. 219

<sup>4</sup> I. Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, 28, BA 17, zitiert nach Herlinde Pauer-Studer 2003, *Einführung in die Ethik*, WUV, S. 12

liefs and desires, both of which are (arguably) allowed by, or reducible to, entirely natural phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

Im Sinne dieser Auffassung lässt sich die praktische Rationalität als instrumentelle Rationalität mittels der folgenden drei Thesen definieren<sup>6</sup>:

(1) Eine Handlung ist vernünftig, wenn jemand vernünftigerweise („reasonably“) glaubt, dass sie zur Erledigung eines bestimmten Zieles führt, *und*

(2) Die instrumentelle Rationalität impliziert die Erreichung jeweiliger Ziele mit den relativ zu einer bestimmten Person und zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt besten Mitteln, *und*

(3) Kein Ziel lässt sich aus der instrumentellen Rationalität ableiten, d.h. kein Ziel ist vernünftig oder unvernünftig *per se*; was die Auswahl unserer Ziele bestimmt, ist etwas Anderes als die Rationalität selbst.

Zusammenfassend gesagt, eine Handlung würde im Sinne der instrumentellen Rationalität als vernünftig gelten, wenn sie die Bedingungen (1) + (2) + (3) simultan erfüllt.

## 1.2. Skeptizismus

Allgemein gesagt ist Skeptizismus eine philosophische Strömung, die die Möglichkeit einer gesicherten, nachweisbaren Erkenntnis verneint. In Bezug auf die instrumentelle Rationalität würde ein Skeptiker laut J. Hampton behaupten, dass die Rationalität im Sinne der Bedingungen (1) + (2) + (3) *prinzipiell* nicht möglich ist. Das würde bedeuten, dass Hume ein Skeptiker bezüglich instrumenteller Rationalität genau dann wäre, wenn er behaupten würde, entweder dass (a) die Vernunft *prinzipiell keine Rolle* zur Erreichung unserer Ziele spielt, oder dass (b) keine der zielgerichteten Handlungen als vernünftig oder unvernünftig zu beurteilen sind, i.e., dass *die instrumentelle Vernunft keine normative Kraft* bezüglich der Auswahl von den zur Erreichung eines bestimmten Ziels nötigen Handlungen hat, i.e., dass alle zielgerichteten Handlungen unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Vernunft im Endeffekt gleich (un)berechtigt sind.

Laut J. Hampton<sup>7</sup> stehe die Variante (a) doch außerhalb der Debatte: Hume sei kein Skeptiker bezüglich praktischer Rationalität im Allgemeinen, weil er der Vernunft erlaubt, wie eine Art von *Kalkül* bezüglich unse-

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<sup>5</sup> Laut J. Hampton 1995, S. 59

<sup>6</sup> Vgl. J. Hampton 1995, S. 57

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*

rer zielgerichteten Handlungen zu funktionieren. Humes Position sei aber doch als Skeptizismus bezüglich instrumenteller Rationalität zu verstehen, weil er ihrer Meinung nach die Variante (b) vertritt: er würde nach J. Hampton der obigen These (1) nicht zustimmen, da er glaubte, dass es keine notwendige Ziel-Mittel-Beziehung im Sinne von „*Wenn man Z will, muss man notwendigerweise M vollziehen*“ gibt, was die praktische Vernunft auf eine Art Kalkül reduzieren würde, das der Handelnde auf freiwillige Basis vollzieht.

## 2. Die Argumentation von J. Hampton

### 2.1. Hume über praktische Rationalität in der Lektüre von Hampton

Was man als die Hume'sche Position bezüglich praktischer Rationalität bezeichnen kann, wird von J. Hampton mithilfe folgender Äußerung Humes zusammengefasst: "Reason is and ought only to be the slave of the passions and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them". (D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2.3.3.4). Dabei scheint die Aussage: "Reason is the slave of the passions" genau der oben dargestellten These (3) zu entsprechen und damit die Auffassung darzustellen, nach der die praktische Rationalität auf die Verfolgung bestimmter hypothetischen Imperativen reduziert wird, die ihrerseits auf Glauben und Leidenschaften zurückgeführt werden können, d.h., auf Elemente, die im Rahmen des Naturalismus erklärbar sind.

### 2.2. Hypothetische Imperative

Hypothetische Imperative lassen sich wie normative Handlungsanweisungen definieren, i.e. als Regelungen zum Handeln, die in der Form einer konditionellen Aussage „*Wenn ..., dann ...*“ erfasst werden können. Die (vermutete) normative Kraft der hypothetischen Imperative wurde in der Fachliteratur ziemlich häufig unkritisch behauptet, so wie auch folgendes Zitat J.L. Mackies es deutlich macht:

<If you want to do X, do Y> (or <You ought to do Y> will be a hypothetical imperative if it is based on the supposed fact that Y is, in the circumstances, the only (or the best) available means to X, that is, on a causal relation be-

tween Y und X. The reason for doing Y lies in its causal connection with the desired end, X; *the oughtness is contingent upon the desire*.<sup>8</sup>

Die im obigen Zitat angedeutete These, laut der die normative Kraft der hypothetischen Imperative so etwas wie eine Funktion der gewünschten Ziele zu verstehen sei, lässt die Frage offen, wie diese hypothetischen Imperative eigentlich möglich sind, d.h. wie es zu erklären ist, dass sie als verschreibende Handlungsanweisungen funktionieren können.

### 2.3. Kriterien der praktischen Rationalität nach Hume. Erster Ansatz

Hume versucht die Frage über die Normativität hypothetischer Imperative zu beantworten, indem er behauptet, dass die Rationalität unser Verhalten nur in zweierlei Weise beeinflussen kann: „... [e]ither when it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it; or when it discovers the connexion of causes and effects, so as to afford us means of exerting any passion“<sup>9</sup>. In diesem Sinne können sich die hypothetischen Imperative nach Hume nur auf die theoretische Rationalität beziehen, da sie nur Verbindungen zwischen bestimmten Zielen und den entsprechenden Mitteln bestimmen können. Diese Verbindungen werden von der theoretischen Rationalität als eine Art Kalkül gearbeitet. Hume gibt zu, dass die erwähnten kausalen Beziehungen zwischen bestimmten Mitteln und Zielen hin und wieder bestimmte Wünsche („desires“) zur Erledigung einer Handlung verursachen könnten; er besteht allerdings darauf, dass die hypothetischen Imperative keine Autorität, i.e. keine normative Kraft zur Erledigung gewisser zielgerichteten Handlungen haben. Also, so die Schlussfolgerung von J. Hampton, weil die Rationalität im Rahmen der Theorie Humes keine praktische Norm vorgibt, im deren Lichte unsere Handlungen evaluierbar sein können, sei Hume kein Instrumentalist bezüglich praktischer Rationalität. Dabei muss man präzisieren, dass obwohl Hampton explizit damit einverstanden ist, dass Hume die Kritik der „unvernünftigen“ Handlungen indirekt (“as being vicious or imprudent“) erlauben würde, ist sie doch der Meinung, dass die Hume’sche Position noch nicht mit der Kritik der Unvernünftigkeit im Sinne der instrumentellen Rationalität identisch ist: „ [...] not only is imprudent action *not* the same as instrumentally irrational action (for example, some imprudent actions can

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<sup>8</sup> J.L. Mackie 1977, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (Harmondsworth: Penguin), zitiert nach J. Hampton 1995, S. 59.

<sup>9</sup> D. Hume, *A Treatise ...*, 459, zitiert nach J. Hampton 1995, S. 63.

nonetheless be instrumentally rational, in virtue of the fact that they satisfy short-term goals), more importantly, calling someone imprudent is not calling her mistaken – and the concept of mistake is central to the charge of irrationality.”<sup>10</sup> Es wird hier also behauptet, dass die Kritik einer Handlung als unvorsichtig keinen Normen der Rationalität entspricht und dass sie vielmehr als eine Projektion bestimmter sozialen und darauffolgend kontingenten Normen zu verstehen ist.

Im Lichte der oben angeführten Überlegungen lässt sich das Argument für den vermuteten Skeptizismus Humes bezüglich instrumenteller Rationalität folgendermaßen zusammenfassen: Weil die instrumentelle Rationalität unentwirrbar mit der Idee der Normativität gedacht wird, und weil es nach Hume keine solche Normativität aus reinen natürlichen (materialistischen) Gründen ableitbar ist, folgt es, dass es eigentlich keine instrumentelle Rationalität gibt. An dieser Stelle muss man erwähnen, dass die oben dargestellte Schlussfolgerung Hamptons auch von C. Korsgaard geteilt wird. Sie argumentiert in ihrem hier zitierten Aufsatz<sup>11</sup>, dass das instrumentelle Prinzip allein uns keinen Grund zum Handeln geben kann. Es ist so, weil das instrumentelle Prinzip – „Wähle die besten Mittel zur Erreichung deines Zieles“ – nach ihr nur das besagt, dass es eine bestimmte kausale Verbindung zwischen gewissen Mitteln und Zielen gibt; damit ergibt sich aber noch keine Motivation zur Erreichung des Zieles, das wir begehren.

### 3. Die Argumentation von K. Setiya

#### 3.1. Hume über praktische Rationalität in der Lektüre von K. Setiya

Wie schon angedeutet, scheint die Rationalität im Sinne von Hume unsere Handlungen nur dann beeinflussen zu können, wenn sie uns Informationen über die Objekte unserer Wünsche gibt, oder wenn sie zur Entdeckung bestimmter kausalen Beziehungen zwischen gewissen Zielen und den zu ihrer Erreichung nötigen Mitteln dient. In Bezug auf diese Idee bemerkt Setiya, dass „[a]lthough Hume argues that we are not „determined by reason“ to make causal inferences, there is no suggestion in the section „Of the inference from impressions to the idea“ that such inferences are unwar-

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<sup>10</sup> J. Hampton 1995, S. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Vgl. dazu die Fußnote 3.

ranted, or that reason requires us to give them up."<sup>12</sup> Man muss also beachten, dass die Behauptung Humes eigentlich nur darauf hinausläuft, dass es keine Rechtfertigung für das „aus empirischen Begebenheiten durch nicht-demonstrative Schlüsse gewonnene Wissen“<sup>13</sup> gibt, i.e. dass die Uniformität der Natur nicht aus reinen logischen Gründen ableitbar ist, und nicht, dass man diese Art von Argumentation prinzipiell ablehnen muss. Analogerweise lässt sich behaupten, dass die Durchführung der praktischen Argumentationen (als eine Art kausaler Argumentation) keine vorherige Rechtfertigung (z.B. in Bezug auf ihre Nützlichkeit) benötigt. Wenn diese Interpretierung richtig ist, würde die oben dargestellte These Humes nur die Möglichkeit der Rechtfertigung praktischer Argumente betreffen, nicht aber die Möglichkeit der praktischen Rationalität als Kalkül im Sinne der hier angeführten instrumentellen Theorie. Das erlaubt uns weiter zu behaupten, dass das Ziel der Hume'schen Theorie eigentlich nicht darin besteht, eine skeptische Untersuchung bezüglich praktischer Rationalität zu liefern, sondern vielmehr eine Theorie der Motivation zu erfassen.

Um die oben angeführte These argumentativ noch präziser zu untermauern, erwähnt Setiya im Folgenden die Tatsache, dass Hume die Motivation zum Handeln nicht nur in Beziehung mit bestimmten Leidenschaften („desires“), sondern auch in Bezug auf gewisse Gefühle erläutert:

So, for instance, he thinks of love and hatred, like pride and humility ...; they differ in that love and hatred, but not pride and humility, produce the motivating passions of benevolence and anger by <the original constitution of the mind.> (D. Hume, *A Treatise ...*, 2.2.6.6). This <constitution> is not a desire, but something that determines the transition from non-desiderative passion to desire.<sup>14</sup>

Darauffolgend sei die Behauptung, laut der Hume die Motivation intentionaler Handlungen exklusiv auf bestimmte genuine Leidenschaften reduziert, nicht völlig richtig zu sein scheint, da nach Hume'scher Ansicht auch bestimmte Gefühle wie Vergnügen und Schmerz als Triebkräfte zum Handeln agieren können. Überdies scheint Hume auch die Behauptung zu akzeptieren, laut der bestimmte Vorstellungen von Schmerz oder Vergnügen zumindest hin und wieder das Konstituieren bestimmter Leidenschaften

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<sup>12</sup> K. Setiya 2004, S. 369.

<sup>13</sup> B. Russell 2008, *Philosophie des Abendlandes*, 5.Auflage, Piper Verlag GmbH, München, S. 672.

<sup>14</sup> K. Setiya 2004, S. 372.

beeinflussen können, so wie das z.B. folgende Äußerung Humes anzudeuten scheint:

Nature has, therefore, chosen a medium, and has neither bestow'd on every idea of good and evil the power of actuating the will, nor yet has entirely excluded them from his influence. (...) The effect, then, of belief, is to raise up a simple idea to an equality with our impressions and bestow on it a like influence on the passions.<sup>15</sup>

Die Bestimmung einer Leidenschaft durch ein gewisses Gefühl ist mehr ein psychologischer Prozess als ein kausaler Schluss, was nach Setiya genau die begriffliche Unterscheidung Humes zwischen praktischer und theoretischer Rationalität darstellt: während die theoretische Rationalität im Sinne von Hume die Formulierung demonstrativer und kausaler Argumente bestimmt, betrifft die praktische Rationalität mehr die Leidenschaften und die durch sie bestimmten Handlungen. Diese begriffliche Unterscheidung lässt sich weiter mit der Anmerkung begründen, dass die Leidenschaften, die unsere Handlungen begleiten, keine Wirkung einer kausalen Argumentation sind, sondern vielmehr Ergebnisse einer kausalen *Transaktion*, i.e. „Wirkungen“ einer Art psychologischer Inferenz. Anders gesagt, zwischen Gefühlen und Wünschen gibt es keine Ursache-Wirkung-Verbindung, sondern vielmehr, wie Setiya sie nennt, eine bestimmte *transaktionale*, d.h. eine *korrelative* Beziehung.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2. Kriterien der praktischen Rationalität nach Hume. Zweiter Ansatz

Die oben angeführten Überlegungen haben versucht, zu verdeutlichen, dass die Argumentation, die Hume im Kapitel „Of the influencing motives of the will“ entwickelte, eigentlich nicht auf die Möglichkeit des praktischen Argumentierens als solches abzielt, sondern vielmehr auf die Besonderheit dieser Art von Rationalität. Sie versucht nämlich zu zeigen, wie die Spezifität dieser Art des Rasonierens zu verstehen ist. Wurde diese Behauptung mithilfe der oben angeführten Analyse klar genug und überzeugend argumentiert, heißt das, dass das vorgenommene Ziel der hier unternommenen Analyse schon zur Hälfte verdeutlicht wurde.

Weiters ist in Bezug auf die Thematisierung der Hume'schen Auffassung über praktische Rationalität noch die Frage zu beantworten, welche

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<sup>15</sup> D. Hume, *A Treatise ...*, 1.3.10.3, zitiert nach K. Setiya 2004, S. 372.

<sup>16</sup> Zur Andeutung dieser Idee siehe K. Setiya 2004, S. 375.

Kriterien der praktischen Rationalität die Hume'sche Theorie als solche indiziert. Laut Setiya sei Hume der Meinung, dass der Standard der praktischen Rationalität analogerweise mit dem der theoretischen Rationalität festgestellt werden sollte. Weil das aber nicht möglich ist, verweigert sich Hume über praktische Rationalität („practical reason“) zu sprechen; stattdessen zieht er vor, über „practical justification“ zu sprechen.<sup>17</sup> Wie lässt sich diese terminologische Präferenz Humes erklären? Als kurze Antwort auf diese Frage kann folgende Anmerkung dienen: Hume weigert sich, über *praktische* Rationalität zu sprechen, weil nach ihm Rationalität nur „discovery of truth or falsehood“ bedeutet, was aber mit den praktischen Inferenzen nicht der Fall sein kann. Außerdem versucht Hume durch seine terminologische Auswahl, seine Position vom alltäglichen Benutzen des Begriffes „Rationalität“ zu unterscheiden, welches seiner Meinung nach missverstehend behauptet, dass „reason can oppose passion in the direction of the will. (D. Hume, *A Treatise ...*, 2.3.3.1).“ Darauffolgend lässt sich behaupten, dass der Standpunkt von Hume darin besteht, zwischen den Kriterien der theoretischen und den der praktischen Rationalität klar zu unterscheiden. Da er aber der Meinung ist, dass es keine formalen Kriterien der praktischen Rationalität geben kann, stellt sich weiter die Frage, was Hume als spezifische Kriterien der „practical inference“ sieht.

Um auf die im obigen Absatz formulierte Frage antworten zu können, sollte man sich zuerst daran erinnern, dass Hume unter dem Begriff „practical inference“ den Prozess der Motivierung von Leidenschaften und Handlungen versteht. Diese Art von Motivation ist ihrerseits Objekt einer ethischen Analyse, weil nach Hume jede frei unternommene Handlung unter dem Gesichtspunkt ihrer Motivation analysiert werden soll, oder, wie Setiya sagt: „for Hume, the standards of practical reason are the standards of *ethical virtue*.“<sup>18</sup> So betrachtet, haben die Motivierung der Handlungen und die praktische Inferenz im Rahmen der Hume'schen Theorie in etwa dieselbe Bedeutung. Darauffolgend kann man behaupten, dass bei Hume die Evaluierung der praktischen Kriterien zum Durchführen einer Handlung und die Evaluierung ihrer Motivierung als identisch betrachtet werden, wobei der geistige Prozess der Motivierung weiter als Objekt der Analyse über moralische Urteile zu verstehen ist. Mit den Wörtern Setiyas zusammengefasst: „[...] our dispositions of practical inference are good, as

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<sup>17</sup> Laut K. Setiya 2004, S. 377.

<sup>18</sup> K. Setiya 2004, S. 381.

such, just to the extent that they are ethically virtuous“<sup>19</sup>, wobei zu beachten ist, dass Hume unter dem Begriff „virtue“ bestimmte Charakterzüge wie z.B.: „*prudence, temperance, frugality, industry, assiduity, enterprise and dexterity, ...* (3.3.1.24)“ versteht, d.h., die Eigenschaft eines Handelnden, eine gute motivationale Kapazität zu haben.

Die oben angeführten Überlegungen lassen uns zusammen mit Setiya behaupten, dass der Standpunkt Humes tatsächlich so etwas wie „a radical anti-instrumentalism“ bezüglich der praktischen Rationalität darstellt. Gleichzeitig aber ist Hume kein Skeptiker bezüglich praktischer Rationalität, da er der Meinung ist, dass die praktische Rationalität als eine Art Analyse der Charakterzüge des Handelnden zu verstehen ist. Die Kriterien für diese Art von Rationalität kann man aus seiner Lehre über Tugenden herauslesen: jemand wird dem Standard der praktischen Rationalität im Sinne von Hume nicht folgen, wenn diese Person kein Besitzer der oben genannten „virtues“ ist, gleichgültig wie effizient ihre Handlungen auch seien. In diesem Sinne kann man behaupten, dass die Hume'sche Analyse der praktischen Rationalität mehr den Inhalt der Handlungen und nicht ihre Form betrifft, oder in den Worten Setiyas: „[...] the practical inference (cannot) be evaluated without regard to what is about.“<sup>20</sup>

### **Anstatt einer Schlußfolgerung:**

Wie schon ganz zu Beginn der hier durchgeführten Analyse erwähnt, in Bezug auf die Frage, ob Hume eine skeptische Position der praktischen Rationalität gegenüber vertritt, bin ich der Meinung, dass die von K. Setiya zu diesem Thema entwickelte Argumentation überzeugender als die von Hampton ist und möchte ihrer Hauptthese völlig zustimmen: es lässt sich doch eine gewisse positive Theorie der praktischen Rationalität im Rahmen der Hume'schen Auffassung identifizieren.

Gleichzeitig bin ich aber der Meinung, dass die Argumentation Setiyas doch ein paar offene Fragen lässt. Die wichtigste dieser Fragen lässt sich folgendermaßen formulieren: Inwiefern können bestimmte psychologische Fakten tatsächlich als Kriterien der praktischen Rationalität angeführt werden? Wenn die moralische Qualität unserer Handlungen sich letztendlich auf unsere psychologische Natur stützen würde, so wie Hume in der Interpretation von K. Setiyas zu meinen scheint, inwiefern sind wir

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<sup>19</sup> Vgl. K. Setiya 2004, S. 381-82.

<sup>20</sup> K. Setiya 2004, S. 383.

dann noch berechtigt, die Handlungen von jemandem als unmoralisch zu kritisieren, nur weil derjenige eine andere psychologische „Natur“ oder einen anderen „subjective motivational set“<sup>21</sup> hat? Ist es in diesem Fall noch möglich, eine Kritik des Handelns von jemandem unter einem moralischen Standpunkt zu fassen, ohne die Schuldmöglichkeit derjenigen Person vorauszusetzen? Anders gesagt, kann man diese Art psychologischer Determinismus mit der Möglichkeit der Moral vereinbaren?

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<sup>21</sup> Vgl. K. Setiya 2004, S. 383 und weiter.

# PROPRIETATEA CA POSTULAT LA KANT

Ionuț RĂDUICĂ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *In this study we investigate the meaning of property in Kant's philosophy, first analyzing the biases involved in concept as an empirical postulate: property as an extension of the soul, the various types of incomplete property, or property governed by empirical feelings. The aim is to demonstrate that the property has two main meanings: one is contractualist and another ethical (normativist). The importance of property is thus vital for Kant – without property, man is personally and socially incomplete.*

**Keywords:** *Kant, property, principle of innate humanity, experience, postulate, ethics.*

## Introducere

Conceptul de proprietate nu este tratat de Kant în sfera filosofiei politice, ci în cea a eticii. Aceasta, deoarece etica este considerată fundamentul absolut al acțiunilor omenești, sferă a imperativelor și principiilor esteticii transcendente, analizabilă și ca postulat practic. Discuția despre proprietate este inițiată în *Metafizica moralei* (1797), o lucrare care poate fi considerată de sinteză a principiilor kantiene, cu multe noțiuni preluate din *Critica rațiunii pure* (1781)<sup>2</sup>. În această carte târzie, Kant introduce la început ideea că umanitatea este înnăscută în fiecare, ceea ce va însemna, în primul rând, că orice om are dreptul de a-și fi propriul stăpân. Aplicat la societate, ca stare de fapt, principiul umanității înnăscute, de asemenea, semnifică limitarea puterii politice și juridice, cu arbitrariul și subiectivitatea autorității, la „scopuri cu adevărat publice și la mijloace specifice” (trad. noastră)<sup>3</sup>.

Ca să funcționeze, principiul umanității înnăscute presupune respectarea integrală a legilor de către toți oamenii, în același timp, fără oprire, astfel că aceștia sunt egali în fața legii și sunt supuși coerciției – sau fricii față de pedeapsă – în aceeași măsură. Normativitatea umanității înnăscute, exprimată pozitiv în legi juridice, nu va fi însă pusă în balanță cu coerciția,

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<sup>2</sup> A se vedea Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure*, ed. Univers Enciclopedic Gold, Ediția a III-a, București, 2009, pp.73-74 și urm.

<sup>3</sup> Ripstein, A., *Force and Freedom : Kant's Legal and Political Philosophy*, Harvard University Press, Londra, Marea Britanie, 2009, p. 31.

căci doar prima este înnăscută, a doua fiind empirică și accidentală<sup>4</sup>. Coerțiția nu înseamnă determinarea voințelor oamenilor prin amenințare și constrângere, caz în care ideea de etică s-ar contrazice în concept, ci presupune limitarea libertății în caz de încălcare a normelor și imperativelor morale<sup>5</sup>.

La fel, principiul autonomiei dedus din umanitatea înnăscută nu presupune egalitate a beneficiilor de pe urma aplicării acestuia în comunitatea etică, ci înseamnă independență față de ceilalți, precum și libertatea oamenilor de a folosi „propriile puteri, în mod individual sau în cooperare, pentru a-și stabili propriile scopuri și astfel nimeni nu poate fi obligat să-și folosească puterile pentru a promova sau pentru a se adapta scopurilor altei persoane” (trad. noastră)<sup>6</sup>. Domeniul interacțiunilor omenești se referă la alegerea mijloacelor, la îmbunătățirea lor, și nu la determinarea scopurilor, unde fiecare are un privilegiu absolut în ce privește propria persoană. De aici nu rezultă că fiecare acționează în mod perfect just alegând scopuri personale, ci doar că ceilalți își suspendă, grație libertății și autonomiei individului, orice tendință de a construi scopuri pentru semeni. Cu toate acestea, va exista întotdeauna o tensiune între libertatea unei acțiuni și alegerea (bună) supusă rațiunii. Dacă viziunea lui Kant este instrumentală, așa cum consideră Ripstein, atunci sensul principal este de a limita acțiunile celorlalți și de a permite libertatea subiectivă. Invers, dacă scopul este acțiunea dreaptă în limitele rațiunii, atunci centrul de greutate este regula morală și automatismul comportamental, cum consideră alți critici<sup>7</sup>.

Situația existenței unui singur drept înnăscut – cel al libertății, o individualizate a Principiului universal al dreptului – care poate coexista cu libertatea celorlalți, în mod necontrastant, ne direcționează spre normativism extins. Acesta, deoarece omul e constituit în principal din simțăminte interne și facultăți ale datoriei interne. Perfecțiunea acțională se bazează pe

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<sup>4</sup> Ripstein folosește sintagma „unconditional constraint”, constrângere necondiționată, destul de potrivită pentru a sublinia că frica de pedeapsă nu ține de sensul comun, ci de ieșirea nepermisă din dreptul universal de a nu fi influențați de ceilalți.

<sup>5</sup> „Kant does not conceive of coercion in terms of threats, but instead as the limitation of freedom” (Ripstein, A., *op. cit.*, p. 54).

<sup>6</sup> Ripstein, A., *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> A se vedea, Bauman, Z., *Etica postmodernă*, ed. Amarcord, Timișoara, 2000, pp. 57-58 și urm.

acordul suprem dintre intern și extern, dintre subiectul natural moral și obiectivitatea extern-practică, de aceea o imagine bună a Principiului universal al dreptului se produce când individul sincronizează propria libertate cu aceea a celorlalți<sup>8</sup>. Un alt argument normativist se referă la faptul că, dacă toți oamenii își folosesc propriile abilități în a-și fixa scopuri personale, conflictele indivizilor ar fi inexistente, iar comunitățile politice/etice ar fi în stare de pace perfectă. În plus, o stare de fapt de acest gen generează cunoaștere despre erorile de aplicare și astfel oamenii se corectează înainte de acțiune. Ripstein consideră că sinteza erorilor poate fi numită „dominația celorlalți” (*domination*)<sup>9</sup>. Într-adevăr, multe exemple kantiene provin din pseudoetica heteromică (stăpân-sclav, imperiu-etnie dominate etc.). Heteronomia, pentru a folosi termenul lui Kant, presupune luarea în înstăpânire a calităților celorlalți și direcționarea lor către scopuri exterioare lor, lucru interzis de adevărata etică. Găsim o descriere concisă a pseudoeticii heteronome, pe care Kant dorea să o combată, la V. Mureșan: „Opusul moralei autonomiei e ceea ce Kant numește morala heteronomiei, o morală având în centru ideea de *om supus*, incapabil să-și dea singur legile morale și să-și explice temeiurile lor – motiv pentru care are nevoie de confesori și de îndrumători (preoții), ca și de pedepse aspre pentru a respecta legea (singurele «argumente» pe care le înțelege)”<sup>10</sup>.

Cu toate acestea, dreptul de a stăpâni obiecte externe nu este o extensie a libertății de a dispune de propria persoană<sup>11</sup>. Motivul este că în practică este nevoie de a sincroniza deținerea obiectului cu posibilitatea de a fi scop pentru ceilalți<sup>12</sup>. Îmi cumpăr un ceas care poate fi cumpărat de orice altă persoană a planetei. Cum explică Kant această „rupere” de principiul său înăscut?

### **Erori ale proprietății ca postulat empiric**

Trebuie să plecăm în investigație exact așa cum pornește Kant, anume de la empiric către teoretic, după o definiție generică, oferită la început. Astfel,

<sup>8</sup> Ripstein, A., *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Mureșan, V., *Trei teorii etice. Kant, Mill, Hare*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2009, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Ripstein, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>12</sup> „This “could be mine or yours” structure does not apply to the innate right of humanity in your own person” (Ripstein, A., *op. cit.*, p. 59).

Kant denumește prin proprietate un obiect exterior sau interior, de natură fizică sau non-fizică (spiritual, sufleteasc, intelectual) care aparține de drept unui agent volitiv. Kant este interesat de tema proprietății private<sup>13</sup> din două motive principale: 1. este o temă importantă în empirismul britanic<sup>14</sup>; 2. este o aplicație, din perspectiva rațiunii practice, la sistemul său idealist.

Posesiunea, în practică, semnifică totalitatea condițiilor prin care folosim proprietatea sau libertatea îngădită a posibilității celui alt de a folosi lucrul meu, încât „dacă cineva s-ar putea folosi de el fără asentimentul meu, m-ar leza”<sup>15</sup>. Cum perspectiva idealistă presupune, fie ca obiectul să fie transpus în intelect, așa cum este, adaptând subiectul la el, fie să fie „tradus” în termenii subiectivității, intelectul adaptând realitatea la el, și nu invers, Kant va opta pentru aceasta din urmă, din mai multe motive. Primul privește faptul că intelectul nu poate fi un set versatil de informații sau cunoștințe, caz în care legile subiectivității s-ar contrazice pe ele însele. În al doilea rând, intelectul nu poate identifica „părți” de conștiință (entitate metafizică fără părți) cu obiecte particulare: bunul meu nu poate fi parte a conștiinței, adică intelectul nu se poate întinde sau prelungi în afară, altminteri ar rezulta nenumărate neajunsuri structurale și funcționale. Cum modifică și adaptează intelectul proprietatea?

Pentru a răspunde la această întrebare, trebuie să excludem mai multe tipuri de proprietăți, înțelese greșit în practică, în special acolo unde vorbim de ființe incomplet raționale. Astfel, stadiile biologice tranzitorii (copilăria) sau precare și imperfecte (boala psihică) sunt incompatibile cu proprietatea. De asemenea, animalele și restul ființelor vii nu doar că nu pot avea proprietăți, ci ele însele sunt proprietate, aceasta fiind și o formă de protecție și responsabilitate față de ele. Proprietatea trebuie să fie deplină, în caz contrar se contrazice în concept. Astfel, orice obiect exterior, diferit față de subiect, poate și trebuie să fie în posesia unui subiect. De fapt, a gândi obiecte ale liberului arbitru, fără acesta din urmă, adică „fără proprietar”, ca obiecte în sine este o anomalie. Rațiunea este calitatea necesară

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<sup>13</sup> Proprietatea colectivă este o contradicție, simpla posibilitatea a scopurilor opuse din cel puțin doi „proprietari” fiind suficientă pentru a anula conceptul.

<sup>14</sup> Noi urmărim în acest studiu raționamentele proprietății în cadrul sistemului kantian; pentru o interpretare comparativă, istorică, a se vedea Katrin Flikschuh, *Kant and Modern Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 12-13 și urm.

<sup>15</sup> Kant, *Metafizica moravurilor*, ed. Antaios, București, 1999, p. 81.

pentru a deține o proprietate. De aceea, Kant exclude din start apelul la stat, căci proprietatea ține de domeniul raportului dintre indivizi particulari, pe de o parte, și dintre aceștia și obiectele „lor”<sup>16</sup>, în calitate de agenți raționali.

Situațiile practice pot deruta și afecta înțelegerea proprietății. De pildă, când altcineva deține un bun pe care îl consider al meu, dar neintrat încă în posesiunea mea, efectul practic pe care îl resimt este sentimentul de lezare, emoția negativă a acestei proprietăți folosite (ipotetic sau real) de altcineva. Aceasta este o altă falsă proprietate, iar eu sunt, firește, un fals proprietar. Pe de altă parte, discuția despre lezarea sensibilă, în cazul proprietății nedepline – concept, oricum, contradictoriu – are ca scop să dezvăluie aspectele teoretice ale temeiul proprietății, anume că aceasta este atât sensibilă (posesiune fizică) cât și inteligibilă (latură juridică). Ambele sensuri se găsesc în toate cele trei tipuri de proprietate: 1. obiectele corporale (terenul este exemplul ideal pentru Kant); 2. contractele (serviciile prestate, care presupun plată); 3. statusul („deținerea” copiilor de către părinți)<sup>17</sup>.

Ce se întâmplă, în practică, când un obiect este deținut fizic de cineva, dar în dezacord cu latura sa juridică? Această contradicție sugerează că actul deținerii este unul impropriu, căci dispunerea de un obiect, de către liberul arbitru, se face prin acordul legilor formale ale intelectului, inclusiv cele morale, cu obiectul deținut, și nu prin sincronizarea materialului liberului arbitru cu obiectul, situație în care am vorbi de „res nullius”. Sub incidența rațiunii, nu poate exista o interdicție de folosire a unui bun, căci orice acțiune a liberului arbitru este în acord perfect cu rațiunea. Dacă o acțiune este interzisă, libertatea liberului arbitru ar fi contrazisă în practică și în concept: „Dar cum rațiunea pură practică nu pune drept fundament al întrebuițării liberului arbitru alte legi decât cele formale, făcând abstracție de materia liberului arbitru, adică a calității superflue a obiectelor, cu condiția să fie un obiect al liberului arbitru, rațiunea practică nu poate include nici o interdicție absolută cu privire la întrebuițarea unui astfel de obiect, pentru că ar însemna ca libertatea exterioară să se contrazică pe sine”<sup>18</sup>. Nu

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<sup>16</sup> „Kant shows how it is a structure of rightful relations between private persons, the form of which can be understood without reference to the state” (Ripstein, A., *op. cit.*, p. 86).

<sup>17</sup> „Property concerns rights to things; contract, rights against persons; and status contains rights to persons *akin to* rights to things” (Ripstein, *op. cit.*, p. 20).

<sup>18</sup> Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

mai trebuie insistat asupra faptului că efectul unei atare contradicții se dispută și în zona sentimentului și emoțiilor sensibile.

Deținerea fizică, pentru că proprietatea nu este atașată fizic de proprietar<sup>19</sup>, presupune automat atât a fi la dispoziția autorității ultimului și a conștiinței dreptului de a dispune oricând de acest bun, cât și o putere practică, adică o putere de acțiune asupra lucrului, un act al liberului arbitru în strânsă relație cu facultatea morală, formală, din intelect. Fie în mod teoretic, fie în mod practic, putem vedea fațete ale aceluiași lucru aflat în proprietate. Când observ puterea practică a deținătorului (eu sau celălalt), sunt conștient că aceasta este „lezată” de ceva formal a priori. Când meditez asupra proprietății unui bun, acest lucru se întâmplă spontan în intelect: „Pentru a gândi ceva doar ca obiect al liberului meu arbitru este suficient să fiu conștient că obiectul se află sub autoritatea mea”<sup>20</sup>.

Posesiunea unui lucru empiric este formulat printr-o lege juridică a priori, care nu spune mai multe decât conceptul (afirmă noncontradicția dintre libertatea mea și posesiune, interzice folosirea de către alții a obiectului respectiv etc.). Pentru a fi cu adevărat funcțională în practică și în teorie, această lege juridică necesar inteligibilă și rațională trebuie să fie formulată sintetic a priori, lucru care se realizează prin parcurgerea unor etape cunoscute la Kant: 1. se pleacă de la cazuri empirice (de ex., deținerea unui teren privat); 2. se face abstracție de totalitatea condițiilor limitative empirice; 3. se ajunge la posibilitatea a priori a deținerii; 4. se extinde conceptul la „ceea ce este al meu este și al tău exterior”, ceea ce reprezintă latura sintetică. Prin acest raționament putem să tragem concluzia că nu doar lucrurile empirice pot fi proprietate privată, ci și cele imateriale, adică „orice obiect exterior al liberului arbitru poate fi considerat al meu din punct de vedere juridic, dacă eu (și numai atunci) îl am în puterea mea, fără însă a-l poseda”<sup>21</sup>. Astfel, cele mai multe alegeri pe care le facem sunt proprietăți private, de la locul

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<sup>19</sup> Aici putem folosi diferența conceptuală, din limba română, între posesiunea fizică, caz în care proprietarul dispune fizic de un bun prin folosire continuă, și cea inteligibilă, care presupune detașare fizică de proprietate, unde distanța fizică între proprietar și proprietate poate fi oricât de mare, iar intermitența folosirii nu anulează deținerea; în limba engleză diferența este marcată de termenii *possession* și *ownership* (a se vedea Howard Williams, „Kant's Concept of Property”, *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 106, 1977, pp. 32-33 și urm.).

<sup>20</sup> Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 87.

pe care îl aleg să stau la soare, la tipul de educație oferit copiilor, până la preferințe subiective de natură estetică sau religioasă.

O altă prejudecată legată de proprietatea ca postulat, se referă la identificarea acesteia cu sufletul. Bogăția și bunurile materiale sunt considerate adesea în cultura populară ca imagini ale deținătorului, existând riscul de a materializa, cuantifica ceva ce este definit ca metafizic, adică sufletul. Soluția este de a accepta o anumită idealitate a proprietății ca „avere”, dar numai în sensul de posibilitate a priori a deținerii efective, în timp ce bunul propriu-zis este cu totul exterior și deci diferit față de suflet.

Proprietatea îmi este exterioară în sensul că este un „obiect diferit de mine”, dar și concret, măsurabil, mijloc al maximelor morale, în relație cu care reprezentarea avuției (averea) se face fără spațiu și timp, ca un fel de posibilitate practică a deținerii. În același timp, putem spune și că sufletul este cu totul diferit și independent de exterior, că proprietatea nu îl extinde pe acesta. Dar cum libertatea liberului arbitru are nevoie de orizont practic limitat, căci limitele îl fac real-empiric, proprietatea este mijlocul cel mai bun cu putință.

Cumpărarea unui bun depinde de substanța acestuia din urmă. În mod empiric și istoric, pământul are spațiu și timp, ceea ce îl face obiectul cel mai pretabil pentru cumpărare. Achiziția însă trebuie să pornească de la posibilitatea *a priori* de a face acest lucru, lucru observabil și din perspectiva rațiunii practice, ca postulat. Or, în acest sens, a fi posibil din perspectivă formală să achiziționezi un teren se întemeiază pe „proprietatea originară asupra pământului în genere”<sup>22</sup>. Cu alte cuvinte, în starea originară<sup>23</sup>, oamenii posedă dreptul legal de a fi într-un loc pentru simplul motiv că, independent de voința lor, au fost puși de natură sau de întâmplare acolo. Acest lucru se întâmplă pentru că ei dețin în mod colectiv tot pământul, grație conceptului de proprietate, care nu este în această situație unul empiric, temporal, ci unul care trimite la principiul a priori al deținerii. Cu toate acestea, adevărata luare în posesiune presupune temporalitate și voință particulară, lucru realizat, pe de-o parte, prin faptul că toate voințele sunt unite în perspectiva deținerii originare și, pe de altă parte, că una dintre ele acționează pentru deținerea reală a unui obiect (teren) particular. Acest act empiric particular al unei voințe, bazat anterior pe „comunitatea originară” a deținătorilor tuturor pământurilor, nu se poate realiza pe de-a-

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 98.

<sup>23</sup> Kant o distinge de cea naturală, pe care o consideră fictivă.

ntregul decât dacă se întemeiază și pe o formă care să îi corespundă în intelect. Cu alte cuvinte, orice achiziție are nevoie de o „posesiune intelectuală”.

### Proprietate și contract

Un sens principal pozitiv al proprietății este contractualismul, astfel că proprietatea nu tinde, în practică, către eroare întotdeauna. Un astfel de exemplu pozitiv este proprietatea rezultată prin achiziție. Achiziționarea trebuie să fie întotdeauna în acord cu celelalte voințe, adică în relație strânsă cu practica dreptului, cu acceptarea implicită a celorlalți a posibilității ei, în cadrul „totalității legilor” și aplicării simultane a acestora. Dreptul, în general, ca și întregul comportament moral, presupune respectarea integrală și simultană a legilor scrise și nescrise, toate morale. Idealitatea acestui mecanism voluntar este una cât se poate de practică: legile trebuie respectate ca imperative, fără posibilitatea analizării conținutului lor de fiecare dată când acționăm. În caz contrar, s-ar consuma energie mentală pentru judecăți care nu ar face decât să dubleze ceea ce este deja gândit a priori. În plus, ar exista tendința de a gândi legile în aplicații (maxime) în funcție de alte interese decât ale celuiilalt, adică s-ar urmări finalități precum starea de plăcere, satisfacții egoiste etc., iar mecanismul voluntar ar intra în sfera irațională. Pe de altă parte, „logica” practică a acțiunii umane, care e întotdeauna morală, face ca ansamblul interacțiunilor umane să fie un fel de mașinărie care implică creativitate doar la nivelul aplicațiilor personale (maxime), nu la cel al conținutului efectiv al acțiunii, căreia îi rămân aceleași motivații, înfrângeri ale rezistențelor, cât și scopuri în persoana celuiilalt. De aceea, achiziția unei proprietăți private nu poate fi autoritară, originară, nelegală sau „prin fapta altuia, pe care eu o determin după legi juridice”<sup>24</sup>.

Contractul, care stă la baza achiziției, are patru părți: oferta, consimțământul, promisiunea și acceptarea. Simultaneitatea este un criteriu *sine qua non* și aici: „Însă nici prin voința particulară a celui care promite, nici prin a celui căruia i se promite (cel ce acceptă), ceea ce este al celui dintâi nu trece într-al celui de al doilea, ci numai prin voințele unite ale celor doi, prin urmare, numai în măsura în care cele două voințe sunt declarate în același timp”<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Kant face aluzie la politica nedreaptă, abuzivă, autoritară.

<sup>25</sup> Kant, *Metafizica moravurilor*, ed. cit., p. 106.

Această simultaneitate, care e un concept intelectual, este doar reprezentată astfel, nefiind afectată de desfășurarea succesivă în practică, unde întâi propune o ofertă, care apoi este agreată de compărător etc. Astfel, promisiunea și acceptarea provin „dintr-o voință comună unică”, a priori, iar obiectul unde se aplică aceasta, obiect supus vânzării și achiziției, este înțeles „după legea rațiunii pure practice, făcând abstracție de condițiile practice”<sup>26</sup>. Atunci când contractul se exercită pentru prestarea unui serviciu, dreptul personal nu este asupra persoanei celuilalt, ci doar asupra acțiunii acestuia. Achiziția unui serviciu nu este fundamental diferită de cea asupra unui bun oarecare, atâta doar că în privința primeia trebuie să scoatem în relief că persoana de la care cumpărăm serviciul rămâne intactă, fără posibilitatea de a fi afectată în esența sa. Afectarea libertății și demnității celorlalți, principiu universal moral, care nu depinde de vreun status (religie, etnie, cetățenie, vârstă, sex etc.), impune anularea principiului libertății în general, deci și a celui care are astfel de judecăți denigratoare și „superioare”. Mai simplu spus, raportul stăpân-sclav, ca și altele heteronome, este irațional și imoral.

Relațiile heteronome sunt iraționale, în calitate de „vicii contra naturii”, inclusiv în domeniul casnic: soții se posedă reciproc, ca „desfătare”, fie limitat doar la natură (animală), fie plenar, între limitele căsătoriei juridice. Leșirile dintre aceste limite „nu pot fi numite, fiind lezări ale umanității în propria noastră persoană”<sup>27</sup>. Scopurile raționale ale căsătoriei sunt reprezentate de căsătorie, astfel că „dacă bărbatul și femeia vor să-și folosească reciproc proprietățile sexuale, ei trebuie, în mod necesar, să se căsătorească, necesitate rezultată din legile juridice ale rațiunii pure”<sup>28</sup>. În cazul în care capacitatea procreativă nu există, relația juridică matrimonială ar trebui să înceteze. Desigur, doar conceptul căsătoriei încetează, relația celor doi parteneri poate continua prin intermediul unui alt concept. Dar pentru a nu periclita umanitatea universală, prezentă în fiecare dintre noi, posesiunea rațională în căsătorie trebuie să fie simetrică. Dacă soții se văd mutual ca obiecte, deci și ca simple posesiuni, acest lucru nu le degradează „esența” umană: Acest lucru nu este posibil decât cu o singură condiție, anume aceea că dacă o persoană este dobândită de cealaltă la fel cum este un lucru, tot astfel este dobândită și cealaltă persoană; căci astfel, ea se recâștigă pe sine

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 107.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 111.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112.

și își restabilește personalitatea”<sup>29</sup>. Dar spre diferență de relațiile dintre proprietar și un lucru obișnuit, proprietatea reciprocă a soților presupune coabitare materială și imaterială.

În cazul proprietății asupra copiilor rezultați în urma căsătoriei, aceasta este o stare tranzitorie, născută din drepturi multiple (al părinților, al copiilor), astfel că ei trebuie crescuți corespunzător, fiind persoane, până când vor fi capabili să își folosească singuri proprietățile înnăscute. În acest sens, limitarea rațiunii (intelectului) copiilor îi pune în postura de a fi considerați chiar iraționali, împreună cu situațiile viciate natural (boli mintale, fizice etc.), lucru pentru care ei trebuie moralmente să fie sub autoritatea ființelor cu rațiune, precum părinții sau comunitatea, dacă aceștia sunt orfani.

### **Proprietatea în sfera eticii**

Un al doilea sens pozitiv al proprietății – și cel mai important – este cel eticist, observabil tot în sferă empirică. Sfera practică a vieții, cu toată diversitatea creativă de acțiuni, este una morală. Greu de spus care acțiuni interumane sau introspective, mai periferice sau mai pline de viață și expresie, sunt în afara moralei. Chiar și stereotipurile sociale sau erorile de judecată, trebuie raportate la moralitate. Fiind determinată de facultăți a priori, sfera morală nu are nevoie de analiză intelectuală complicată. Indivizii fără educație pot acționa moral la fel de bine ca aceia care înțeleg cele mai avansate lucruri din chimie sau din analiza matematică. Mecanismul acțiunii morale este intuitiv, spontan și presupune doar un efort în înfrângerea rezistențelor psihologice și somatice, căci adesea e nevoie de acceptarea neplăcerii în acțiunea morală. Astfel, acțiunea care respectă regula morală a perfecțiunii de sine necesită adesea neplăcerea în sensul alimentației sănătoase și moderate cantitativ, gimnastică sau limitarea somnului la atât cât este necesar. Interacțiunea cu semenii presupune a renunța – uneori un lucru neplăcut – la ceva pentru celălalt, servindu-i ca mijloc pentru scopul fericirii acestuia din urmă.

Analiza conceptului de datorie ar trebui să fie temeiul pe care putem analiza atât fundamentul moralei, cât și al plăcerii, adică al sentimentului bazat pe senzații, sentiment care, numit fericire sau simplă plăcere, nu poate motiva sau condiționa în mod real actul moral. Așadar, etica proprietății trebuie să depășească mai întâi ideea că are o legătură fundamentală cu

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

fericirea. Acțiunea morală nu rezultă din „apropierea de un anumit sentiment, numit cvasi-moral, datorită efectului pe care îl așteptăm de la el”<sup>30</sup>. Legea morală, observabilă în maxima întemeiată subiectiv, adică în felul creativ în care oamenii acționează moral sau mai simplu spus ca „principiu după care acționăm”<sup>31</sup>, trebuie să fie coerentă în practică, atât ca acțiune cât și prin fidelitatea cu temeiul său. Acțiunea morală se bazează pe înfrângerea rezistențelor, fără să aștepte ceva opus, adică plăcere (fericire) la capătul actului. Cu toate acestea, sentimentul fericirii poate fi acceptat cu condiția să fie rezultatul necondiționat al actului. Astfel, dacă cel care face caritatea se bucură pentru cel care primește caritatea, atunci această fericire este admisibilă și normală.

### Concluzii

Orice acțiune etică – și putem să spunem că orice acțiune săvârșită de ființe natural raționale este etică – se bazează pe forța poruncii imperativului moral (legea morală). Aceasta trebuie să constrângă sau să permită auto-constrângerea, adică rezistența la neplăcere în schimbul finalizării actului moral, fără să afecteze liberul arbitru. Când intelectul înfrânge impulsul natural contrar (e mai plăcută pasivitatea naturală decât efortul), poate deveni act de curaj, iar repetarea curajului (învățarea) devine virtute, adică dispoziție morală. Astfel, virtutea se aplică atât ca act particular, cât și în serii de acte și ea este intensitatea sau „tăria maximei în îndeplinirea datoriei”<sup>32</sup>. Cu toate că virtutea pune în practică acțiuni morale în moduri mai puțin forțate, ea este la fel de meritorie ca orice acțiune morală independentă. Obiceiul ca dispoziție este suma unor acte voluntare neplăcute, astfel că este puțin important că o oarecare acțiune morală este făcută foarte ușor.

Dacă teoria dreptului se ocupă de adaptarea legilor la forma pură (legea morală), etica se ocupă și de scopurile sau obiectele liberului arbitru, în acord cu legile formale. Deși scopurile sunt „obiectiv-necesare”, ele „lucrează” pentru liberul arbitru în afara cauzelor formale ale sale, cu alte cuvinte între cauză (liber arbitru) și efect (acțiunea practică) nu există un raport determinat decât ca poruncă, nu ca relație cauzală tipică, căci astfel s-

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 204.

<sup>31</sup> H. J. Paton, Scurt comentariu la Întemeierea metafizicii moravurilor, în Valentin Mureșan (coord.), *Legea morală la Kant*, Editura Universității din București, București, 2009, p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 222.

ar acționa automat, fără liber arbitru: „Dacă etica cuprinde datorii, la a căror îndeplinire nu putem fi constrânși (fizic) de către alții, este doar consecința faptului că e o teorie asupra scopurilor, iar o constrângere în acest sens (de a le avea) se contrazice pe sine”<sup>33</sup>.

Conceptul de proprietate la Kant dezvăluie două sensuri principale, cel contractualist și cel eticist sau normativist. Proprietatea are un sens adânc atât prin asumare contractuală explicită, cât și în sfera mai largă a eticii. Pentru analiza acestor două sensuri a fost nevoie, mai întâi, să fie depășite prejudecățile de care am vorbit mai sus, rezultate din starea de postulat practic. După aceste analize, putem concluziona că exercitarea dreptului de proprietate nu presupune conflict cu ceilalți, ci dimpotrivă o garanție a bunei conviețuirii comunitariene, în care individul este autonom, liber și creativ în raport cu propriile calități și vocații. De aceea, proprietatea privată este un pivot empiric excepțional, fără de care nu poate fi concepută existența umană deplină.

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209.

# UP TO A POINT, THE DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM IS DIALECTICAL IDEALISM, IN HEGEL'S MEANING; BUT THEN IT IS MORE

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**Abstract:** *The paper investigates the common and different features of Hegel's and Marx's philosophy, thus not the historical and personal aspects of authors are important but the internal articulation of their philosophical methodologies. These features are both the dialectical approach of the knowledge of the world and, somehow deriving from the dialectical method, the understanding of objectivity. The beauty and limits of the dialectical pattern of Hegel is shown in his treatment of the finites. The analysis is rather a dialogue between the dialectical idealism and the dialectical materialism. The conclusion is not a synthesis seen dogmatically - as a final state, apotheosis of philosophy - but as an inherent development of thought, therefore even as its division into the never-completed dialectical materialist methodology and the eternally necessary convergence of philosophical interrogations and science.*

**Keywords:** *negation, formal vs. dialectical thinking, experience, praxis, existence/being, meaning, man, finite, objectivity, Hegel's idealism, dialectical materialism, science.*

## 1. Dialectic

### 1.1. In Hegel

So, both philosophies announced in the title are *dialectical*, showing the development from within the existence and things. The ancient Aristotelian *entelechy* became decomposed dialectically through *negation*.

*Formally*, or at the first, analytical level of understanding, negation is an absolute difference and concealment, and destruction of a state of a thing. (A state of a thing means that in a definite moment, the thing has definite properties).  $A \neq B$ ; the larva stage of the metamorphosis of butterfly annuls the egg stage, as the pupa stage annuls the larva stage, and the adult stage annuls the pupa stage; rationalism is not empiricism.

However, the most important and specific feature of the Being is movement, development.

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Accordingly, *philosophically* – i.e., here in the *dialectic philosophy* of Hegel – negation is interconnected with *identity*, and this means with the *whole* of the object as thing we focus on. Reason with its synthetic manner is that which connects the parts, the opposite aspects, the different stages, into the whole that comprises them, both by deploying their negations and uniting them, and keeping something from the distinctions, oppositions and negations<sup>2</sup>.

Let's remain in Hegel's philosophy. Formally, there is about an accurate description of a single fact – as in mathematics, the formalisation of a function, of a specific property of the elements of a set – and only in an affirmation establishing it. But when the fact is considered in the whole of the object, it is related to other facts of the object. Only by doing this we can see the origin, the causes, of the fact and of the facts, their relationships, their interdependence and the relative independence<sup>3</sup>, their unity and how relative is this one. We continue the example of mathematics: it describes the succession of states/processes of a set/system, and all types of possible and impossible successions. Thus we know the evolution of the system and its states. But we do not know why and how, except the presence or absence of properties in different moments of the system. In this respect, mathematics is an indispensable tool for reason, but only a tool through which we better understand the different lines of successions of states. And since the problems (the inquired perceived existence as complex and contradictory, and as changing, developing) are so complex and they involve many tools of thinking and solving, the interconnections of successions must also be approached with other tools than mathematics.

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<sup>2</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic* (1812-1816). Edited and translated by George di Giovanni. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 453: "The whole and the parts thus fall indifferently apart; each side refers only to itself. But, as so held apart, they destroy themselves. The whole which is indifferent towards the parts is *abstract identity*, undifferentiated in itself. Identity is a whole only inasmuch as it is *differentiated in itself*, so differentiated indeed that the manifold determinations are reflected into themselves and have immediate self-subsistence".

<sup>3</sup> Yes, the parts of a considered system can righteously be considered a system in itself. The complexity of the existence is also due to this both mosaic and embedded, implanted (as well as inclusion, intersection and union) characteristics of the appurtenance and membership of systems. Also, the complexity is due to the definition of a system by its context (called sometimes, by its universe of discourse).

Consequently, only if we remain at this level we do surround us with a “limit that limits”. In contradistinction, the dialectical thinking helps to arrive to “limits which do not limit”<sup>4</sup>, namely, concepts and reasoning which allow the thinking of the *integrity* of a system, with all its contradictions and transformations, when the internal and external causes – transformations generated in outside systems – are composing both strict/deterministic states and tendency states of the discussed system. The antithesis – or negation *in se*, the common model of negation and its result – is both a new, different state that becomes the basis (as a point of contrast) of a new, different development (new, different argument)<sup>5</sup>, and a stimulus for the synthesis, the unity of this negation and the entity/moment/figure it negated. In other words, in the formal or “external” thinking, one “keeps

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<sup>4</sup> I use Constantin Noica’s formulae: “there are limitations that limit and limitations that do not limit. Dogma or 'absolute truths' are basically limitations that limit. The open truths, therefore relative, of the knowledge of today are limitations that do not limit. Knowledge in general tends to transform the limitations that limit (this stone, this real) in meanings and laws, which are at least limitations of higher order. The moral condition defeats evil, which has always been understood as a limitation, and it replaces the good, as a limitation that does not limit. Beauty itself is a limitation concretely, but one that does not limit. All human culture tends to transform limitations that limit into ones that do not limit”, Constantin Noica, *Devenirea întru ființă*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1981, p. 232 [The becoming within being].

<sup>5</sup> As the negative versions of syllogisms (see the reference to Jean Buridan in Stephen Read, *Aristotle’s Theory of the Assertoric Syllogism*, 2017, <https://philarchive.org/rec/REAATO-5>, p. 13); or the affirmative variants where the premises are not of the same kind (see Aristotle, *Sophistical refutations*, 168b), but the result of the confusion of different kinds is not only a paralogism, actually an error because we cannot differentiate the same kind *per necessitatem* from the kind given *per accidens*, so from the diverse (169b), but also a stimulus of new reasoning, but also a stimulus to think to both the logical forms as such and to the contents – the meanings of terms – in arguments; or the assertoric *imperfect* syllogisms, requiring more elements than in premises, where there is about more than one logical relation and thus there is no transitivity allowed by the middle term; see Theodor Ebert, “What is a Perfect Syllogism in Aristotelian Syllogistic?”, *Ancient Philosophy*, 35, 2015, pp. 351-374, where the author shows that transitivity is possible in every syllogism if negations are separated from the middle terms and the minor premises and the other are written with the formula ‘being-contained-as-in-a-whole’ in the middle term.

separate and independent each of two aspects of a single complete idea. In point of fact, neither aspect, if separated from the other, is able to measure the idea, and present it in its truth"<sup>6</sup>. In a dialectical image, this is... negated.

The dialectical thinking has a flexible view on the dynamic *places* and *functions* in the hierarchy of the system: the concept of *mediation* – as necessary intermediary moments/stages – sends to the function of mediation of elements and processes in which lower elements, or let's say here, deep, are taken over but integrated into higher levels and transformed, that is, processed in such a way that they are no longer fundamental but only constitutive elements, the higher forms becoming fundamental<sup>7</sup>. The function of mediation can be fulfilled with both traditional "catalyst" elements and processes and *ad hoc* ones, other elements and processes.

The humans think *both* formally and dialectically, because both ways are necessary. The big problem appears when these two ways restrict each other: although no major formal system can be complete, thus cannot be completely formalised and cannot be explained completely by formal means (we remember Gödel), some people are rigid and do this; while oth-

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<sup>6</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (1820), Translated by S.W. Dyde, Kitchener, Ontario, Ca.: Batoche Books, 2001, 57, p. 66.

<sup>7</sup> Cement, sand and water do not appear in their identity in a construction, but as concrete, also used as a base material for certain parts of the construction. This is not a translation of water etc., of concrete and of bricks in it, but the construction depends on new and superior aspects and not directly related to clinker, etc.: on design, and this according to the objectives of the building, etc., on architecture, on the environment.

But see Hegel's example – still construction, as the model of the construction of the human society based on Right and Order *against* what the individual wills tend – G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (Lectures of Philosophy of History), With Prefaces by Charles Hegel and the Translator, J. Sibree, Kitchener, Ontario, Ca.: Batoche Books, 2001, p. 41: "The stones and beams obey the law of gravity, – press downwards, – and so high walls are carried up. Thus the elements are made use of in accordance with their nature, and yet to co-operate for a product, by which their operation is limited. Thus the passions of men are gratified; they develop themselves and their aims in accordance with their natural tendencies, and build up the edifice of human society; thus fortifying a position for Right and Order *against themselves*".

er ones are negligent and do not take into account the meaning of words and the logic of inferences.

Formally, one cannot deduce from premises but the conclusions these premises support. Dialectically, it's possible. Why? Because: methodologically, the dialectic (Hegelian and Marxian) negation is always *Aufhebung*, both negation and preservation, though in a new manner, of the old system or of something of its contradictions in the new higher unity; these ones cannot be eliminated totally or from all standpoints; and thus, because the system is so complex that it involves many types of negation which, they themselves compose in negations and thus in different *Aufhebungen*. Only the formal logic does not support contradictions – Freud said that “logic” in general – but dialectics involves a multi-value logic, multi-level contradictions, and thus the critique of the coexistence of contraries and of contradictions. But this critique is/must be ordered. Thus, only together the formal and the dialectical logic allow the development of the *critical thinking*: because the formal and the dialectical thinking are intertwined.

Hegel added another aspect: *the formal is abstract*, but this “Formal possibility is immanent reflection only as abstract identity, the absence of contradiction in a something... This real possibility is itself *immediate concrete existence*, but no longer because possibility as such, as a formal moment, is immediately its opposite, a non-reflected actuality, but because this determination pertains to it by the very fact of being *real* possibility. The real possibility of a fact is therefore the immediately existent manifoldness of circumstances that refer to it”. And “The relativity of real possibility is manifested in the *content* by the fact that the latter is at first only the identity indifferent to form, is therefore distinct from it and a *determinate content* in general. A necessary reality is for this reason any limited actuality which, because of its limitation, is in some other respect also only something *contingent*”; “they are indifferent to *form*, are a *content* and consequently *different* actualities and a *determinate* content. This content is the *mark* that necessity impressed upon them by letting them go free as absolutely actual”. And „the reality that the concept gives itself is the next stage, namely the said identity in diversity as such, an identity that equally is, therefore, still *inner*, and only necessity”<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore, *both the formal and the content are necessary*, and *both the abstract and the concrete*. But if people consider the strict but *relative* value of

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<sup>8</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, pp. 482, 485, 488, 707.

the formal and abstract, and think much more from a formal syllogism than it describes, they consider the fruitfulness of the concrete content, too. In this respect, they know that not everything is possible/or impossible, but always depends on the *concrete content and context*. The dialectical thinking shows and makes us aware of the limits of rigid forms, and at the same time is careful to treat orderly, thus logically, thus with the instruments of formal logic, the richness of the concrete. Because otherwise neither the contradictions – with their negations – do appear in their possibility, limits and understanding, and nor the critique of all of these.

### 1.1.1. Hegel's concept of *experience*

Marx took over the Hegelian idea of dialectics<sup>9</sup> and its development. But, because *dialectics always applies to the concrete*, the Marxian social analysis posited it “right side up”<sup>10</sup>. It's not the place to detail, but it would be useful to contrast Hegel's focus on the concept of *experience* and Marx's centre on the concept of *praxis*.

Hegel considered the *experience*<sup>11</sup> as the main “catalytic” concept of his system, because it mediated the development of reason and the treasury

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<sup>9</sup> Karl Marx, *Afterword to the Second German Edition*, 1873, of *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (1867), in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Volume Two, Moscow, Progress Publishers (1966), 1973, pp. 91-99;

The second German edition was considered by Marx “the basic original text” of the *Capital*, after he revised it by reading the French translation of the book (see <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/p4.htm>).

The *Afterword to the Second German Edition* is an important analysis of the historical conditions of the science of political economy in England, France and Germany, and of the dialectical method used in the *Capital*. This method was presented in “its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner” by Hegel, and Marx “openly avowed himself (myself) the pupil of that mighty thinker”. However, the dialectical method was “mystified” by Hegel who considered “the real world as (is) only the external, phenomenal form of ‘the Idea’”. Therefore, with Hegel, dialectic “is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell”.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>11</sup> The words – their meanings – were lived before they were constituted as such, so they transmitted human experiences.

First, the radical  $\pi\epsilon\Omega$  suggests the idea of advancing toward a final point, a limit, so the trajectory as such. Thus,  $\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\Omega\alpha\zeta/\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\Omega\alpha\theta$ ,  $\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\Omega\alpha\theta\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  meant term, limit, end,

of reason, the impersonal Spirit<sup>12</sup>. Phenomenology was just the description of the experience of the human consciousness and awareness of the existence. Everything is experience, not only physical but also mental, spiritual. But experience is judged by man in his head and thus, and letting aside that the humans can have the experience of contemplation of things, experience is the subjective means to arrive to the understanding of the world.

Experience was a gate to the world, or a window, a bull's eye as the one of an old deep sea metallic diving suit, through which the man saw the water surrounding him. But his vision was limited and he could see more

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goal, the extreme point of a thing, the essential part of a thing, which gives it perfection. From where – πείρασις, attempt, trial, effort; the verb to try, to tempt, to force oneself, to make an experience of someone, i.e. to put him to the test, even to try to corrupt him, to seduce him – as Plato used in *Phaidros*, 227b –: πειρά-ω; and πειρασμός – proof, trial, experience; It is interesting that this idea of limit – beyond which something else appears, of a different essence – also led to the word piracy, πειρατεία; while πειρατήριον was not only experience – as a life test (with spectacular results, such as successful colonization, thus building new human spaces, or the punishment of the daring) and evidence, but also a den of thieves, a gang of pirates; πειρατής being a thief, a captor.

Then, in Latin the root is *pererro* – *are*, to traverse, to survey, to go from one to another, to wander; the tests of life, its experiences are after the journeys, the wanderings in which you go through the places. But do you stop? Yes, because *peritia-ae* means knowledge, skill, talent, and this means a break to think, to turn all on all the faces and, of course, to deal with things, so to act; *peritus- a- um* being the knower, the skilled;

So, *experior- iri- itus sum*, to try, to put on the test, to prove, to endure; *experimentum- i*, trial, experience, test, proof, skill; *experientia- ae*, attempt, test, effort, practice, skill, result, effect, success. Very dialectical evolution, isn't it?

<sup>12</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Translated by A. V. Miller with Analysis of the Text and Foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford University Press, 1977, § 86, p. 55: "Inasmuch as the new true object issues from it, this dialectical movement which consciousness exercises on itself and which affects both its knowledge and its object, is precisely what is called experience [*Erfahrung*]. Consciousness knows something; this object is the essence or the in-itself; but it is also for consciousness the in-itself; § 802, p 591: "Everything we know must come before us in a living phase of experience (*Erfahrung*). The substantial, the solidly out there, must slowly be transmuted into the notional, the subjective. Time simply is the form of this self-realizing process. Until Spirit reaches the end of the requisite temporal process, it cannot achieve complete self-consciousness".

only when he moved, turned, twisted. This was another experience and other, new experiences. Thus the main element in experience was the subject who has thrown his “vision”, i.e. his ideas, on the world he perceived. In this, experience seemed to give the same narrow image of the world as the device of Plato’s allegory of the cave<sup>13</sup>: only *fragments*; and only a simple or foolish mind can equate fragments with the whole.

However, if experience is understood as a *flux*, and as a both sensorial and rational moment in the clash of the human with the world, then it is the provider of the objective world<sup>14</sup>. In fragments: but always possible to unite them by reason, by the special and, in principle, ever accompanying intellectual experience of thinking upon the ocean of experience. Therefore, from Kant onwards philosophy could no longer think the knowledge of the world as its copy in the human mind. It is – so, the world is – the result of the human thinking upon it, of the processing of the congeries of sense data and ideas, concepts, logic, and of the power of concepts over experience, thus over the chaotic sense data. From Kant on, this power of concepts, transformed into a transcendental purity, was that which in fact gave us the world as it is seen. The real sensible experiences became external to their transcendental conditions. For this reason, to understand how the world is known – not as a physiological and psychological process, but as a philosophical one – giving the account of what is the world as a result of the processing in the human consciousness, and of what is the subject as a result of this processing, therefore, of the development of ideas, the concept of experience seemed the most appropriate. But the experience of the consciousness – revealed by phenomenology highlighting how the appearance of the world is shown and how this appearance transforms the subject/the consciousness –: once more, the external world of experiences became determined by the ideas and consciousness. And the phenomenology of the consciousness became the most important philosophical knowledge, and seemed to defeat the old metaphysics that treated the world as a given

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<sup>13</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, in *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vols. 5 & 6 translated by Paul Shorey. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1969. 514a-520a.

<sup>14</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, III (Locke), Translated by E. S. Haldane, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995, p. 303: experience “is the form of objectivity”.

which one has either to follow or to imagine. The empirical and the transcendental became definitely opposed.

For Hegel, what is the true essence of man – demonstrated not only by biology but also by philosophy – was the thinking, so the consciousness. It would be strange to reduce the essence, but the consciousness gave birth to the realm of ideas, to Reason, to the Spirit<sup>15</sup>, and: 1) dialectically, the Spirit was both inserted in the humans since they acted according to it, obviously in particular historical ways manifesting only the ideas suitable to their social conditions, and 2) the Spirit had its own autonomy or autonomous life, logically consistent and uniting the opposite ideas of general, particular and individual, of finite and infinity, of personal and collective, of abstract and concrete, of quantity and quality, of freedom and slavery, of interests and inclinations, of independence in thoughts and acts and dependence.

The Spirit – equated with Reason, with the Idea and ultimately with the Divine Being, external to the world – thus the realm of ideas was the direct *mover* of men, of their consciousness and, thus, the direct determining factor of actions: the “middle term” in all the relations and actions. In this sense, to understand the phenomenology of Spirit, its manifestation in the concrete historical development of ideas, i.e. of the human consciousness, was the main task of philosophy. Every concrete experience of men was first of all the experience of their consciousness, *as if* they were moved from outside, thus by ideas. And obviously this experience of consciousness gave/transposed into different practical experiences. We cannot start to understand the humans, what they are, from their different practical exploits, because – Hegel thought – just the ideas and consciousness miss from this picture. And the ideas can separate from the ordinary particular practical life that is finite and transient: but the ideas remain; and develop. Actually, just in their life can we see dialectic throbbing: their separation

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<sup>15</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 10: “negative and *dialectical*, because it resolves the determinations of the understanding into nothing; it is positive because it generates the universal and comprehends the particular therein... But reason in its truth is *spirit* which is higher than either merely positive reason, or merely intuitive understanding”; and p. 469: (even the Spirit is) “The absolute is absolute only because it is not abstract identity but is the identity of being and essence, or the identity of the inner and the outer”.

and opposition, their reciprocal criticism and unity. Are we not inclined to consider history the achievement of the Spirit, of the Reason? And is this clear subordination of the human actions not a form of opposition between the empirical and the transcendental?

## 1.2. In Marx

### 1.2.1. Marx's concept of *praxis*

The core concept of Marx's theory was *praxis*. Πράξις is *action* in order to execute, to make, to accomplish. The experience, the learning from the relationship of the human consciousness with the world, takes place in the human mind, it is *interior* to his consciousness: it involves θεωρία, examination. The synonym of experience is knowledge: "we gained experience" means that we learned something and now know it. Praxis is deploying in the *exterior* of the consciousness, although it includes it as everything that is human. The exteriority and thus the (relative) autonomy of both the process of praxis and its results make praxis similar to the Spirit. But the main relationship in praxis is that between men and the things they are making, or between their consciousness and their activity and these things. The peculiarity of experience is the relationships between the human ideas occurring in every moment of their life.

There are many types of experience, including the actions to make something, but praxis is more than experience, it is its achievement beyond the ideas which were its basis, it is the return of the consciousness outwards it<sup>16</sup>, it is the *objectification* of the experience. We can plan something, but if we do not transpose the plan into reality, there is no praxis: there are no things, an augmented reality, but only us with our ideas. The practical knowledge, that which is the transposition of ideas in reality, πρακτική, is different from the speculative knowledge, γνωστική ου θεωρητική<sup>17</sup>.

Actually, without the exhibition of the consciousness, without the *presentation* of ideas, thus without praxis, there is no consciousness and there are no ideas at all. For this reason, there is no experience of the consciousness without the *contents* of the experience, thus of ideas: without

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<sup>16</sup> Perhaps this is the reason than the goddess of revenge was Πραξιδίκη.

<sup>17</sup> The term *speculative*, in the traditional and Hegelian philosophy, designates the research of the autonomy of *logos*, not as psychological process of thinking but of the articulation of thoughts, of their logic and place and of their significance: that is of the understanding as it appears in the concept and its evolution.

praxis. All the struggle of ideas, for instance between Kant's moral of categorical imperative and its critiques, can certainly be explained through the logic of ideas and of their criticism, but ultimately it reflects the practical conditions of the social development. Men do not become free and do not embrace the public values only because the spiritual wealth of humankind is transposing into their head, but because the complex historical and social conditions are fitting with some ideas and generate some ideas. Even the command of Reason for the human progress is an idea whose concrete contents could not have appeared without concrete and changing historical conditions.

There are spiritual/cognitive experiences and practical experiences. But as the latter are *sine qua non* for the spiritual ones, the former are the same for the practical ones. Yes, a time for contemplation, for deduction, for construction of ideas is absolutely necessary. Without this interval the praxis itself is weak<sup>18</sup>.

Like Hegel, Marx was the heir of Kant. He knew and agreed with the construction of the human knowledge as a mental confrontation of concepts/ideas with sense data. He was at the same time the pupil of Hegel, assuming not only the dialectical methodology but also the idea that the ideas form a realm of existence, the spiritual one, that is objective and influence the humans. (Later on Karl Popper formulated this as "world 3", but he put in this "products of the human mind, such as languages; tales and stories and religious myths; scientific conjectures or theories, and

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<sup>18</sup> As in Hegel's image of slavery's "compensation" with the development of democracy and the intellectual life: "was a necessary condition of an aesthetic democracy, where it was the right and duty of every citizen to deliver or to listen to orations respecting the management of the State in the place of public assembly, to take part in the exercise of the Gymnasia, and to join in the celebration of festivals. It was a necessary condition of such occupations, that the citizens should be freed from handicraft occupations; consequently, that what among us is performed by free citizens – the work of daily life – should be done by slaves", G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History* (Lectures of Philosophy of History) (1837), With Prefaces by Charles Hegel and the Translator, J. Sibree, Kitchener, Ontario, Ca.: Batoche Books, 2001, p. 273; and p. 32: "The Greeks, therefore, had slaves; and their whole life and the maintenance of their splendid liberty, was implicated with the institution of slavery: a fact moreover, which made that liberty on the one hand only an accidental, transient and limited growth; on the other hand, constituted it a rigorous thralldom of our common nature – of the Human".

mathematical constructions; songs and symphonies; paintings and sculptures. But also aeroplanes and airports and other feats of engineering"<sup>19</sup>; Popper insisted not only on the interdependence of the physical world (world 1), the world of mental states as events (world 2) and world 3, but also on the feedback relations between them). Just because of this assumption has Marx developed his theory of *ideology*: ideas about society, existent outside people and influencing decisively, determining their thinking about society.

But ideas generate only ideas. In order to exist, to have things, people must act.

The ideas are constructed in the human mind – obviously, in relation with the sense data. Once emitted, this *subjective* spirit becomes *objective*<sup>20</sup>: namely, it is the driving force of the subjective spirits who behave according to it and transpose it, by their actions, in reality. Do we not see that Hegel developed Kant's theory? (And, once more, this aspect of objective knowledge influencing and explaining the subjective ones was taken over and developed by Marx's theory of ideology, and, later on by Popper<sup>21</sup>). However, as objective as it is, the world of ideas is transient and thus powerless to move the world if it is only transmitted orally. In order the ideas to decisively determine the humans' behaviour and actions they need to be materialised: not only in material things but also in immaterial ones.

Yes, we can mentally see that Beethoven's Fifth Symphony – Popper's example – exists as an immaterial entity influencing us (usually we call this type of entities, "values", as the moral ones; or we call it "abstract objects"). But: we really acknowledge it when we hear it, thus when the minds of interpreters processed – what? – the information contained in the musical scores, these ones material objects, thus at hand, and only when the inter-

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<sup>19</sup> Karl Popper, *Three Worlds*, The Tanner Lecture on Human Values, Delivered at The University of Michigan, April 7, 1978, <https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/resources/documents/a-to-z/p/popper80.pdf>, pp. 143-167 (p. 144)..

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, p. 157: "Knowledge in the objective sense consists not of thought processes but of thought contents... The objective thought content is that which remains invariant in a reasonably good translation".

But see Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, § 25.

<sup>21</sup> Karl R. Popper, *Knowledge and the Body-Mind Problem*, [Based on his Emory University lectures, 1969], Edited by Mark Amadeus Notturmo, London: Routledge, 1994.

preters play, transposing their ideas about how to do this in sounds (which pertain to the material world).

However, although we acknowledge immaterial objects – as the above-mentioned *ideas* of a work, *values*, *meanings*, *performances* (Popper discussed the latter) – through the medium of both individual feelings and mental processing and material embodiments, we can judge them *in se*, as such, and we behave according to them precisely, and not only according to the individual reactions resulted from other people’s feelings or according to material aspects of our surroundings. Therefore, this world of immaterial manifestations of the humans – considered not only as only minds but also as bodies, i.e. as unities of matter and consciousness – within the material world *exists*. The problem arises when the unity of the human existence – the *unity* of the subjective and objective, of the material and immaterial, of the abstract and concrete, in their mutual feedbacks and interdependence, irrespective of the history of their apparition – is reduced to a unilateral determinism, to a “one way causation”.

### 1.3 Hegel’s inferences

This was the problem with Hegel. If we draw a didactic scheme, we see, as above mentioned, the Kantian moment and that of Hegel. Both of them were *realists*, acknowledging the real world as both material and spiritual and having material and subjective and objective spiritual aspects. Hegel was that who developed the dialectical representation of the world, of its knowledge, beyond the dialectical analysis of the human thinking and the human moral by Kant (who did not called his methodology “dialectic”, but transcendental and critical). And nevertheless, Hegel annulled his own dialectic with the unilateral determinism of the Spirit on the human world.

Actually, he annulled the dialectic two times. (And thus he raised questions: something that is very good, not only for philosophers).

Once, when Hegel considered the objective Spirit as being the only *solution*, the logical ideal recipe for the historical problems of man’s existence: *as if* the objective Spirit would nothing to do with the subjective consciences which have many contradictory ideas concerning society. Keep attention: the fact that the logical character (the truth/false, the deduction, the derivability, the correspondence and the consistence) belongs only to mental objects as ideas, and not to material objects or subjective events, is not tantamount to consider the entire spiritual aura of mankind as rational/logical.

Secondly, when this solution determines and explains the world, *despite any possible opposite "passions"*; moreover, the force of the objective Spirit is seen when people work *for it* consciously or not – and this fact is called *"the cunning of reason"* – and when those people who oppose the logic of the Spirit suffer; but this *"phenomenal"* fact does not issues from the possibility that the directives of the Spirit may be problematic or even opposed to people: *"The particular is for the most part of too trifling value as compared with the general: individuals are sacrificed and abandoned. The Idea pays the penalty of determinate existence and of corruptibility, not from itself, but from the passions of individuals"*<sup>22</sup>.

### 1.3.1. Mediation

The mediating role of experience sends to the inquiry of the relationships between ideas and facts. Letting aside that we know the world – thus it appears in front of us through the medium of concepts and their relations – the ideas influence so much that one can rapidly conclude that the facts are only the result of ideas. It's not difficult to arrive to the idea of the whole of the human ideas – and ultimately, of the true ideas, as the Spirit (the spiritual realm) – that determine the knowledge and thus, the world. (And of course there is, just because in the structure of man the ideas determine every thought, state and action, the huge role of the spiritual realm). But if one looks closer – and it is dialectic that which does this, actually, the dialectical thinking – it's clear that the ideas influence only ideas, so the ideas are external factors to the facts. The ideas influence the facts through and with the agency of the will to act. Thus, the facts must be compared with facts, and the ideas with ideas, in order to see which fact is better than the other fact and which idea is better than the other idea.

Thus, in the relations between ideas, facts and mental processes, therefore, in their knowledge, *every one of them plays the role of mediating factor*; and many times, in all their positions: as every one of them plays the role of both triggering factor and result.

### 1.4. Hegel's splendid and lame dialectic

Consequently, the Kant – Hegel line led to the theory of dialectical development of ideas as fundamental causation of facts, of the world. The realm

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<sup>22</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History* (Lectures of Philosophy of History), p. 47.

of ideas, of ideal coherences, was conceived as the objective factor of the subjective ideas and acts of humans. What was important in this line was the understanding of the intellectual construction of ideas – as for instance that of transition from hypothetical imperatives to the categorical one, from desires and adequate ideas to these desires to moral reasoning deriving the necessity of moral norms, beyond conjunctures – and the answer to the old philosophical question about *adequatio rei et intellectus*: and now the world was indeed the realisation of the objective Spirit.

But was it? Does this transposition of the dialectical logic of concepts and reason into the Hegelian picture of the world not follow a paradoxically formal scheme of the dialectic of three stages of development of concepts (Freedom, for instance) and three moments in the development of reasoning (thesis etc.), and is the world displayed according to this scheme not a simplification? Does such a world not be jammed, cribbed into this scheme, is the infinite wealth of experience not reduced in this scheme? And since the experience of the consciousness is infinite, meaning that the world is infinite, does this scheme give the account of the experience of the consciousness?

In his *Philosophy of History*, Hegel ignored everything that was outside his scheme. But is this not “metaphysics” or “speculation” – in the pejorative sense of the terms, as a deduction of the world from concepts? Yes, it is, and Hegel made a *dialectical metaphysics*. Are the ideas not the direct movers of the reactions of men, mediating the sense data? Of course, they are. Do the ideas not influence in a decisive way the facts? Of course, they do. But they do this because of their *contents*, and these contents are not only abstract but also and similarly necessarily *concrete*. Otherwise, they would not determine the actions, would they?

Obviously, the present remarks concern only the logical consistency, thus the dialectic of Hegel’s conception. Not the historical, contextual and philosophical, and not the personal reasons of this unimaginable contradictory guise of what should have been a triumphant dialectical picture. It is of primary importance to see, beyond fragmentary coherent dialectical descriptions, including beyond his dialectical scheme, in what sense was the Hegel’s dialectical conception limited.

The main sense was just the shrinking of a dialectical theory of knowledge. The ideas give the pattern of people’s thinking and acting, thus – of the world. And it’s true. There is no world *for us* without conceiving it: receiving ideas, processing them – obviously, also the ideas which reflect

simple facts from the real life, thus confronting all these ideas – and relating them in as coherent reasoning as we can do. These ideas – and more, all the ideas – explain the world to us, make it intelligible, so give our knowledge of it, and motivate our acts as responses to the world as it is understood by us: *as if* they would be an external instance that governs our thinking, the Reason treasury of the human world, above it, *as God*.

But is the world only a passive matter receiving the ideas which imprint them? This other relationship in the *whole of ideas and world* is that which misses from the Hegelian dialectical construction. Consequently, neither the whole does appear, so dialectic is lame.

Hegel said, obviously, that the humans put in operation the ideas they receive and arrive to, namely, their “need, instinct, inclination, and passion”<sup>23</sup>. The states of the consciousness are and have “motive power” as a middle term in logic, without which there is no derivability. But if so, Hegel’s scheme is:

Ideas/Spirit → humans’ states of consciousness → the world (as it is known, as it appears in the Concept, in the theoretical representations, thus as Spirit, as the logical products of the Consciousness, as the only aspect of the world that counts because it determines the world)

And the circle of causation of ideas from ideas continues. It’s normal: truth is only a fact of idealisation (*Ideelle*), it is an ideal object of the thinking. But it’s only half of the process. There is no explanation of why the Spirit looks as it is described in Hegel’s system, determining only what is described in the system – and nor the feedback relationships from the world to the ideas, without which there is no whole at all, so neither its truth. Because: dialectically, the truth is the account of the whole<sup>24</sup>. The whole is *concrete* and, obviously, it is what people understand of it in their historical effort and what of this understanding is retained in their concepts, in their theories<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Idem*, p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Preface, p. 11: “20. The True is 'the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development”..

<sup>25</sup> Hegel prefigures the latter epistemological observation that the concepts are theories.

describing “the essence”<sup>26</sup>. The essence is what is known as a result of a dialectical evolution of ideas through negations. The process is wonderfully displayed. (And at the same time suggests doubts: the ideas are necessary and just the necessary ideas have the force to push the knowledge of the world – and the world as such – forwards; but once necessary ideas are later negated by other necessary ideas; it’s because of the inner dialectical feature of knowledge, of course, but why would this ideal process be so difficult / difficultly received by people who still support the former necessary ideas or by people who were the harbingers of the new necessary ideas when these ones had not the force to negate the old ideas, and necessary were just the old ones; etc.)

However, we must be careful: the above formula suggests two faces. One is that the world is as it is known; a logical, expected continuation of Kant’s theory. As its result, the ideas about the world are determined by their inner dialectical development and, obviously, they arrive to a coherent corpus of true, logical results (metaphorically, the Spirit). The other is that the ideas about the world are determined by the Spirit – i.e. by the impersonal logical result of the consciousness as such, by both the inner development of ideas, the dialectical methodology as such, and its True results as a treasury of (human) Reason – and thus, the world as such is determined by the Spirit. And here, the understanding of this concept is literal.

Dialectic – the arrival to the synthesis of the whole – involves a *retrospective* thinking (see the metaphor of the Minerva’s owl in *Philosophy of Right*<sup>27</sup>). The ideas and the world evolve through the relative solving of contradictions – namely through permanent negations, through surpassing /outstripping which may be transgressions as mistakes and also outrunning with positive effects, all of these actions calling in fact new analyses and negations – but in each moment people think that the Truth is that which they collaborate to in that moment. Only philosophy, namely the dialectical system advanced by Hegel, said he, is able to see the intertwining, negation, continuation of the ideas as the essence of: both the true ideas about the world and the world as such. Only philosophy – that “does not appear until reality has completed its formative process, and made itself ready” –

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<sup>26</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 12: “when we speak of *things*, we call their *nature* or *essence* their *concept*, and this concept is only for thought”.

<sup>27</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, p. 20.

emphasises that “only in the maturity of reality does the ideal appear as counterpart to the real, apprehends the real world in its substance, and shapes it into an intellectual kingdom”<sup>28</sup>.

And the retrospective image done by the dialectic philosophy is as the traditional metaphysics that derives the world from concepts: the world is not only as it is known – and the problems/the problematic and the solutions are never a copy but their logical development in thinking and its objective products – but also in accordance with the Spirit, i.e. with the truths of every moment and their Truth.

We do not know what the world as such – “in itself” – is and we do not act in this world but according to our ideas, and especially to verified and consistent ones: and thus the world is “for itself”. But the world is a rebel entity, thus the ideas always negate themselves<sup>29</sup>, and actually we cannot take them as particulars<sup>30</sup> – irrespective of which universals they embody – as granted. Consequently, there is a profound contradiction between the even false ideas followed by humans in different stages of history and the apparent consistency of the development of the world in spite of momentary lapses. And this contradiction was solved by Hegel in an inherent contradictory but marvellous way.

*First*, the Spirit is the dialectical methodology itself, the inner logic of the world of ideas that directs their evolution. *Then*, the Spirit is the interweaving and combination of True ideas in both every moment / historical stage and the Truth of their connection and form in a final stage when it is possible to evaluate the former True ideas and to conclude the goal of their development. In this second hypostasis is the Spirit tantamount to the directive of Reason. And *third*, the Spirit is the Consciousness: as a human consciousness and a transcendent one, outside the human. In this third hy-

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> Later on, Gaston Bachelard considered that only the permanent *revision* of ideas, as an inner moment of knowing, assures a “scientific rationalism”, Gaston Bachelard, *Le rationalisme appliqué*, Paris, PUF, 1966, p. 124. And to revise and correct require to refuse the analysis of separate ideas, because they are always correlated. This is why no idea – AB, and obviously, no Spirit as a quintessence – is absolute, Gaston Bachelard, *L'idéalisme discursif*, in *Etudes*, Paris, Vrin, 1970, p. 93.

<sup>30</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, p. 37 “But he who is active in *promoting an object*, is not simply “interested,” but interested in that object itself”. (Here it is the *avant la lettre* idea of intentionality).

postasis, the Consciousness is knowledge in its autonomy as every human product<sup>31</sup>, autonomy that imposes in the human consciousnesses the understanding of what is inevitable, no matter how complex is the concrete social human life<sup>32</sup>.

The above are like three faces of a deity: this one is close to humans and embedded in them (in their minds), it is also outside them as their best, leading them benevolently, and it is, also outside them, the abstract entity of Reason commanding inexorably the course of things, because it knows their inner dialectical logic and, inherently, its reason-to-be. No matter the names of a deity, neither their correspondence with a face or another, important is the acknowledging of its functions. And since the function of the Spirit/Reason/Idea/Consciousness is to promote what is the humans' reason-to-be, the Reason and the Consciousness, their/its driving force over the humans and their reality follows<sup>33</sup>.

Since the reason-to-be is the dialectical Reason, there is no final stage in it, in the conscious analysis and imposition of the dialectical development of both knowledge and reality. Actually, from any reasoning, irrespective of the weigh of the synthesis, we do not only stop, by assuming it, but also begin to question it, so to see it as the basis of a problem, do we? The *telos* of Reason – and of Consciousness, and of Spirit as the overwhelming treasury of the human dialectical effort of knowing – is to not be content with a no matter how important and synthetic idea, to permanently begin and continue. However, this is “in theory”. When related to the world history, Hegel transformed his dialectical pattern. As it is known, there was a final stage: that was to develop, but in the same frame.

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<sup>31</sup> This comparizon with every human product is the result of the Hegel's and Marx's dialectical philosophy.

<sup>32</sup> I G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, 28: “That activity is the medium by which the universal latent principle is translated into the domain of objectivity”.

<sup>33</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, § 80, p. 51: “The progress towards this goal is also unhalting, and short of it no satisfaction is to be found at any of the stations on the way. Whatever is confined within the limits of a natural life cannot by its own efforts go beyond its immediate existence; but it is driven beyond it by something else”; and § 805, p. 591: “Spirit is all the phases of content in which it externalizes itself, and the process of leading these phases back to a full consciousness of self”.

## 2. Idealism

Hegel gave a very important definition of idealism – and of philosophy –: “The claim that the *finite is an idealization* defines *idealism*. The idealism of philosophy consists in nothing else than in the recognition that the finite is not truly an existent. Every philosophy is essentially idealism or at least has idealism for its principle, and the question then is only howfar this principle is carried out”. And he continued: “The opposition between idealistic and realistic philosophy is therefore without meaning. A philosophy that attributes to finite existence, as such, true, ultimate, absolute being, does not deserve the name of philosophy. The principles of ancient as well as more recent philosophies – whether ‘water’, ‘matter’, or ‘atoms’ – are universals, idealizations, not things as given immediately, that is, in sensuous singularity”<sup>34</sup>.

There are different objects of sensuous experience, and no one denies this. They are the objects of common-sense and, at their first level, of sciences. But philosophy not only arrives at the understanding of concepts and ideas of and related to these objects, but also to the questioning of and reasoning about the concepts and ideas as “universals, idealizations” – in science the pendant of idealisation is *model* – as mental objects in and for themselves, and thus about their content as *essence/being* of the external objects they correspond. More: the understanding of the essence or being is the result of a spiritual activity where reason is both positive – by subsuming different particulars under their universal, their category (as Kant shows) – and negative or dialectical, by negating the determinations of idealisations. As a result, “a given particular is not subsumed under this universal but, on the contrary, it has already been determined together with the determining of the difference and the dissolution of this determining”<sup>35</sup>.

This particular is the finite. And its truth – truth itself being a spiritual process – is found only at the level of cognition, where the determinateness arises, giving the content of the finite in „the immanent development of the concept”<sup>36</sup>.

This aspect of concepts as idealisations – which are analysed and not only historically but also, and first of all, logically (but not as a practical procedure of judgements, but as an ontological exposition of the presenta-

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<sup>34</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 124.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> *Idem*.

tion and becoming of ideas) – and which are constituted from determinants which appear just in the logical dialectical process is not refuted by Marx. The content of knowing is the content of external objects. The capture of this content is the work of consciousness, that is „spirit as concrete, self-aware knowledge – to be sure, a knowledge bound to externality, but the progression of this subject matter, like the development of all natural and spiritual life, rests exclusively on the nature of the *pure essentialities* that constitute the content of the logic“. In this activity, the spirit, just „on the way of manifesting itself frees itself from its immediacy and external concretion. There is not only about the mediation of the knowledge and content of the external object by the movement of the spirit and its creations, the concepts (this was clear already in Kant), but also about the fact that the spirit/consciousness considers its own movement and creations as „its subject matter as they are in and for themselves“<sup>37</sup>. Philosophy questions the concepts and their inner logic and change, of course. And this is the realm of thought „in its own immanent activity or, what is the same, in its necessary development“<sup>38</sup>.

Hegel’s above definition of idealism describes the method/pattern to approach the existence, from the standpoint of Kantian transcendental idealism. The external world, the finites are not denied, of course. But they are *more* than their appearance according to the senses, namely they are known, thus *are* according to the movements of ideas. Their true existence in their concreteness is tantamount to their essence grasped only by ideas.

So what the richness of the concrete world consists of? It consists of the many *meanings* of things, much more beyond the sense data, produced by ideas. And this nobody refutes.

Accordingly, just in order to “reveal” the essence/truth of the finites and as many meanings as possible, the scrutiny of ideas together with the deep awareness of the peculiarity and place of ideas towards we and the world are *sine qua non*. The old requirement of the necessity of clear and distinct ideas (Descartes), and thus of the development of concepts/definitions (Hegel), follow. Only in this attention towards concepts which appear as moments of self-criticism in the development of ideas, can

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<sup>37</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

we have truer meanings about the world<sup>39</sup>. Only by intransigently respecting the discovery and exposition of the dialectical relationships in and of the whole, can we construct anticipative theories which consist of the displaying of different reasoning based on different premises, criticising themselves and generating holistic theoretical landscapes<sup>40</sup>. We do not arrive to truth by “applying” the abstract ideas to concrete phenomena<sup>41</sup>, but by deciphering the logic of these concrete phenomena through the instrumentality of ideas criticising themselves and developing themselves.

However, this is only the “technical” aspect of the Hegelian idealism: and it is common to both “idealists” and realists. The problem is, as Hegel pointed out, how far its conclusions go: concerning the relations between ideas and the concrete world.

### 2.1. Objectivity

No one denies the existence of the objective reality. However, what is real – and has meanings for us; and especially the meaning that there is reality – is the result of our experience, i.e. our interaction with that objective reality. Letting aside that the ideas mediate this interaction, the real is the result of

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<sup>39</sup> We do not necessarily need empirical proofs to understand who sabotaged the Nord Stream pipelines (see June 10, 2023, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/nord-stream-sabotage-probe-turns-to-clues-inside-poland-4ed20422>), it's enough to reason putting the question *cui prodest* (see *La NATO attacca l'Europa*, 16 Giugno 2023, <https://www.byoblu.com/2023/06/16/la-nato-attacca-leuropa-grandangolo-pangea/>).

<sup>40</sup> Ki-Weon Seo et al., “Drift of Earth's Pole Confirms Groundwater Depletion as a Significant Contributor to Global Sea Level Rise 1993–2010”, *Geophysical Research Letters*, Vol. 50, Issue 12, 28 June 2023, e2023GL103509.

<sup>41</sup> It's, Aristotle said, because the terms are used in various senses and these different senses are given because they relate to different and various concrete situations. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, in *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989, 6, 1026a.: “the simple term “being” is used in various senses, of which we saw that one was *accidental*, and another *true* (not-being being used in the sense of “false”); and since besides these there are the categories, e.g. the “what,” quality, quantity, place, time, and any other similar meanings;”, 1026b: “and further besides all these *the potential and actual*”.

both the experience of senses and of the thoughts<sup>42</sup>. The sensible experience – obviously translated into/as empirical and empirical abstract concepts – gives a subjective knowledge, explained Hegel. Only the concepts as theories give an objective knowledge, because only they can be criteria of coherent judgements and only they give the possibility to check and repeat the complex experience of the world.

The ontological priority of the external reality does not annul – and is not annulled by – the relative character of reality, because it depends on our experience. And both the sensible experience and the conceptual/theoretical experience generate “epistemological obstacles”, delays and troubles. But only the theoretical experience configures inexistent realities: not only as ideal alternatives but especially as a conceptual knowledge that is a model<sup>43</sup>. And though we apply our conceptual knowledge to the external reality aiming at forging it according to our knowledge, there is a resistance of the objective reality. To know is just to be aware of this relationship and to evaluate the pressure and the opposed resistance: and to construct better concepts. Accordingly, the relative character of the objective reality – the fact that the modes of reality are conceived of<sup>44</sup> – doesn’t mean absolute relativism in the construction of concepts.

The common-sense spontaneous realism allows an adaptive relation with the world, but since its results are not always happy, it requires the scientific realism of the awareness of the systematic methodical construction of concepts and knowledge. The philosopher who, as Hegel, considers philosophy a science, and the scientist, obviously, do their research not as individuals but as “representatives” of the method of systematic construction of reality. But this construction shows that all the aspects of the empiri-

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<sup>42</sup> Kant’s distinction between analytic and synthetic judgements – between what is knowable from experience and what is knowable only from reason – is very important here. Because: if we transpose and substitute the two manners of thinking to both facts from experience and theories about them indistinctly, we confuse facts with ideas.

<sup>43</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *Épistémologie* (1971), Textes choisis par Dominique Lecourt, Paris, PUF, 1974, p. 158 : “The real is never ‘what one might believe’ but it is always what *one should have thought*...in fact, one knows against a previous knowledge, by destroying badly made knowledge, by overcoming what, in the spirit itself, is an obstacle to spiritualization”.

<sup>44</sup> Patrick Juignet, « Une ontologie pluraliste est-elle envisageable ? », *Philosophie, Science et Société*, 2022, <https://hal.science/hal-03217728>.

cal – so the concepts, too – interact. Therefore, once more the concepts are parts of experience, although they are conceived of as external landmarks of the objectivity. But also only at their level can we conceive of alternatives, the “ought”<sup>45</sup>.

### 3. Dialectical materialism

Continuing the old metaphysics<sup>46</sup>, the main tenet of Hegel’s idealism was that the ideas become independent of their subjective production in the human mind and that as such have their own life of inquiring themselves, of negating and developing themselves, of understanding and of their power to impose their logic on the actions of humans, and even when their passions would oppose to this logic. As mentioned, the dialectical materialism pattern has assumed this idea because it simply cannot be refuted. The ideas form a specific realm of reality and the huge importance of this realm is visible just in the dialectical interpenetration with the realms of human actions.

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<sup>45</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 675: “But the process of this finite cognition and this finite action transforms the initially abstract universality into totality, whereby it becomes *complete objectivity*”.

But see also a late expert in Hegel: H. S. Harris, “Would Hegel Be A ‘Hegelian’ Today?”, 7-17, in *The Spirit of the Age: Hegel and the Fate of Thinking*, Paul Ashton, Toula Nicolacopoulos and George Vassilacopoulos, editors, Melbourne: re.press, 2008, p. 17: “To believe that *ought implies can* here is to admit the saving capacity of reason, to recognize the positive presence of the Spirit, its existence as moral necessity, i.e., as freedom and as charity. It is not a very comfortable home that we have made for ourselves in this world. But the absolute philosophy is the one that shows us that it is our *home*, and that we are the ones who have built it”.

<sup>46</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 25: “The older metaphysics had in this respect a higher concept of thinking than now passes as the accepted opinion. For it presupposed as its principle that only what is known of things and in things by thought is really true in them, that is, what is known in them not in their immediacy but as first elevated to the form of thinking, as things of thought. This metaphysics thus held that thinking and the determination of thinking are not something alien to the subject matters, but are rather their essence, or that the *things* and the *thinking* of them agree in and for themselves (also our language expresses a kinship between them); that thinking in its immanent determinations, and the true nature of things, are one and the same content”.

But dialectic requires a consistent treatment of a system. If we accept that in the system of *ideas-actions*<sup>47</sup> the ideas determine the actions, why not accept that the displaying of actions influence the ideas?

The ideas constitute a realm of their own, but why not accept that the actions constitute a realm of their own, too?

The existence of ideas justifies specific sciences, and obviously not only neuro-physiology, psychology, linguistics, logic, but also their ontology (Hegel's *Logic* being an ontology of ideas/consciousness in their autonomy and dialectical displaying, developed as a science). The realms of actions – and more, in different domains – together with the material and immaterial products (as institutions and relations, but also as corresponding theories) of actions in the delimited domains – are studied by specific sciences. Do we not see that not only people act according to their ideas, as a result of them – and this is irrefutably true and unanimously known and accepted – but also that their actions in their compositions of multiple aspects and individual passions influence their ideas? Shouldn't this feedback be contained in the ontology of ideas, and more, in the human/social ontology and philosophy of history? Shouldn't the feedback between the command of Reason and the rational speech – that is in its essence free – be contained in the ontology of ideas, and more, in the human/social ontology and philosophy of history?

It's absolutely obvious that the humans behave rationally<sup>48</sup>, following the paths of searching for and detecting the causes and the results of phenomena and actions, inferring from data and checking their conclusions. It's equally obvious that the structural manner – speculatively<sup>49</sup> discovered – of reasoning, not only as logical patterns as such but also as their development through a meta examination of the particular states and conclusions in every moment of judgement, namely the dialectic feature of

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<sup>47</sup> Is there such a system? There is, since a system is a taking into account, that which we circumscribe when we focus on something.

<sup>48</sup> But see Heraclitus, *Fragments* (in Diels, 1912), translated by John Burnet, Arthur Fairbanks, and Kathleen Freeman, [https://antilogicalism.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/heraclitus\\_fragments\\_final.pdf](https://antilogicalism.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/heraclitus_fragments_final.pdf), fragment 2 (thus 22A2, taken from Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*, VII 133) : “And though reason is common, most people live as though they had an understanding peculiar to themselves”.

<sup>49</sup> In the Hegelian meaning of this word.

reasoning, condensed in “Concepts/“Theory”, is common, too; and that the “Concepts/“Theory” that is not only the basis, in mind, of the understanding and action, but also the realm of ideas as available to different humans, is likewise common. The dialectical materialism cannot oppose, actually it integrates these aspects.

A) But the fact that people behave rationally is not tantamount to their observance of the commands of Reason. If it would have been so, all the behaviours of humans would be the same and the world history would be different than it is.

B) And people behave rationally according to their specific conditions and goals: they fit/apply the logic to these conditions and goals. Therefore, in order to understand why and how do people act, the thesis of determinism/mediation of ideas over their intentions and practice is not enough. And just in order to understand the power of the realm of ideas over people, it is necessary to see the ideas as *criteria* of behaviour. And once more, the ideas have *concrete* contents and just this *concreteness* gives the different *criteria*. But the concreteness depends on the real – and imaginary, also – existential conditions and goals of people. Consequently, the ideas processing these conditions and goals – including the spectacle of other conditions and goals – are as determining over the behaviour of people as the ideas about mathematical abstract objects over the decision of a mathematician to develop a formula or another; and as the ideas about the development of the reason-to-be of the human reason in its impersonal model (the Spirit) considered as the most specific feature, thus essence, of the human being and his most important treasury for the philosophers who were interested to use these ideas in theories either about the different transcendental and logical conditions of the experience of knowing or about the role of cultural ideas in the existence and evolution of societies.

C) What is the concrete influence/determinism of ideas on the world? This question resumes the openness of the Hegelian philosophy about the transposition of ideas as beliefs and decisions. The results of ideas are the values, the goals and decisions of people; and the world as they decided and acted. Thus to ask which are the results of the ideas, is appropriate. And these results are different even from the logical development of the Spirit as a rational objectification of the realm of ideas. Obviously, one can forge the image – the theory, thus the ideas – of the reason-to-be of the reason/Reason as being its own liberation from the constraints of the real life and thus, the image of its freedom to develop the most consistent ideas

of this freedom; and thus, the image of the concept of Freedom as quintessence of the reason of the (human) history.

These images are beautiful intellectual constructions, caused by the intertwining of the evolution of the German idealism, the creativity of thinking and the inner logic of the speculative way of philosophy with the historical conditions of these constructions. But they demand, even from them, questions about their continuation. There are different paths to continue the beautiful speculative philosophy of Hegel. A path can be the treatment of the Spirit not in a Hegelian speculative manner but in simple paternalist idealism.

And another path can be a dialectical materialism. It focuses on the *formation of ideas on concrete existential conditions* and on the *direct influence of ideas on the concrete existential conditions*. Dialectical materialism is philosophical approach: it demonstrates the existential basis of ideas and thus, the existential basis of their development. It is not psychology and nor a detailed description of the existential conditions. But it is based on this description and inner determinism of different existential realms, made by different sciences. On this grounding, the dialectical materialism is a holistic and general methodology for sciences. It is not a book of receipts for them and neither an absolutely external domain that involves the possibility of sciences to not take it into account, nor it selects from sciences what fits with its own suppositions. Actually, the sciences themselves develop their own particular dialectical materialist views, interpretations and questions: because the materialist dialectic perspective gives the space for always new standpoints of the “signs”. And thus both the general materialist dialectical methodology and the sciences are necessary for the decryption of the signs of reality<sup>50</sup>, thus including of ideas. Sometimes some ones un-

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<sup>50</sup> Howard Pattee, “Epistemization”, pp. 131-134, in *A More Developed Sign*. Edited by Donald Favareau, Paul Cogley, Kalevi Kull, Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2012, pp. 131-132: “the ideal of science is empiricism – conforming theory to experiment – and that this implies a necessary epistemic cut... The condition for the objectivity, or universality, of laws is that they appear to be the same for all conceivable systems and to all conceivable observers. Consequently, an individual system cannot be distinguished by objective laws alone. Any experimental test requires a subjective agent, or an observer, to choose an individual system for examination. This choice is largely arbitrary, but it must be made explicit if the concept of experiment is to have any functional meaning. This choice is the epistemic molecules can func-

derstand science as an absolutely a-philosophical business, but in fact it develops only in concert with philosophy.

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Therefore, (1) the development of ideas through their own logic is a *model* and a “*transcendental*”<sup>51</sup>/*methodological condition* of every experience of thinking. (2) The methodological conditions of the experience of thinking are not opposed to the philosophical conclusion that the ideas as *criteria* of the behaviour; instead, this conclusion is another methodological approach of the human beings and their practice. (3) It is not enough to speak about the general function of ideas – the function to be criteria for the human behaviour. All are ideas and all are criteria; *but the kind of criteria depends on the concrete contents of ideas; thus, on the existential conditions reflected by ideas.*

Actually, the *modern/contemporary* idealism-materialism divergence and problem is based on a, historically determined, misapprehension. Because: the Hegelian idealism is inherently integrated in the dialectical materialism. And because: in its core this idealism discusses *other* aspect than the dialectical materialism. There are two different aspects emphasised by the Hegelian idealism and the dialectical materialism. The first is that of the (relative) autonomy of ideas and the realm of ideas and that of the dialectical negation and development of ideas; the second is that of the strong influence of the existential conditions on the ideas. Both philosophical premises are valid. The problem is when they are used and developed in a dogmatic manner, when one neglects the mediation of ideas or when one ignores the existential conditions.

More: from a methodological standpoint, the two aspects complete themselves and complete our perspective of the world (and its knowledge). But in fact the dialectic of things, of reality cannot be grasped without the dialectical materialist approach. All the scientific concepts developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in present are the result of this approach; as well as the

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tion as symbols that instruct replication. But from our theories of physics, it is not possible to even imagine how symbols can become molecules”.

<sup>51</sup> As a dialectical analysis of the development of concepts/knowledge from their inner logic.

breakthrough in philosophy. The system theory<sup>52</sup>, cybernetics with the feedback and the feedforward, the levels of reality, the boundary conditions and the top-down determinism<sup>53</sup>, the holism and complexity, the management of instructions for procedures, are only few of the “embodiments” of the dialectical materialism. The blame on “present ideas of simplistic materialism reducing everything to matter” – that is an abstract concept, let’s not forget<sup>54</sup> – and to the physico-chemical, ideas “not understanding the extraordinary peculiarity and determinant role of the consciousness”, waved in amateur philosophical discussions, is but an unfounded chatting. Actually, no one promotes today these ideas: there are not anymore possible after Hegel and Marx.

#### 4. Instead of conclusions

The concepts, the units of knowledge and also their relationships bring out *meanings*. The concepts are theories about, and just this means the evolution of meanings, the revealing of different perspectives and aspects. Everything, i.e. the whole knowledge takes place through ideas. The logic of knowledge is the articulation of what is judged, of the meanings. Thus, it is more – as Hegel showed – than the formal, instrumental logic. The fathoming of relationships between aspects, between determinates, the judgement of the evolution of meanings and their understanding – take place within the logic of knowledge.

The feelings and the goals, the interests, decisions and actions – exist in and through ideas, of course. But all of them have their relative autonomy; hence, neither the different aspects/realms can be understood only as the unique realm of ideas developed logically from themselves. The *content* of ideas is given by the external world. *This content gives the different realms of the (human) existence*. What happens in the outside world – the relations, forces, interests, ideas about them – give the various and dynamical content of the ideas. We can remain neither at the conclusion that “the pas-

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<sup>52</sup> Actually, the entire materialist dialectic exposition of the dialectic of society – economy, social and political relations, institutions, ideas – was that of a system theory *avant la lettre*.

<sup>53</sup> Michael Polanyi, “Life’s Irreducible Structure”, *Science*. 160 (3834), June 1968, pp. 1308–1312.

<sup>54</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of logic*, p. 392.

sions” are guilty for the delay of the rational understanding of “truth” and nor that anyway the humans are driven by the power of reason.

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What is the truth? What is more important for humans, the ideas or the existential conditions? The questions are absurd. Important are both<sup>55</sup>, because *both* constitute what is essential to human beings.

The answer that they are important from different standpoints is not correct. It's clear that, as the ancients observed, the *logos*, the reason and its manifestations, is the *differentia specifica* of humans. However, even this emphasis of the ancients aimed at showing the difference and superiority of humans towards the animals.

Why would the human reason be the climax of (terrestrial) animals? Would it because, as Popper said, only at its level the ineffable realm of ideas is considered as an object/body of objects and because only the humans have access to it and “taste” it? Is the climax always the essence because the essence is the truth<sup>56</sup>, as Hegel said? Is a synthesis a final situation?

From a consistent dialectical standpoint, a synthesis is only the beginning of other lines of development; as every moment of thinking and acting is a bifurcating point.

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<sup>55</sup> Karl Marx, “Mazzini and Napoleon”, 1858, in Marx-Engels *Collected Works*, Volume 15, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1980, pp. 485-489 (485): “Nothing is easier than to be an idealist on behalf of other people. A surfeited man may easily sneer at the materialism of hungry people asking for vulgar bread instead of sublime ideas”. (And he continued: “The Triumvirs of the Roman Republic of 1848, leaving the peasants of the Campagna in a state of slavery more exasperating than that of their ancestors of the times of imperial Rome, were quite welcome to descant on the degraded state of the rural mind”). Later on the well-know pyramid of needs (Abraham Maslow) displayed the above conclusion in science.

<sup>56</sup> As the truth of a human being revealing – including to him – at old age? It's clear that this is not false and thus people must live until they become too tired to do this, just in order to “reveal their truth”. However, this kind of apex is not really revealing because it is showing only *in mente*; the old have no time to transpose into reality their wisdom. For this reason, the truth of a human being is not in a moment of his life, not even in a moment of culmination. His truth is the whole of his life, with all the contradictory thoughts and actions.

The truth of man is not his reason and its result, the realm of ideas. The truth as the spiritual was the tenet of the contemplative philosophy. But in a philosophy that made a dialectical interpretation of that philosophy, *the truth of man is the unity of his flesh and spirit*. The latter cannot be explained independently from this unity. The whole creativity and creation of man arise from the inner struggle of the whole system of his identity. Even the infinity and wholeness of the spiritual realm depend on the finitude of the individual human. For this reason, the spirit itself is not absolute, but relative.

But just because of its power, the logically consistent ideas about the world should be implemented. The analysis of the power of Spirit is absolutely necessary; but it is equally imperative to analyse – and thus, forge – *how, to what extent and why this power is or not implementing in the real world*.

This analysis is assumed by the dialectical materialism.

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The development of dialectical materialism is not a cancellation of Hegel's dialectical idealism. It is its completion (and, since every completion is likewise a correction, it is also its correction) as an *Aufhebung*: and a never finished process.

What the dialectical idealism was interested to show was the *universal*, the "law", as the science does (and nor art and theology, whose principle is the particular), and as Hegel's systematic philosophy was conceived as a science. The dialectical idealism emphasised the universal of the "mechanism" of the development of ideas and of their constitution as a special existential realm determining the consciousness and behaviour of humans. In this, the dialectical idealism was absolutely necessary, as every essential moment in the history of thinking, here, of philosophy.

Hegel continued the tradition of philosophy whose focus on the universal neglected the individual and thus, the concrete. It was inherent to this traditional philosophical model to subordinate the individual to the universal. The individual had "passions etc." but ultimately he was a rational being and, generally and in the historical tendency, his acts – according to the universal requirements and command of Reason. And this moment of the history of philosophy was – as the former Kant's normative ethics of the categorical imperative – intrinsic to the function of metaphysics.

Obviously, philosophy felt the inadvertences between its construction and the real world and aimed at solving them. And the most suitable terrain was that of modern political philosophy, confronting the deep opposition of “the people” against oppression. A knot in the chain of solving was the concept of *multitude* in Spinoza, and not in Hobbes<sup>57</sup>. The Spinoza’s concept described a concrete manifold of individuals having, each of them, their own needs and propensity to freedom, as well as their own right to it, beyond a simple representation by the One. For Hegel, the contradictions in the state-civil society unity were to be solved by both the becoming of a social and benevolent state and the development of reasonability in the members of the civil society: but all of these in the frame of private property ruled discipline, as moments in the evolution of Reason.

Speculatively said, the dialectical materialism started from the opposite premise: that of the equality in theoretical dignity of both the universal and the individual. Is there a ground of this premise? There is just the dialectical criticism of the metaphysics that deduces the world from concepts: the necessity to begin with the description of the world. With all the autonomy of *logos* – thinking, thoughts, words/discourse, reason – that puts forwards the universal, the individual and the particular are the starting point of the thinking and the formation of concepts. First, the individual and the particular call both their affirmation as identity – by simply naming them – and negation, generating their appurtenance to a wider class of objects and their differentiation within this class. There is no concept, affirmation and development of the universal, without the pre-existence of the individual. But is this pre-existence significant for philosophy?

As it was said, in the relations between ideas, facts and mental processes, therefore, in their knowledge, every *one of them plays the role of mediating factor*; and many times, in all their positions. But letting aside this aspect or rather considering it a model: both the universal and the individual play a mediating role in the knowledge of things. Thus it’s allowed to start reasoning both from universals and individuals.

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<sup>57</sup> See the discussion of the difference in Ana Bazac, “Conatus and the worth of life in a time of crisis”, in *Philosophy and Crisis: Responding to Challenges to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World*, 2013 Conference Proceedings, G. Maggini, H. Karabatzaki, V. Solomou-Papanikolaou and J.Vila-Chã (Eds.), vol. II, Washington D.C., Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, book series IV. “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change”, vol. 11, November 2018, pp. 137-152.

However, what is here the individual?

1) It is the *empirical*, the *factual*. We can start – in metaphysics and the common-sense approach – from universal, from concepts to which we fit the individuals, i.e. the facts: as if we deduce them from the concepts; as if the world would be the result of the concepts, as in the traditional metaphysics. But – in dialectical idealism, dialectical materialism and also common-sense approach – we start from facts and discover the concepts fitting them.

This *starting point* is important, obviously. But the starting point as such does not guarantee the *truth* of the knowledge about it. In dialectical idealism, the truth of facts is given by the dialectical development (negation etc.) of the knowledge/concepts about them. And the beauty of this development is so overwhelming that the knowledge/the concepts seem to brush away the “details” of facts and to transform the facts in illustrations: and thus, the dialectical idealism in metaphysics.

Consequently, the *subject matter* of the philosophical analysis is something different from the starting point. In dialectical idealism the subject matter is just the knowledge as articulation of ideas in their development. In dialectical materialism the subject matter is the facts. Clearer, when the subject matter is a fact/a system of facts, it is comparable only with facts, not with ideas about those facts. These ideas are important only at the extent when we add the subject-matter of ideas about the facts just in order to better understand the system of facts – which, of course, the ideas about those facts take part of.

And because the common-sense approach was mentioned at both the two kinds of starting points: it can consider the things according to prejudices or clichés which veil the complexity of empirical existence and substitute this complexity with simple slogans or notions as verdicts<sup>58</sup>; but generally, for the common sense the truth is the immediate sensible reality and this ignorance of the mediation of thinking and knowledge leads not only to falsity in the ordinary life but also to an inconsistent theory of truth, that does never explain the empirical facts<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, „Wer denkt abstrakt?“ (1807), in G.W.F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970, 2 Band (Jenaer Schriften – 1801-1807), pp. 575-580.

<sup>59</sup> See the already quoted G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 25.

However, distinct from the epistemological turn of philosophy, made by Kant whose Copernican revolution in philosophy was just the positing of the transcendental conditions of experience, Hegel – who developed another type of “transcendental” conditions, those of the dialectical constitution and development of the concept, the truth, the spirit, and thus Hegel opposed to the understanding of his methodology as transcendental – considered that the reason-to-be of philosophy is more than that turn, it is, in the line of Aristotle, the focus on “being qua being” and thus the distance of thoughts from sensible experience is as harmful as the empiricist exclusivism. He said that in order to go beyond the common-sense understanding of real empirical things and their connections and causes it is necessary to add a “philosophical consciousness” that emphasises the unity of a finite thing at the same time emphasising its differences, as well as the unity of all finite things maintaining their unique differences, and that shows the constitution of causal laws in the empirical world through “conceptual structures *and* concrete universals”. “Speculative philosophy, therefore, has as its function the need to make explicit – i.e. provide speculative/rational/critical articulation – what common sense takes implicitly. In this sense, philosophical consciousness is more responsive to reasons than ordinary consciousness”<sup>60</sup>.

Therefore, both dialectical idealism and dialectical materialism had a sense of humility before the real, but the latter confronted the abstract empirical concepts with the dialectical analysis of the real facts and thus confronted the abstract empirical concepts with concrete conceptual structures. Indeed, when this confrontation does not take place, the real is interpreted through the lens of concepts/theories which, consciously or not, select real illustrations as their truth.

More or otherwise put: the dialectical materialism confronts the abstract empirical concepts with *practical reasons*. Thus it is not only the theoretical reasons related to the articulation of ideas which must be understood when we regard the real facts but also the practical ones. These ones arise, on the basis of our intentional focus on something, from our intention to perform our acts according to *ideas* about a preferred situation. Accordingly, the ideas about the preference and, clearer, about its ends are related with the analysis of their constitution: that sends and involves the constitu-

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<sup>60</sup> Paul Giladi, “Philosophy and Common Sense”, *The European Legacy*, 23 (3), 2018, pp.: 269-285.

tion of ideas about facts<sup>61</sup>. Therefore, it is not, roughly speaking, that we confront ideas with facts and that the truth would arise from facts, but that we confront ideas with ideas, their articulation. Truth never arises directly from facts, but only from their dialectical analysis<sup>62</sup>.

2) The individual is the human individual, too. For Hegel, this *Dasein* was the illustration of both the origin of the human consciousness – actually, its personification – and the substitution of the humankind in its evolution. A single man was enough for showing the meanders of thinking, and this singular model of thinking was enough for epitomising the progress of mankind. Thus, neither the many nor the concrete individuals of the multitude were targets of the dialectical idealism. By displaying the dialectical development of concepts, everything necessary appeared: the conditions of possibility of experience and knowledge seemed to be enough for the dialectical understanding of the human whole as such<sup>63</sup>.

And the individual was erased; the sovereignty of reason over the human history<sup>64</sup> was conceived of in a statistical manner<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> See, written in the tradition of analytic philosophy, Douglas W. Portmore, “The Teleological Conception of Practical Reasons”, (UC Berkeley ISUS-X, Tenth Conference of the International Society for Utilitarian Studies), *Mind*, Vol. 120, Issue 477, 2011, pp. 117-153.

<sup>62</sup> For instance, the fact of the existence of social classes – an idea – is based on the analysis of ideas about both reasons of this idea, the coherence of ideas about features of the social class, and about alternative ideas/options; and the review of both our idea and its alternatives in a *reductio ad absurdum* reasoning. (Actually, the result of this review is not only that we arrive in the case of an idea to a strongest validity because it reflects maximal features of the notion of social class (and about its features) than the alternatives of that idea. See Douglas W. Portmore, “Maximalism versus omnism about reasons”, *Philosophical Studies*, Volume 174, 2017, pp. 2953-2972.

<sup>63</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 483: “Real possibility thus constitutes the totality of conditions, a dispersed actuality which is not reflected into itself but is determined to be the in-itself of an other and intended in this determination to return to itself”.

<sup>64</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 22: “Reason is the Sovereign of the World; that the history of the world, therefore, presents us with a rational process”. (But the fact that history – and any process – is understandable doesn’t mean that it is rational, and lesser that it represents progress.

<sup>65</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 50: *universal law is not designed for the units of the mass* (Hegel’s emphasis).

By showing the equal dignity of the universal and the individual in the philosophical explanation of the world, Marx annulled this manner; the Spinoza's multitude, i.e. the *every member* of the human commonwealth was posited: not in a normative way – as Kant's splendid categorical imperative – but in a radical dialectical materialist way. Not only as negative freedom (in Isaiah Berlin's term) of moral/passive resistance<sup>66</sup>, but also as positive will and power to establish on Earth the "harmony" of the rights and duties of every one and all<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 117: "When the visible world has become untrue to freedom, the will no longer finds itself in the established morality, and is forced to seek the harmony, which the actual world has lost, in the inner ideal life".

<sup>67</sup> Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (1845-46), in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Volume One, Moscow, Progress Publishers (1966), 1973, p. 38: "Communism is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence"; and Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Preface* (1859), *ibidem*, p. 504: "man-kind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation".

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# UN EXEMPLU SUBSTANȚIALIST: DESCOPERIREA AMERICII

Anton ADĂMUȚ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Kant aims to achieve a scientific metaphysics; Camil Petrescu rather a metaphysical science. Neither of them will achieve anything of what they set out to do, only that, while the first one has the consciousness of failure, the second one will eventually reach a failure of conscience. But the metaphysics of failure is more than just a failed metaphysics. Here both of them are saved. Kant, the "all-destroyer", the negator, this "Prussian Hume", "falls" from science into faith. Camil Petrescu falls as well, but replaces faith with the successive idea of science. He falls from science to science, in the totality of science about the world or in the science of substance. Such a science, whose meaning will be realized, like that of the concrete, along the way, progressively, by addition. Camil detaches himself from the beginning and definitively from what he calls "rationalist philosophy", by which he understands classical systems (especially Kantian and Hegelian ones). The reproach? It is a fundamental one for the future substantialist philosophy: this type of rationalist philosophy can only be suspected of being in possession of the notion of the concrete and in no way in possession of the reality of this concept. Rationalism has the "other" one in the form of abstraction; substantialism has it in the form of simultaneous reality. What Camil Petrescu wants to demonstrate is the fact that reality lacks logic or, at least, reality escapes from classic logic. Both Kant and Hegel capture reality in a scheme, ossifies it, they give it logic, thereby canceling out precisely what characterizes it essentially: the concrete. Logicism translates into a heretical infidelity to the real. The concrete thus becomes the fact of being for self, not of existing. All this I try to analyze by applying them to the theory of knowledge as it appears in an episode of the Doctrine of Substance, the episode of the discovery of America.*

**Keywords:** *theory of knowledge, logicism, substance, knowing pole, method, Camil Petrescu.*

Limitând cunoașterea la istorie Kant nu sărăcea cunoașterea ci o consolida. Exclusea din câmpul cunoașterii ceea ce este cu neputință de cunoscut (lucrurile în sine). *Cum este cu putință cunoașterea?*, devine, la Camil Petrescu: este ea posibilă?, și cum? (chiar limitată fiind de Kant la lumea fenomenelor). Rămas în experiență perigetică, în indeterminare, crede Camil, Kant nu

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putea oferi decât certitudini apodictice, scăpând sensul celor substanțiale. O dată deci substanțialismul înlătură din câmpul cunoașterii dialecticul, fără a înlătura și conținutul lui de realitate ci doar metoda, apoi înlocuiește un criteriu tradițional cu unul specific: criteriul certitudinii substanțiale. Rezultatul este o explicitare în sens substanțialist a lumii, iar nu o explicare a ei, care ar fi de ordin logic. Logicul dialectizează, explicitarea anticipează vederea noosică prin intuiții substanțiale. Explicitarea nu este ea însăși o cunoaștere ci doar sensul ei. Explicând lumea, logic deci, și neținând cont de postulatul actului, toate filosofii tradiționale stau sub semnul antinomului. Pe de altă parte nu putem trece peste faptul că „realitatea, ca una care este ea însăși nemijlocită, unitate de formă a interiorului și exteriorului, este implicată în determinația modului nemijlocit, ca opusă determinației reflectării în sine, sau ea este o realitate opusă posibilității. Relația reciprocă a acestora e *al treilea*, realul determinat tot ca ființă reflectată în sine, și aceasta totodată ca existență”<sup>2</sup>. Este vorba, prin urmare, de mijlocire, și apelul la Hegel vine din faptul că, în fond, sfârșim la el într-un universal concret. Altfel spus, Hegel depășește „universalul abstract pe care i-l atribuie lui Kant. Dar ceea ce ne oferă el nu este sinteză a universalului și individualului care este într-adevăr o întreprindere supralogică. Ceea ce substituie universalului-abstract este universalul concret”<sup>3</sup>. De aici faptul că, într-o sugestie camilpetresciană, logicismul hegelian nu reprezintă în primul rând o suveranitate a intelectului ci o operațiune a Spiritului. Iar dacă intelectul doar pune antinomia fără a o rezolva, cade aceasta în sarcina rațiunii. Raționalismul hegelian depășește intelectualismul logic și devine astfel „un panlogism concret”<sup>4</sup>, chiar dacă rămâne, totuși, un panlogism. Oricum, dacă antinomia nu se rezolvă, cel puțin se pune la nivelul relației intelect-rațiune, și ceea ce ne interesează este Spiritul. Păstrând simpatia hegeliană și trecând-o prin soluția substanțialistă, putem spune că logicul dialectizează, dar la Hegel logicul este dat ca inscripție în și își pune mijlocirea prin propriul sine. Concretul este dublul, Altul, după cum cunoașterea scapă dublu pentru Camil Petrescu. Adică, dacă *însinele este conștiință, pentru altul*

<sup>2</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Știința logicii*. Traducere de D. D. Roșca, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1966, p. 535.

<sup>3</sup> Émile Boutroux, *Études d'histoire de la philosophie allemande*, J. Vrin, Paris, 1926, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

este *însinele*. Extremele sunt mijlocite de conștiință, „conștiința anume deosebește, dar pe un atare care e totodată pentru ea ceva nedeosebit”<sup>5</sup>.

Este lesne de bănuț, de acum, că în legătură cu problema cunoașterii Camil va pleca de la „necesitatea unui nou examen”, după cum adesea spune. Este, logic, o consecință a metodei și Camil, ca de atâtea ori, se situează și aici într-un straniu paradox. Spune, când vorbește despre necesitatea unei noi doctrine în teatru cum că orice teorie / concepție / afirmație au la bază o metafizică ignorată. Are dreptate, încât paradoxul stă în aceea că afirmând aceasta despre orice, nu o afirmă și despre sine! Modernitatea lasă la o parte principiul, ideea logică și sufletul și pune, cu acuitate, problema cunoașterii. În mod firesc începem cu Imm. Kant care supune întreg procesul cunoașterii de până la el unui tribunal critic (rațiunea), și încearcă să afle însuși mecanismul de funcționare a facultății de cunoaștere. Este vorba de a afla condiția posibilității științei însăși și abia apoi să încercăm să răspundem la întrebarea dacă există posibilitatea unei metafizici științifice. Rezultatul e cunoscut, dar limita kantiană nu este o degradare a ideii de știință în genere, și nici a științelor naturii sau a celor noologice. Pot cunoaște doar fenomenul, fac abstracție de faptul că însăși ideea de fenomen presupune, la Kant, existența unui suprasensibil, și am în vedere doar istoria. În acest caz însă, întrebarea trebuie reformulată, și forma în care o aflăm în substanțialism este: „dacă și așa limitată la istorie, cunoașterea e într-adevăr posibilă, și cum e posibilă”<sup>6</sup>.

Ajungem astfel la o primă limită a criticismului. Kant limitează cunoașterea la exterior prin funcțiunile interiorului, dar meritul lui cel mare (excluderea transcendentului din cunoaștere) este el însuși „limitat” de confuziile sensurilor lumii subiective. Câștigul critic obținut prin fenomen este anulat de consecințele idealismului transcendențial care sunt: sistemele metafizice ale eului, ale conștiinței și ale psihologicului. Criticismul nu se plasează în experiența apogetică, ci e o constantă evoluție în subspecie. Cuplul sensibilitate-intelect este analizat în experiență perigetă, în ciclu, în orientare, nu în sistem. Sensibilitatea și intelectul sunt de fapt materia și forma cunoașterii, și Camil Petrescu reproșează criticismului renunțarea de

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<sup>5</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Fenomenologia spiritului*. Traducere de Virgil Bogdan, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1965, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Camil Petrescu, *Doctrina Substanței*, vol. I. Ediție îngrijită, note și indice de nume de Florica Ichim și Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1988 vol I, p. 189.

a face inteligibile categoriile altfel decât prin definirea lor în raport cu diversul sensibil. Exprimăm acest lucru prin resemnarea kantiană: conceptele fără intuiții sunt goale. Celălalt comandament metodologic kantian (intuițiile fără concepte sunt oarbe) nu interesează substanțialismul, și acest fapt nu îl avantajează. Că trebuie să determin inteligibil categoria prin sensibil este de două ori surprinzător, spune Camil, nu dinspre o judecată substanțialistă, ci chiar din punctul de vedere al lui Kant. Mai întâi Kant însuși nu a putut nici determina și nici defini numărul și felul categoriilor, deci un tabel complet al lor nu ne-a furnizat. Dovada acestui neajuns este dată, pentru Camil, de neacceptarea și discutarea de către urmași a tabelului. Argumentarea lui Camil Petrescu e neconvingătoare mai ales dacă ținem seama de faptul că tabelul, în raport cu cel aristotelic, era considerat de Kant complet. Că urmașii au preluat din tabela categoriilor pe acelea care conveneau sistemului lor (substanța sau cauzalitatea mai ales), nu e vina lui Kant. În fond Camil însuși așază substanța la baza filosofiei sale și nu își află în aceasta vreo vină.

A două limită a criticismului este, din perspectivă substanțialistă, o contradicție în care cade Kant: proclamând necesitatea și universalitatea drept condiții *a priori* ale cunoașterii, Kant ne trimite la fenomene pentru a realiza cunoașterea însăși. Ne trimite la cunoașterea empirică lipsită tocmai de necesitate și universalitate. Contradicția nu este însă a lui Kant, e a autorului noocrat. Amenda este valabilă la Kant, dar numai până la un moment dat și doar acolo. Avem în vedere Capitolul V al *Dizertației* din 1770 („Despre metodă”), atunci când filosoful spune că regula metodei este păstrarea purității, adică neamestecul dintre ceea ce este dat empiric și structurile intelective, separarea strictă în procesul cunoașterii între sensibilitate și intelect. Constituirea ideii critice, sau cei 11 ani de tăcere kantiană, exact asupra acestui aspect meditează, iar *Critica rațiunii pure* infirmă fundamental, în acest punct, *Dizertația*. E nevoie de colaborarea dintre sensibilitate și intelect, și dacă intelectul ne trimite la fenomen, nici nu mai are importanță că acesta nu posedă necesitate și universalitate; important este că modificarea fenomenului, prin aplicarea categoriilor în schematism, îl transformă într-o cunoștință. Or această cunoștință își primește automat, de la categorii, caracterul transcendental. Acesta este motivul pentru care insistă Kant asupra intuițiilor sensibilității ca având idealitate transcendentală însoțită, ca de un corelat necesar, de realitate empirică. Fenomenul însuși, ca realitate empirică, substanțială, este constituit transcendental, și e de mirare că autorul noocrat nu sesizează faptul. Poate că și concretul este, într-un anu-

me sens, transcendental, și atunci Camil ar fi fost în neplăcuta situație (și nici măcar pentru întâia oară!) de a prelua de la Kant exact ceea ce critica. Psihologic, Camil ar fi fost în stare de o asemenea omisiune, substanțial însă metoda ar fi trebuit să o interzică.

În al treilea rând se adaugă în critica substanțialistă făcută criticismului postulatul de indeterminare, încât, în urma aplicării lui, materia și forma revin la a fi simple abstracții logice, iar demersul kantian se conservă perigetic. Cum perigetică este și unitatea de a percepție transcendentală, acel „eu gândesc” care însoțește și unifică toate reprezentările mele. După critica substanțialistă, conștiința pură transcendentală kantiană, unitatea de a percepție, este un concept pur fără nici o raportare la intuiție, este o conștiință inconștientă. Camil Petrescu uită, și încă interesat, pentru că de știut știa, că tocmai în baza unei asemenea raportări diversul sensibil era unificat într-o reprezentare care devenea a mea ca subiect. Devenea cunoștința *mea*, nu a unei conștiințe pure. Aflăm aici o „viclenie” a conștiinței îndreptată înspre subiect („eu gândesc”) tocmai pentru că e pură. Numai pură fiind se putea astfel orienta.

Unde găsește Camil o limită e de fapt, deseori, un merit și, metaforizând în marginea adevărului, acest lucru tinde să fie o regulă care nu e în nici un fel substanțială. E și acesta un mod de a vedea lumea. Dovada nu întârzie.

Kant rămâne un mare, „deschizător de drumuri”, dar nu prin contribuția lui pozitivă ci prin aceea negativă! E drept că în ambele este perigetic, dar Camil acceptă ca fiind cel mai mare câștig înlăturarea tentației cunoașterii transcendentului. Această limitare a cunoașterii va nemulțumi însă filosofiile postkantiane. Singurul mulțumit e Camil! Ba substanțialismul merge atât de departe încât, considerându-se esențial un criticism, va înlocui criteriul certitudinii (necesitatea și universalitatea) cu un criteriu propriu. „Toate operațiile cu concepte sunt necesare și universale, dar necesitatea și universalitatea lor nu e cea științifică, căci conceptele nu sunt cunoștințe. Prin urmare, dacă Newton a greșit afirmând că există cunoștințe necesare și universale, a antrenat în această eroare și tot sistemul idealismului transcendental”<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 195. Camil are dreptate. În contra lui Newton el spune: „Fizica de azi nu mai cunoaște în mod necesar și universal, deși «principiul cauzalității» este la baza explicației științifice, căci există o esență a cauzalității” (*Ibidem*). Are chiar foarte mare dreptate: „fizica clasică se bazează pe ideea *continuității* [...]. Ideea de conti-

Involuntar, Kant evoluează dialectic, dar tocmai semnificația dialecticului îi lipsește, a tautonomului, și de aceea construiește în gol, cu adevăruri goale, ca matematicile. Mai departe se ajunge, în idealismele postkantene, la o dublare a conștiinței, de fapt o dedublare a celei actuale în una inactuală. Substanțialismul nu cade în această dedublare (cum nu cade, de altfel, nici Kant, în ciuda opiniei lui Camil Petrescu). Vederea sensibilă, noosică, sau ceea ce numim la Kant conștiință în genere, e deosebită de simpla conștiință, nu dedublă acesteia. Vederea noosică e transcendentă individului (cum e și genericul kantian care posedă avantajul de a fi afirmat, pe când în substanțialism este doar implicit), e o „modalitate indeterminabilă”. Conștiința simplă, individuală, e una de tip biologic, unită cu vederea noosică chiar prin noos, și atunci ea este vedere noosică interioară și sesizează unitatea biologică. Funcția de realizare a unității e fundamentală în criticismul kantian, unde are în vedere transcendentalul, nu biologicul. Împotriva acestei unități transcendente nu e nevoie, spune Camil, „decât de unitatea biologică a eului, dată în conștiința reală. Numai fiindcă nu a cunoscut sensul substanțialismului, Kant a trebuit să improvizeze o conștiință transcendentală, care să dea unitate conștiinței empirice și, mai ales, să dea unitate sintezei percepțiilor”<sup>8</sup>. Camil are însă talentul de a fi mai „convingă-

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nuitate este intim legată de un concept-cheie al fizicii clasice: *cauzalitatea locală*” (Basarab Nicolescu, *Transdisciplinaritatea*. Traducere de Horia Mihail Vasilescu, Editura Polirom, Iași, 1999, pp. 15-16). Prin urmare, Camil arondează fizicii clasice, așa-zicând, *cauzalitatea locală*, diferită de cauzalitatea ca atare (ceea ce el ascunde sub sintagma „esența cauzalității”). Basarab Nicolescu spune în continuare: „astăzi încă, sunt numeroși cei care consideră echivalența dintre «cauzalitate» și «cauzalitatea locală» ca fiind de o indiscutabilă evidență, într-o asemenea măsură încât adjectivul «local» este în majoritatea cazurilor omis” (*Ibidem*, p. 16). Când, de pildă, constatăm o „ruptură a legilor și o ruptură a conceptelor fundamentale (cum ar fi, spre exemplu, cauzalitatea)”, atunci vorbim deja de *niveluri de realitate* pe care le recunoaștem tocmai prin constatarea rupturii de care vorbeam (Idem, *Noi, particula și lumea*. Traducere de Vasile Sporici, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 102). Confuzia între nivelurile de realitate, sau *tipuri de complexitate*, spune Basarab Nicolescu, „conduce la neînțelegeri fără sfârșit” (*Ibidem*, p. 101). Confuzia duce, ca la Kant, la construcții în gol: „Kant nu avea semnificația integrală a dialecticului tautonom, altfel ar fi văzut cu uimire poate că și matematicile sunt tot o activitate dialectică și ar fi înțeles zădărnicia construcției pe un teren înșelător de adevăruri goale” (Camil Petrescu, *op. cit.*, p. 195).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 196.

tor” atunci când vorbește despre ceea ce vrea el să facă decât despre ceea ce au făcut alții. Să vedem dacă ne putem lăsa convinși de teoria substanțialistă a cunoașterii apelând exemplul descoperirii Americii.

Postulatul actului, din care decurge și acela al metodei, este unul esențial antinomic și el va marca posibilitatea și desfășurarea cunoașterii. Acestui postulat trebuie să-i urmeze refacerea integrală a științei moderne. Postulatul este o evidență absolută, este dat universal și necesar (Camil Petrescu sfârșește cu Imm. Kant tocmai pentru că nu vrea să înceapă cu el!), și postulatului un contrariu nu i se poate gândi. Formula lui absolută este: nici un act nu poate fi act imediat pentru el însuși. Postulatul este dublu structurat: fizic și extern mai întâi (mâna nu se poate cuprinde pe ea însăși), intern apoi („cunoașterea nu se poate cunoaște nemijlocit pe sine însăși”<sup>9</sup>). În actul cunoașterii nu există prezență de esențe, și dacă aplicăm acest postulat domeniului cunoașterii toate filosofii, de la Platon la Husserl, se ruinează. Dar dacă este o iluzie cunoașterea imediată, nemijlocită, a cunoașterii, nu înseamnă că ea este și imposibilă. Ea devine posibilă prin mijlocire, prin mediat, prin altul dat într-o intuiție esențială. Camil Petrescu preia întrebarea kantiană, o găsește antinomică, o modifică substanțial prin alteritatea acceptată și absolută, pentru a conchide: cunoașterea trebuie să fie însoțită de metodă și, prin metodă, cunoașterea analizează structura, iar indicația structurii o oferă metoda. Nu putem cunoaște nemijlocit structura cunoașterii, dar că această cunoaștere există este un fapt cert. Experiența apogetică și revelarea momentelor ei descrie procesul și procedeul cunoașterii. În urma experienței apogetice apare concretul, și autorul se folosește, pentru exemplificare, de experiența apogetică a descoperirii Americii prezentată în 179 de momente<sup>10</sup>. Orice experiență de tip apogetic implică funcționarea a doi poli în structura concretului, și fiecare pol este exprimat prin quidditatea lui. Experiența, care cuprinde o succesiune indefinită de interacții, deosebește ca existând substanțial două axe. Prima este axa pol cunoscător-realitate necesară, a doua este axa subiect-obiect.

Din apogetica descoperirii Americii rezultă faptul că prima axă este dată în mod absolut, pe când a doua este variabilă. În prima nu se poate

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 200.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 202-211. Descoperirea Americii îi pare lui Camil „una din experiențele apogetice cu un accent de expresivitate dintre cele mai pronunțate din câte cunoaște cultura” (*Ibidem*, p. 211).

depăși cantitatea de existență (realitate necesară) prezentă în fața polului cunoscător (noosul în genere). Dacă realitatea existenței este (atunci când cei doi poli se află într-o prezență față în față) America, în cazul relației subiect-obiect variabilitatea e dată de faptul că subiectul putea fi un oricare altul în locul lui Columb, după cum obiectul este la fel de variabil. În experiență el chiar începe prin a fi Asia și sfârșește în realitatea Americii. Interacțiile între poli se multiplică pentru că polul cunoscător (Columb), aflat singur în fața realității necesare (America), suferă postulatul actului. Pentru ca el să ajungă la cunoștință e nevoie de transferul subiectului, de individualizarea polului noosic într-un subiect cunoscător. Relația subiect-obiect nu e dată în mod absolut decât prin succesiune și sub condiție istorică, adică după dispariția fizică a subiectului (Columb), realitatea necesară (America) nu dispare, și de aici caracterul absolut al primei axe. Prin urmare constat că America, în cazul de față (și exemplul poate fi la întâmplare), nu a fost niciodată doar în potență, a fost întotdeauna în act. Înaintea descoperirii ei (actul experienței apogetice), America nu era mai puțin în act. Că a fost descoperită mai târziu nu afectează calitatea ei de a fi fost mereu actuală și niciodată potențială. Columb nu a avut o intuiție ci un „surplus de intuiție”. Descoperirea Americii „revine la a examina posibilitatea în care un fenomen s-ar impune cu un surplus de intuiție, încât nu s-ar putea nici reduce la condițiile experienței, nici nu s-ar putea dispensa totuși de a apărea”<sup>11</sup>. Din acest motiv fenomenul saturat se dă ca absolut, nevizibil-impredictibil, insuportabil, necondiționat, ireductibil. Camil spune: nici un act nu poate fi act imediat pentru el însuși. Din acest motiv nu cred că mă hazardez să văd în postulatul actului un crainic al fenomenului saturat. Și pentru că lui Camil toate-i ies pe dos, Marion dă exemple de fenomene saturate din Descartes și Kant, din Descartes infinitul (infinitul nu este niciodată în potență, ci doar în act), din Kant sublimul.

Ceea ce prin polul noosic este dat, este dat în mod absolut și existența absolută astfel rezultată are un titlu noosic cu care e dată. Acestei realități absolute i se opune categoria individuației care încearcă să dialectizeze noosul. Subiectul, care este un eu dialectic, falsifică titlul de dat absolut al noosului prin două modalități: insuficiența organică și excesul de spontaneitate (care e opusul surplusului de intuiție). Sarcina noosului constă în a în-

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<sup>11</sup> Jean-Luc Marion, „Fenomenul saturat”, în Jean-Louis Chretien, Michel Henry, Jean-Luc Marion, Paul Ricoeur, *Fenomenologie și teologie*. Traducere de Nicolae Ionel, Editura Polirom, Iași, 1996, p. 119.

vinge categoria individuației, sau subiectivarea, prin obiectivizare, prin crearea de medii substanțiale care sunt culturile. Noosul este transcendent și el se dă cu titlu absolut ca realitate a lumii. Reprezentarea acestei lumi date va fi însă un act biunivoc de prezență absolută, și va exista atâta realitate câtă îmi pot reprezenta în prezență. Când reprezentarea în prezență stă sub condiția necesității, prezența este una substanțială, nu simplă prezență în reprezentare, așa cum procedează idealismele. De unde faptul că în procesul cunoașterii este necesară prezența polului noosic, pol al cunoașterii, pe de o parte, și pe de altă parte o realitate deosebită și opusă acestui pol. „Prezența «față în față» a acestui pol lucid de cunoaștere și a unei realități exterioare lui și necondiționată este condiția esențială a cunoașterii”<sup>12</sup>. Esența actului de cunoaștere este deci prezența simultană a celor doi poli. Rămâne aici neexplicată cunoștința căpătată în lipsa prezenței, ca în sistemele astronomice (cazul prevederii cometelor), caz în care cei doi poli sunt, istoricește, prea departe pentru a putea fi puși în prezență unul celuilalt.

Autorul ne spune că aceasta nu e cunoaștere, dar nu ne spune ce ar trebui să fie. Acest pol cunoscător, destul de vag întrezărit de autor (de unde și comparația cu raza de lumină), este impersonal și de o specială luciditate, „este ceea ce e dat istoric din noosul transcendent”<sup>13</sup>. Punerea în contact a acestor doi poli este operația pe care trebuie să o săvârșească a doua axă polară: axa subiect-obiect. Rolul ei este acela de mijlocire prin intermediari. Polul noos-realitate necesară, în raport cu cunoașterea, e un pol pasiv. Noosul trebuie activat de subiect cu condiția înfrângerii dificultăților subiectivării, dialectizării noosului prin eul dialectic (falsificator). Realitatea necesară e caracterizată la rândul ei de pasivitate și indiferență funciare. Realitatea este dată ca pasivă în cunoaștere în mod absolut, ca și prezența ei. America a așteptat atât de mult timp ca să fie descoperită încât îi era, ca realitate necesară, indiferent dacă mai aștepta încă pe atâta vreme. În raport cu obiectul prezent, subiectul se folosește, pentru a-l traduce în scheme substanțiale, de categorii. Categoriile, aristotelice sau kantiene, deosebite prin aceea că primele sunt deduse istoric, celelalte transcendental, se unesc și devin inutile substanțial prin prea marele tribut plătit logicului. În substanțialism ele devin categorii istorice ale necesității și numărul lor, fiind sub condiție istorică, este indefinit. Sunt și substanțializate dar, lucru extrem de important, nu sunt date de noos necesității (așa cum dă idealismul

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<sup>12</sup> Camil Petrescu, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>13</sup> *Idem.*

transcendental legi naturii), ci sunt impuse de necesitate noosului, impuse polului noosic de realitatea necesară. Este singurul moment activ al primei axe, și atunci „structura realității este substanțială, adică o structură de categorii substanțiale, a căror necesitate nu e absolută, ci sub condiția istorică”<sup>14</sup>. În urma acestei multiple colaborări între cele două axe polare subordonate, rezultă forma apogetică istorică a cunoașterii și forma ei perigetică. Cunoașterea nemijlocită a actului de cunoaștere nu ne este dată. Avem dat mediatul și el este, în forma apogetică sau în forma istorică a cunoașterii noosice, intuiția prezenței istorice, o intuiție totală, plenară, datorată interacției dintre polul noosic și forma lui particulară – subiectul. În cunoașterea apogetică participă doar dimensiunea structurată noosic, ceea ce nu revine la a spune că în forma perigetică ar participa doar dimensiunea reală (realitatea necesară și individuația ei – obiectul). Această parte pasivă e activată de subiect, iar forma perigeticului este esența care nu se degradează, pentru că ea reprezintă „punctul de inserție al subiectului în realitatea necesară și pragul reconstituirii prin obiectivare”<sup>15</sup>. Noosul, deși transcendent, nu este și atotputernic, limita îi e dată de necesitate prin impunerea categoriilor.

Dacă noosul se eliberează și capătă o existență cu titlu noosic, polul realității necesare e dat de totalitatea existenței cu titlu absolut de existență. Tot ceea ce noosul eliberează în decursul istoriei și poate fi obiect de cunoaștere este totalitatea concretă. Necesitatea impune noosului obligația de a se elibera substanțial în individuație și, în concept, totalitatea concretă stă sub categoria individuației. Actul de a cunoaște concretul astfel redus este același lucru cu a cunoaște relația care se stabilește între noos și necesitate. Realitatea, în consecință, în mod aparent este o creație prin eliberare a noosului, și aparența vine din transcendența polului cunoscător. În fapt realitatea nu urmează, ca să-și devină existență, legea noosului ci legea necesității care impune legea ei noosului. Acesta doar o suportă, și eliberarea substanțială în individuație este expresia obiectivată a suportării. Abia apoi noosul, devenit istoric, își impune prezența lui necesității, și modul în care noosul realizează acest lucru constituie esența cunoașterii și istoria ei. Ce este în intimitatea ei această cunoaștere, ne este imposibil de cunoscut din cauza postulatului actului. *Quidditatea* cunoașterii ne este inaccesibilă. Istoria cunoașterii poate fi însă descifrată în subiect, care este entitatea păstră-

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 216.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217.

toare a legăturii dintre noos și necesitate. Unitatea de cunoaștere în istorie, care se realizează prin contactul pol cunoscător-realitate necesară, este dată în mijlocirea eului biologic și opunerea lui unei realități determinate (obiectul). Subiectul poate descoperi ordinea concretului. Această ordine nu este a noosului ci a necesității, și a cunoaște înseamnă a descoperi și deosebi ordinea necesară de ordinea logică. „Polul noosic, care introduce ordinea în istorie, introduce o anumită ordine, noocratică nu prin actul pur al gândirii, ci prin utilizarea necesității însăși”<sup>16</sup>. Asta vrea să spună a descoperi prezența, pentru că „nu orice obiect înseamnă o prezență și simpla înfățișare dinaintea simțurilor noastre nu înseamnă și existența efectivă a obiectului”<sup>17</sup>. E vorba, în fond, de a adera la cunoașterea concretului nu de a mă preda lui, de a-l dori, nu de a-l îndura. Iată ceea ce stă, sau ar trebui să stea, în puterea subiectului.

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 218.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, *Comentarii și delimitări în teatru*. Ediție îngrijită de Florica Ichim, Editura Eminescu, București, 1983, p. 289.

# COULD PAUL TAYLOR'S BIOCENTRISM BE INTERPRETED AS A RAWLSIAN THEORY OF JUSTICE?

Constantin STOENESCU<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *In his „A Theory of Justice” Rawls accepts that „a conception of justice is but one part of a moral view”, that „it is wrong to be cruel to animals and the destruction of a whole species can be a great evil”, and that there are moral duties regarding animals, species and nature, but „they are outside the scope of the theory of justice, and it does not seem possible to extend the contract doctrine so as to include them in a natural way”. However, Rawls mention a way to find an answer to this challenge: „A correct conception of our relations to animals and to nature would seem to depend upon a theory of the natural order and our place in it. One of the tasks of metaphysics is to work out a view of the world which is suited for this purpose; it should identify and systematize the truths decisive for these questions.” (Rawls, „A Theory of Justice”, 1999, p. 512). My aim in this paper is to argue that Environmental Ethics tried to offer exactly this requested theory of natural order so that it become possible to talk in terms of justice about an extended moral community, the so-called biotic community or community of life. I claim that biocentrism is a theory which is able to fulfill this task. Paul W. Taylor, in his „The Ethics of Respect for Nature” (1981) develops a theory based on the concepts of respect for nature, good of a being and inherent worth. If Rawls (See his „Justice as Fairness”, *Philosophical Review*, 1958, 67, p. 183) describes the rules of the duties of human morality (fidelity, gratitude, honesty and fidelity) as „forms of conduct in which recognition of others as persons is manifested”, Taylor considers that „the rules of duty governing our treatment of the natural world and its inhabitants are forms of conduct in which the attitude of respect for nature is manifested.” (1981) I will argue that the extension of moral community is possible using Rawls’ conceptual framework. Therefore, a new theory of natural order can be derived step by step so as the contract doctrine will be extended without any prejudices to Rawlsian initial presuppositions. My aim is to offer a reconstruction of this extension. Then I shall return to Taylor and his biocentrism.*

**Keywords:** *Ethical theory, distributive justice, justice as fairness, environmental ethics, biocentrism, inherent worth, rules of the duties of human morality.*

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### Setting the stake for a theoretical challenge

In his *A Theory of Justice* Rawls accepts that „a conception of justice is but one part of a moral view”, that „it is wrong to be cruel to animals and the destruction of a whole species can be a great evil”, that there are moral duties regarding animals, species and nature, but „they are outside the scope of the theory of justice, and it does not seem possible to extend the contract doctrine so as to include them in a natural way”<sup>2</sup>. In other words, the contractualist doctrine cannot be extended outside the human community because, as the basic notions of a contractualist theory are defined, the sphere of morality coincides with the extension of the human community.

However, Rawls mentions the possibility of finding a way to extend the realm of morality beyond the confines of the human community by taking on the metaphysical task of reconfiguring the natural order of the world by rethinking the relationship between humans and other living beings and their position in this world: „A correct conception of our relations to animals and to nature would seem to depend upon a theory of the natural order and our place in it. One of the tasks of metaphysics is to work out a view of the world which is suited for this purpose; it should identify and systematize the truths decisive for these questions.”<sup>3</sup> In his *Theory of Justice* Rawls does not assume such a metaphysical task, but I believe that this mention of its principal possibility should not be ignored.<sup>4</sup>

My aim is to argue that Environmental Ethics tried to offer exactly this requested theory of natural order so that it become possible to talk in terms of justice about an extended moral community, the so-called biotic

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<sup>2</sup> Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 512.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>4</sup> In a previous paper I have outlined Rawls' argument in this way:

1. A theory of justice is limited to the community of human beings because just them have a capacity to grasp a sense of justice.
2. But this doesn't mean that our relations with other beings didn't have a moral content. (It is wrong to be cruel to animals)
3. Therefore, we have some duties to those forms of life which have the capacity for feelings of pleasure and pain.
4. But we can't extend the contract so that to include the other beings in the moral community in a natural way.
5. It is the task of metaphysics to change our vision and to propose a new theory of natural order. (Stoenescu, "The Biocultural Ethics...", 9).

community or community of life. I claim that biocentrism is a theory which is able to fulfill this task.

Paul W. Taylor, in his „The Ethics of Respect for Nature”, develops a theory based on the concepts of *respect for nature*, *good of a being* and *inherent worth*. If Rawls describes the rules of the duties of human morality (fidelity, gratitude, honesty and fidelity) as „forms of conduct in which recognition of others as persons is manifested”<sup>5</sup>, Taylor considers that „the rules of duty governing our treatment of the natural world and its inhabitants are forms of conduct in which the attitude of respect for nature is manifested.”<sup>6</sup>

My theoretical aim is to argue that the extension of moral community is possible using Rawls’ conceptual framework. Therefore, a new theory of natural order can be derived step by step so as the contractualist doctrine will be extended without any prejudices to Rawlsian initial presuppositions. My aim is to offer a reconstruction of this extension. Then I shall return to Taylor’s biocentrism.

### **A possible reconstruction of Rawls’ theory**

I think that the indisputable goal of Rawls’ project is to develop a theory based on the concept of justice and to make a conceptual analysis which is put into the theoretical framework of social contract. His goal is to argue that the fundamental idea meaningfully associated with the concept of justice is fairness. I have to mention from the beginning that this framework bounded the definition of ethical community according to a possible contractual community made from persons as parts of a network based, first of all, on reciprocity. The main concepts that are used by Rawls in this framework and that allow the openness to the environmental ethics are those of *practices and rules*, *interests*, *moral principles*, *public reason*, *the duty of civility*.

Therefore, I propose a conceptual cut that is selectively guided by the goal of identifying a theoretical convergence between Rawls’ theory of justice and the environmentalist theories. This means that I do not claim to be faced with a question of truth, but I only make certain choices. Other interpretations are possible in relation to other theoretical preferences.

The main direction of extending or applying Rawls’ theory to environment was related to the concepts of intergenerational justice and fair-

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<sup>5</sup> Rawls, “Justice as Fairness”, 183.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, “The Ethics of Respect for Nature”, 205.

ness, and to the savings principle, and the result was the configuration of a theory of sustainability (see Manning, 1981; Barry, 1997; Dobson, 1999; Attfield, 2009). On the contrary, Schraume (2006) shows that the conceptual schema used in *A Theory of Justice* depends on an assumption that conflicts the goal to protect the environment and the natural resources. The problem would be that all the parties implied in the original position want to use as many resources as it is possible and that under scarcity a Rawlsian maximising strategy is the only rational alternative and it is bad for environment. The conclusion would be that the Rawlsian way to sustainability, based on the savings principle, should be rejected. My proposition, however, is to use Rawlsian concepts to form an isomorphic theory of the environment with a theory of justice, as I believe is, as I will show, the case of Taylor's biocentrism. I argue that by developing his conceptual network Rawls advances step by step and opens his theory to its applicability to environmental issues.

In "Justice as Fairness" justice is considered a virtue of social institutions, but also of practices. Rawls mentions in a footnote that the word "practice" is used "as a sort of technical term, meaning any form of activity specified by a system of rules which defines offices, roles, moves, penalties, defences, and so on, and which gives the activity its structure. As examples one may think of games and rituals, trials and parliaments, markets and systems of property."<sup>7</sup> Rawls clearly claimed that the basic sense is of "justice as applied to practices."<sup>8</sup> But some practices involve a relationship with the environment. for example, practicing agriculture, hunting and fishing, or, much more, changing a landscape in order to exploit natural resources. As a consequence, it is fair to take into account not only the relationships between people in this process, but also the relationships with the environment. This is the first step towards an environmental ethics.

But certain interests are involved in any practice. Rawls agrees that justice as a virtue is related with practices which express some interests. As a rule, in any community there are competing interests, with the probable exception of "an association of saints".<sup>9</sup> Therefore, some of the interests

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<sup>7</sup> Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", 164. I have to mention that the relation between the notion of practice and the notion of rule was analysed before by Rawls in "Two Concepts of Rules".

<sup>8</sup> Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", 165.

<sup>9</sup> Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", 175.

related with the practices mentioned before will be focused on nature and environment. But also is a valuable idea to speak about a common interest or about the interests of the other entities. Let's put aside the idea of interest as the second step towards the environmental ethics.

It is a consensual view that Rawls proposed a normative project for political philosophy. My attempt is to continue this kind of normative project for the case of environmental ethics. I think that the conceptual analysis proposed by Rawls leads step by step to an implicit acceptance of the presuppositions that make possible to extend the field of morality beyond the limits of human community.

The third step consists of the two principles of justice proposed by Rawls since his first paper about justice as fairness: "First, each person participating in a practice, or affected by it, has an equal right to the most extensive liberty compatible with a like liberty for all; and second, inequalities are arbitrary unless it is reasonable to expect that they will work out for everyone's advantage, and provided the positions and offices to which they attach, or from which may be gained, are open to all."<sup>10</sup> The first is the Liberty Principle, the second was named "the Difference Principle" and both of them can be reinterpreted within the specific conceptual framework of environmental ethics.

Rawls developed the argument of "original position" (this concept is similar to the idea of "state of nature" used in the philosophical tradition of social contract by Hobbes, Rousseau and Locke) as a thought experiment. The problem is that of the principles that should be fundamental for a society (social structure/social order) based on solidarity. In the original position, when we have to choose these principles, we have no prior knowledge of the social consequences for us of the choices which were made, we don't know anything about our later position in that society. A "veil of ignorance" prevent us to know how our original position (social status, ethnicity, gender) lead us to a good life. As a consequence, the people are forced to choice the principles of impartiality and rationality.

The citizens in the original position are mainly concerned with the primary social goods, namely, how to share rights and advantages. Social equality is the maximum for the original position.

In a later book, *Justice as Fairness: A restatement* (2001), Rawls adds something new, the idea of public reason, which is related with the argu-

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<sup>10</sup> Rawls, "Justice as Fairness", 165.

ment for the two principles of original position and the veil of ignorance. Moral duty (the duty to justify a political decision) is understood as a duty of civility. Moreover, in “Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical” (1985), Rawls agrees that the concept of fairness is based on the intuitive idea of society as a fair system of cooperation between free and equal parts.

Rawls’s doctrine of public reason is permissive regarding the bounds of civility. The citizens are free to decide what is within or without these bounds. Rawls suggests some extensions inside the human community and they could be considered as a model for an extension outside it.

I think that the ideas of public reason and the interpretation of moral duty as a duty of civility allow us to talk about environment as a domain which is affected by our decisions. In “The Idea of Public Reason Revisited” (1997), Rawls mentions the relation between the public reason and the deliberative democracy and recognize that our own life as such is affected by the decisions which are taken. Rawls doesn’t say anything about the deliberation focused on problems regarding environment because he remains at a theoretical normative level, but this doesn’t mean that these principles can’t be applied to a deliberation which is related with the environment. On the contrary, the model of deliberative democracy is fully adequate for decision-making on environmental issues.

Last but not least we have to consider Rawls’ *The Law of People* where he explicitly recognizes the fact that nature is a necessary condition for the human development and well-ordered societies. Rawls talks about the resources of a territory which sustain the people, the capacity of the natural world to sustain the human population<sup>11</sup> and about the responsibility to maintain the environmental integrity<sup>12</sup>.

All these theoretical categories are sufficient for an application of Rawls theory of justice, even without presupposing a new natural order, to the problems generated by the anthropic effects of human actions on the environment. I think that the best example is the reconsideration of the natural resources from the perspective of the concepts listed above to which we add, as Manning (1981) did, another Rawlsian concept, that of intergenerational justice. Rawls’ theory can be applied to justify the prudential use of natural resources in two in two horizons of time, that of immediate use and that of consequences for future generations. In the first case we deal

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<sup>11</sup> Rawls, *The Law of the People*, 107.

<sup>12</sup> Rawls, *The Law of the People*, 8.

with the environmental impact on our health and opportunities related with the primary goods, in the second we consider the right of future generations to use natural resources in conditions similar to those of the current generations because the generation to which a person belongs is just a contingency and not a reason to exclude that person from the original contract of society.

### **A quasi-Rawlsian extension of moral community**

The task to extend the morality sphere beyond the boundaries of human community has been assumed by environmentalists as a radical change of our perspective on the world.<sup>13</sup> The sphere of morality is traditionally bounded starting from the moral community. Therefore, the extension strategy is to find cases of individuals who belong in fact to the accepted moral community but are excluded from the morality sphere on some reasons, and to revise these arbitrary criteria. From a Rawlsian traditional perspective based on a certain preconception about the natural order we'll have the right to include into this sphere just the human beings who are able to be responsible parts of a contract. The problem can be clarified by redrawing the natural order starting from properties that allow the configuration of an extended community. For example, the animals feel the pain, they are able to suffer and to make the difference between bad and good environmental conditions.

The second characteristic element of the extension consists in redefining the idea of prejudice in agreement with the naturalized community. Routley (1973), Goodpaster (1978) and Attfield (1981, 1987) have proposed a similar argument and Routley and Attfield have developed an imaginary experiment. Let's suppose that on the Earth survive only one person and that person cuts the last tree from one species. Although the person didn't produce any prejudice to another person, we are tempted to say that on the basis of our common moral intuitions we have to condemn that fact as an immoral one. The tree could save its own species from extinction. Moreover, we can assign some interests to that tree. Generally speaking, the environmentalists assert that all forms of organic life have a moral statute or are morally considerable, regardless their psychological capacities. This means

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<sup>13</sup> See Stoenescu, "The Extension of Moral Community in Environmental Ethics..." for a detailed approach.

that to cut a tree is equal in human terms with the death of that tree and that this fact is morally significant.

T. M. Scanlon, beginning with his “Contractualism and Utilitarianism” (1977), revised the contractualist theory and he accepted the living beings that could be prejudiced as parts with a moral statute in a contract. To be able to be prejudiced means to feel the pain, to feel a frustration or to feel something similar in some circumstances. This means that it is possible to speak about moral wrongness in a broader sense than that which is taken into account in a theory of morality exclusive to human beings. We can identify forms of conduct which are open to moral objections. Scanlon mentions the human action that causes a sentient being to feel pain and he goes even further to admit that in the case of injuring a non-human animal something is wrong “in a sense that goes beyond the idea that pain is a bad thing: it is something for which we should feel guilty to the animal itself, just as we can feel guilty to a human being”<sup>14</sup>.

Scanlon describes five possible characterizations of the set of beings that can be morally wronged:<sup>15</sup>

- (1) The beings (or entities) for which things can go better or worse.
- (2) The beings in the first group who are conscious.
- (3) The beings in the second group who are capable of judging things as better or worse and are capable of forming “judgment-sensitive attitudes”.
- (4) The beings in the third group capable of making specifically moral judgments.
- (5) The beings in the fourth group with whom it is to our advantage to enter into a relation of mutual restraint and cooperation.

But, according to Scanlon, not all beings in group (1) can be covered by the morality of right and wrong because this group includes everything from fully rational human to any other entity, such as a fragile ecosystem, for which one state of affairs may be better or wrong for its health, integrity or equilibrium. We might try to find a bridge between humans and nonhumans by taking into account a feature of contractualism, namely, the interest for a neutral position in decision making process. Such an approach would be consistent with Rawls's contractualism and his idea about the so-

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<sup>14</sup> Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 182.

<sup>15</sup> Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 179. See also Talbert, “Contractualism and Our Duties to Nonhuman Animals”, for the comment about the relation with Rawls position.

called "original position". In *A Theory of Justice* Rawls argues that the fairness of the basic organizational principles of human society is ensured if the choosers of these principles are unsure of the position that they will occupy in that society. This neutral procedure neutralizes the luck of some choosers and it put all of them in the same acceptable position to share together the same world. Even if it is easier for a human being to put himself into positions of other humans than of nonhumans animals and, starting from this difference, we may try to treat differently the humans and the nonhumans animals, the others, humans and nonhumans, will remain parts with a moral statute as members of the enlarged biotic community.

This natural order which corresponds to the biotic community is enlarged by Brennan (1986) following six steps:

1. The biotic community consists of animals and plants in mutual relations, as would be the food chain.
2. Any biotic community is inevitably in relationship with other communities, so that we can extend the notion of community up to the entire biosphere.
3. Every community tends to get to a final state of equilibrium and diversity.
4. No biotic community can stand without abiotic resources because it needs to process some inorganic resources into organic components.
5. The global ecosystem can be conceived as a system composed from all the biotic communities and the abiotic environment.
6. The biosphere as a whole tends to stability, equilibrium and diversity.

This extension of moral community produces a tension between inclusion (based on the principles of equality, liberty and impartiality) and hierarchy (based on the principle of difference). First of all, the inclusion is regulated by the principle of impartiality which means that the members of moral community have the same advantages and support equally the costs. The inclusion in the moral community may not grant any privileges and the costs or prejudices have to be supported equally. Moreover, the extension of moral community must not create opportunities for someone to have some benefits with the price to prejudice others. The members of moral community will have the possibility to use their liberty according to their capacities in order to develop themselves and to create their own biological niches. Therefore, the differences between the members of the enlarged moral community are inevitable and they will be expressed by different interests and needs.

The principle of inclusiveness, proposed by Ralph Barton Perry (1926), has been reworded by Gary Varner in these terms: "it is always better to satisfy all the interests in a given set rather than any proper subset of that same set."<sup>16</sup> Varner adds two strong assumptions to it:

"1. The satisfaction of any interest is considered in and of itself, a good thing (and the dissatisfaction of any interest is, in and of itself, a bad thing), and

2. Only the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of interests matters from the moral point of view."<sup>17</sup>

But inclusion must be balanced by building a hierarchy, and the best way forward is to take into account the interests of the moral community members in the form of relational and action priorities described as needs and preferences. The following hierarchical principles result:<sup>18</sup>

1. The satisfaction of human basic needs takes priority over the satisfaction of all the other human needs.
2. The satisfaction of human needs takes priority over the satisfaction of all the other human preferences.
3. The lives of all creatures, actual and possible, are of equal value.
4. When the needs of a more complex creature are in conflict with the needs of a less complex creature, the first have priority.
5. When the needs of a sentient creature are in conflict with the secondary preferences of a more complex creature, the first have priority.
6. The good of insentient animals and plants have a slight moral significance if their welfare isn't in conflict with the basic needs of other more complex beings.

### **Taylor's biocentrism as a Rawlsian perspective**

Taylor (1981) mentions some categories derived from the principle of priority, such as self-defence, proportionality, distributive justice, minimum wrong, and restitutive justice, which assure the harmony of biotic community and the balance between human values and the well-being of animals and plants in natural ecosystems.

According to Taylor (1986) the biocentric order of nature is based on these principles:

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<sup>16</sup> Varner, *In Nature's Interests?...*, 84.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

<sup>18</sup> Attfield, *A Theory of Value and Obligation*, 88-89.

1. All human beings, like all the other living beings, belong to the biotic community of terrestrial life.
2. The human species, like all the other species of living beings, is integrated in an ecosystem of interdependences in which the survival of every living being depends on the environment as a whole and on the relations with all the other members of the biotic community.
3. All the organisms are teleological vital centers following their own good, each in their own way.
4. The human beings aren't superior to all the other living beings, neither regard their merits, nor their intrinsic value.

The next step is to derive the moral rules, principles or duties which govern the life inside the biotic community so that to assure the inherent worth for every entity. I think that two paths can be followed in introducing these rules, principles or rules of moral biocentrism.

The first is identify the moral hard core of biocentrism starting from two general negative duties and one general rule which are necessary and together sufficient:

1. Non-maleficence. We have the duty to don't harm the living beings.
2. Non-interference. We have the duty to don't interfere in living beings life. We have to let the nature to follow its own course.
3. The rule of loyalty. The moral agents have the duty to be loyal to the nature.

The second strategy is to structure the network of priority principles and to order them starting from their force. This means that the first principle has priority over the others and so on. They also can be considered as formal conditions for the validity of any set of rules or as principles of fairness or moral conduct in environmental ethics.

Here they are:

1. The Principle of Self-defence. Any moral agent is allowed to defend himself against any threat in some unsafe and dangerous circumstances. If we apply this principle with impartiality, taking into account the inherent worth of all living beings, then the consequence is that just as is moral for humans to defence against dangerous nonhumans so it is moral for some nonhumans to defence against other nonhumans who treat them. In terms of species, we will consider that each species builds its own biological niche by defending itself, attacking other species or cooperating. Probably, judging by the effects it has on nature, the human species is the most ferocious predator. But, according to the biocentric moral norms of the respect for

nature, the humans have the duty to do all the reasonable efforts to avoid such consequences which are justified in the name of self-defence.

2. The Principle of Proportionality. If the basic interest of nonhuman living beings enters into a clash with the non-basic interest of humans, then the first will be considered more important and intrinsically compatible with the respect for nature. The exploitation of nature (for example, the use of depletable natural resources) and a harmful attitude (for example, killing wild mammals) are intrinsically incompatible with the respect for nature. Also, other activities that are the expression of non-basic interests of humans can harm nature, such as replacing a rain native forest with plantations or damming a river for a hydroelectric power plant, but they are acceptable in some circumstances.

3. The Principle of Minimum Wrong. This principle is related with the previous one and it is symmetrically derived from the acceptable circumstances mentioned above. There are some circumstances where non-basic human interests that are intrinsically compatible with the respect for nature do not clash with the basic interests of non-human living beings. If the wrong done is a minimal one, then it is reasonable to permit it. The cases invoked are those in which we do not have an alternative to the minimum prejudice of nature to achieve goals related to the core of human civilization and those in which the human good is considered a priority. In this sense, it is discussed about the inevitability of habitat destruction in order to expand the infrastructure or urbanization or about the inevitability of environmental pollution as a result of the development of industrial technologies.

4. The Principle of Distributive Justice. We have to assure the equilibrium of justice in the extended moral community for those cases of conflict situations where the interests of all the parts, humans and nonhuman living beings, are basic interests and express basic needs. If there is a unique natural source of good for all the parts of biotic community, then we have to treat them equally and to allow their equal use of it. The goal is to conceive and to create a community of life based on an equal distribution of justice for all the parts so that the nonhuman living beings to be able to follow their own good. Taylor mentions four methods to fulfil the requests of this principle:

- Permanent habitat allocation: some natural areas are permanently allocated to the wild living beings even if this enters into as conflict with some local human basic interests.

- Common conservation: fair, mutual and wise sharing and use of natural resources for the equal benefit of humans and nonhuman living beings.
- Environmental integration: careful planning and development of human habitat according to the preservation of the ecological integrity of natural places so that to avoid major disturbances or degradations of nature.
- Rotation: both humans and nonhumans have access to natural resources, but in turn, in succession, for time intervals, so that nature has time to restore its renewable resources.

These practices and rules would in principle ensure a fair distribution, but it does not represent absolute guarantees.

5. The Principle of Restitutive Justice. If some reparations or compensations are made without properly follow the principles of minimum wrong and distributive justice, then we need to apply the principle of restitutive justice and to restore the balance using amends and rewards. The idea is that the greater is the harm, the greater should be the amends or reward required, and the corollary is the rule that we have to pursue not the individual good, but the ecosystemic good, of the whole community of life.

This biocentric order of nature starts from human duality between biological nature and moral autonomy. The main question become this: "Is our biological nature at all relevant to the choices we must make as moral agents, and if it is, in what way it is relevant?"<sup>19</sup> The humans, as biological beings and members of biotic community, have the interest to survive and to obtain their own good by transforming nature and adapting it to their needs. But "what is the ethical significance of our being members of the Earth's Community of Life?"<sup>20</sup>

Taylor proposed the so-called Ethics of Bioculture as a system of institutions, practices, rules and values that regulate the interactions between humans and the controlled environment. The Ethics of Bioculture propose a new vision about the place of humans in the natural order: "Just as our power over other living things does not absolve us from all responsibilities regarding their welfare, so our lack of personal caring about them does not entail freedom from all moral constraints on how we treat them."<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the Ethics of Bioculture became an ethics based on duties and responsibilities in the moral space of biotic community.

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<sup>19</sup> Taylor, *Respect for Nature...*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, *Respect for Nature...*, 49.

<sup>21</sup> Taylor, *Respect for Nature...*, 56.

Taylor proposed a list<sup>22</sup> of the main social institutions and practices which express a Bioculture:

Agriculture, grain, vegetable and fruit farming

Raising and slaughtering animal food and clothing (chicken farming, sheep raising, pig farming, and cattle ranching)

Cultivated forests for timber production

Plant nurseries for raising garden flowers, shrubs and trees

Breeding and training animals for various tasks (work horses, racing horses, hunting dogs, watchdogs, circus animals)

The pet trade and all activities involved in the private ownership of pets

Raising, collecting and using animals and plants for scientific experiments

Zoos, animal exhibition, parks, aquariums, and "marineland" establishments

Sports that depend on the use of animals (horse racing and dog racing, rodeos horseback riding, bullfighting and cockfighting)

Some wildlife management practices aimed at the benefit of humans, not the good of the animals being "managed" (sport hunting and fishing)

All these institution and practices are subject to the rules and principles of the biotic community.

### **Concluding remarks. Ethical harmony of biotic community**

The priority principles mentioned above do not close up themselves in a completely logical system that establishes everything that is allowed to the members of the biotic community, so as to exclude any conflict. But the natural order configured on their basis can ensure a dynamic balance and, ultimately, a harmony of the biotic community as a whole. This harmony is assured by the Ethics of Biculture as a new vision because it puts humans in a position of responsibility even if they, linked to an instrumental tradition, avoid caring about nature. Therefore, harmony is obtained just because the humans do their duties to nature and respect it.<sup>23</sup>

I would argue that Taylor's biocentrism represents a development of the perspective proposed by Aldo Leopold through Land ethic understood both as an evolutionary possibility and as an ontological necessity. Leopold understands ecosystems as a community, his idea being a precursor to

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<sup>22</sup> See Taylor, *Respect for Nature...*, 54.

<sup>23</sup> See Stoenescu, "The Biocultural Ethics...", for a detailed analysis of an approach based on the concept of homogeneous development.

the concept of community of life. According to Leopold, those actions that preserve the stability, integrity and beauty of the ecosystem are morally correct.<sup>24</sup>

As a result, it is assumed not only a vision of the natural order, but also a knowledge of the ecosystem of the dynamic whole with its own processes and states. Moral action, in the sense of one that seeks to achieve good, is thus based not only on values but also on scientific knowledge of nature, so that decisions have a nomologic foundations. In other words, our knowledge of the facts influences our choices, preferences, and moral attitudes insofar as we act as rational agents. Our system of opinions is restructured starting from the respect for nature. The concept of harmony doesn't mean anything that to preserve the balance between human values and culture (cultures) and the well being or the inherent good of the biotic community members. We can't talk about cooperation in a Rawlsian sense as an internal relation inside the biotic community, but environmental justice assures at least a harmonious natural order.

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<sup>24</sup> Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 220.

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# CONCEPTE FUNDAMENTALE PENTRU O FENOMENOLOGIE A TRANSFORMĂRII EXPERIENȚEI

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**Abstract:** *In this paper, I aim to phenomenologically analyze the transformation of experience, which can be epitomized both by religious conversion and phenomenological reduction. In so doing, I propose a definite set of concepts such as: self-dislodgement and relodgement (dislocare-relocare), open and closed experience, consolidation of experience, hierarchy of relevance and others. I show the clarifying potential of this terminology by putting it at work in a phenomenological reading of some excerpts from Augustine's Confessions. Moreover, I argue that this conceptuality is deeply rooted both in the medieval tradition of self-understanding of the believer — such as Hildegard of Bingen — and in the Romanian phenomenological tradition, exemplified by Alexandru Dragomir.*

**Keywords:** *Transformation of experience, conversion, St. Augustine, negativity, worldliness, temporality.*

Cercetarea fenomenologică a convertirii pe care o întreprindem în studiul de față nu este o simplă aplicare a metodei fenomenologice asupra unor trăiri religioase. În fapt, *transformarea experienței* poate fi înțeleasă ca o expresie generică pentru alte experiențe specifice, cum e convertirea în plan religios sau *epoché* în tradiția fenomenologică. Astfel, în măsura în care fenomenologia asumă în mod deliberat un proces de transformare a experienței ca parte esențială a travaliului său metodologic, atunci o fenomenologie a convertirii va implica totodată o punere în chestiune de sine metodică, o reflecție a fenomenologiei asupra ei înseși. Rodul acestei reflexivități metodologice va consta, în cele din urmă, într-o conceptualitate aptă să pună în lumină experiența străbătută de transformare.

Husserl vorbește explicit despre „transformarea radicală a tezei naturale” printr-un soi de convertire liberă a privirii spre ceea ce rămâne în urma suspendării judecății: *conștiința pură*.<sup>2</sup> Aceasta din urmă deschide tema fenomenologului: sfera trăirilor „conștiinței în genere” și, mai precis, con-

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<sup>2</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Idei privitoare la o fenomenologie pură și la o filozofie fenomenologică*, trad. de Christian Ferencz-Flatz, București: Humanitas, 2011, pp. 117-128.

ținutul „propriu al unei *cogitatio* în *pura sa specificitate*”.<sup>3</sup> Altfel zis, tema fenomenologiei constă în structurile pure – transcendente – ale experienței, relevate în urma transformării acesteia, prin trecerea de la atitudinea naturală spre cea fenomenologică. Husserl nu s-a abătut de la această temă în ciuda schimbărilor sale de idei. La o distanță de optsprezece ani de la publicarea lucrării *Idei I*, în concluzia *Meditațiilor carteziene*, Husserl spune că „În investigațiile acestei meditații [...] ne-am mișcat pe terenul experienței transcendente, pe terenul experienței de sine propriu-zise și al experienței alterității.”<sup>4</sup> Experiența umană în toată amploarea sa, în structurile sale esențiale, reprezintă terenul principal pe care au loc explorările fenomenologice. Însă, structura *transformării experienței ca atare* nu pare a se fi bucurat de același interes. Cercetarea de față își propune să avanseze în această direcție prin elaborarea unei serii de concepte fundamentale pentru o analiză fenomenologică a transformării experienței. Punctul de plecare va consta în transformarea experienței înțelegătoare drept convertire în noetica creștină. Mai întâi, (1) vom delimita *transformarea experienței* de caracterul fluid al acesteia, așadar de *motilitatea experienței*, cu care ar putea fi confundată ușor. În contrast cu aceasta din urmă, cea dintâi își va dobândi conceptualitatea sa genuină. Așadar, (2) vom citi apoi în lumina conceptelor propuse anumite pasaje din *Confesiunile Sfântului Augustin*, aprofundând astfel înțelegerea transformării experienței în structura sa. În cele din urmă, (3) vom rezuma înțelegerea structurală a transformării experienței în lumina conceptelor propuse, justificându-le istoric prin plasarea lor atât în tradiția medievală de la care plecăm, cât și în cea fenomenologică în care ne situăm.

## 1.

Conceptele fenomenologice – menite să surprindă datul intuitiv – nu pot fi determinate în ele însele, în mod prealabil angajării lor în descrierea experiențelor pe care le explorăm. Ne aflăm prin urmare într-o situație hermeneutică circulară în care, pe de o parte, trebuie să definim conceptele pentru a le utiliza în descrierea experienței și, de altă parte, să apelăm la descrierea experienței pentru a defini conceptele utilizate. Se cuvine astfel

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 130-131.

<sup>4</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Meditații carteziene*, trad. de Aurelian Crăiuțu, București: Humanitas, 1994, p. 191.

să facem uz de o terminologie în așa manieră încât să o definim în cursul analizei noastre, oferindu-i sensul pe măsura iluminării experienței analizate. Astfel, inteligibilitatea conceptelor fenomenologice va depinde de modul și măsura în care acestea vor face inteligibilă experiența. Prin urmare, nu le vom putea defini decât parțial, pe loc și la momentul potrivit în ansamblul cercetării de față. Aspectul maleabilității semantice specific conceptualizării fenomenologice a fost remarcat deja de Husserl în *Idei I*, atunci când scria:

în cadrul unei fenomenologii aflate încă la începuturi toate conceptele, respectiv toți termenii, trebuie într-un anumit sens să rămână fluizi, așadar să fie mereu pe punctul de a se diferenția mai departe, în funcție de felul în care înaintează analiza conștiinței și conform noilor straturi fenomenologice pe care ajungem să le recunoaștem [...] *Pentru început, orice expresie este bună, și în special orice expresie plastică [bildlich] potrivit aleasă, de natură să ne conducă privirea la o particularitate fenomenologică ce poate fi sesizată în mod clar.*<sup>5</sup>

Acest fragment („Despre terminologia folosită”) conține indicații metodologice cu privire la alegerea și, poate mai important, atitudinea potrivite unei întreprinderi de conceptualizare a experienței, realizată cu scopul de a face clar, distinct și relevant ceea ce în experiența noastră era înainte obscur, confuz și neînsemnat.

Vom începe analiza prin constatarea unor fapte ale experienței nemijlocite care nu pot fi puse la îndoială și de care va trebui să ținem cont în permanență. Primul fapt al experienței ține de caracterul ei fluid: experiența constă într-o schimbare permanentă, într-o trecere continuă de la un lucru la alt lucru, de la o stare la alta, de la o trăire la alta etc. Această fugă neconținută nu este o deficiență sau un viciu personal, așa cum ar putea fi interpretată în anumite tradiții morale sau religioase, ci reprezintă caracterul de esență al experienței înseși, potrivit căruia mișcarea și înțelegerea se împletesc într-o unitate de nedistins. Înțelegerea este o formă de mișcare și, pentru a se putea realiza, ea trebuie să fie în permanentă mișcare. Chiar în cursul scrierii acestui text, încercând să mă fac înțeles<sup>6</sup>, mă opresc din scris și ținesc cu privirea un lucru, ridic ochii de la ecranul calculatorului undemi înșiram gândurile și mă uit pe geam la biserica albă, împrejmuată de

<sup>5</sup> Husserl, *Idei*, p. 314. (Sublinierea îmi aparține.)

<sup>6</sup> Trecerea la persoana întâi face parte din caracterul de metodă al fenomenologiei. În legătură cu asta, cf. Cosmescu, „Practica scriiturii fenomenologice la Alexandru Dragomir” (2019), p. 287.

mesteceni. Revin la gândul pierdut, caut un cuvânt potrivit, citesc în șoaptă cele scrise, corectez, mă fac mai comod pe scaunul pe care am început să amorțesc și tot așa mai departe. Toate aceste lucruri fac parte din experiența mea și sunt trăite ca un tot unitar.<sup>7</sup> Fluxul dat este alcătuit dintr-o înșiruire de trăiri pe care, printr-un procedeu de reflecție ulterioară asupra experienței, îl pot împărți în trăiri psihice, fiziologice, intelectuale etc. Dar, în primă instanță, mă aflu într-o lume și trăiesc fiecare din aceste lucruri într-un mod indistinct, fără să mă pot opri în loc, urmând cursul experienței așa cum aceasta mă poartă prin sine și prin alții, prin gânduri și prin lume, fără discriminare, ca și cum *sufletul ar fi într-un fel toate lucrurile (he psyche ta onta pos est panta)*.<sup>8</sup> Chiar dacă cel mai adesea experiența are un caracter unitar și o trăim ca pe o mare coerentă – această tendință a ei spre unificare fiindu-i cea mai proprie –, cu toate acestea, noi realizăm de fiecare dată o seamă de acte mentale particulare care fac cu puțință experiența ca atare în întregul ei.<sup>9</sup>

Să luăm de pildă masa la care stau pentru a scrie aceste rânduri. Unitatea obiectului își află corespondentul său necesar în unitatea experienței acestui obiect. Altfel zis, închiderea obiectului în limitele esenței sale, prin care îl pot clasifica potrivit unui anumit tip de existență – masa –, se realizează printr-o închidere colaterală a experienței înseși în limitele unui orizont determinat. Chiar dacă modalitățile de înfățișare sunt *deschise* ex-

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<sup>7</sup> Sau în cuvintele lui Husserl, *Idei*, p. 308: „Înaintând în chip continuu de la sesizare la sesizare, noi sesizăm într-un anumit sens [...] și *fluxul însuși de trăiri ca unitate*.”

<sup>8</sup> Aristotel, *Despre suflet*, trad. de Alexander Baumgarten, București, Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2015, p. 177: „sufletul este oarecum toate realitățile.”

<sup>9</sup> Husserl, *Experiență și judecată*, trad. de Christian Ferencz-Flatz, București: Humanitas, 2012, p.139. „Înțeleasă concret, percepția noastră se desfășoară ca atare prin realizarea năzuinței sale intrinseci, așadar a tendinței sale îndreptate către noi și noi moduri de donație ale aceluiași obiect.” În măsura în care experiența, analizată aici de către Husserl în aspectul percepției exterioare, se desfășoară potrivit unei tendințe de epuizare a modalităților de oferire ale *unuia și aceluiași* obiect, ceea ce înseamnă că ea caută necesarmente un obiect unitar, trebuie să presupunem de bună seamă o tendință asemănătoare, dacă nu chiar identică, a experienței de a fi unificată potrivit laturii sale trăite în chip nemijlocit. Cu alte cuvinte, percepția caută un obiect unificat în multiplicitatea aparițiilor sale și totodată ea caută o coerentă cu ea însăși în adăstarea în preajma obiectului vizat. Tendința experienței de a delimita obiectul potrivit unor granițe clare este identică cu închiderea ei asupra sa în satisfacția împlinirii prin cunoașterea aceluși obiect.

plorărilor mele – căci pot privi masa din diferite unghiuri –, cu toate acestea, ele se realizează într-un orizont *închis*. În acest sens, utilizăm expresia *experiență deschisă* pentru explorarea care nu-și găsește un orizont bine definit. Percepând, de pildă, laptopul de pe masă, îi voi căuta posibilitățile sale de înfățișare potrivit tipului tehnicii date, să zicem, pentru a găsi o intrare USB de care am nevoie. Pe de altă parte, nu voi căuta o astfel de intrare în masa pe care stă laptopul, fiindcă știu că aceste două obiecte sunt închise în domeniul existenței care, în ce au ele mai esențial, nu comunică între ele. În schimb, dacă în urma explorărilor realizate în preajma laptopului voi depista că acesta nu are o astfel de intrare sau că este stricată, atunci experiența mea se va deschide în afara limitelor orizontului perceptiv în care îmi efectuam explorările și va căuta să se reînchidă în noi limite ale experienței. Preocuparea mea cu laptopul stricat va fi deraiată către o preocupare cu meșterul care poate să-l repare. Or, acesta din urmă va reprezenta un prilej pentru a închide experiența deschisă de laptopul stricat.

Așa cum unității obiectului noematic îi corespunde în chip colateral unitatea experienței noetice, această corelativitate fiind înțeleasă, pe de o parte, ca o închidere a experienței în limitele sensului obiectual, iar de cealaltă parte în limitele familiarității cu acel obiect,<sup>10</sup> tot așa *lumea* – ca fundal stabil care face cu puțință schimbările de sens, răzgândirile, decepționările etc., așadar ca o promisiune de închidere pentru toate experiențele deschise – este acea unitate obiectuală care-și află contrapartea în tendința esențială a experienței de a se unifica.<sup>11</sup> Substanțialității lumii îi corespunde subiectivitatea actelor de conștiință, iar *consolidarea experienței* reificate se manifestă în imanența conștiinței drept *consolare a sinelui*.

Revenind la actele de fundal ale conștiinței, atinse în treacăt mai sus, acestea pot fi grupate în: 1. Vizarea intențională – prin care proiectăm un scop, un temei, o rațiune spre ceea ce, în mod convențional, ca să remarcăm caracterul de alteritate, numim „lume”; 2. Umplerea intențională –

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<sup>10</sup> Heidegger a remarcat această dublă manifestare a lucrului, întâi în aspectul său noematic, în *Ființă și timp* (p. 114), ca menire funcțională (*Bewandtnis*) ce unifică lucrul potrivit întrebuirii sale drept *cel-care-e-bun-la-ceva*, apoi în aspectul său noetic-afectiv, în *Originea operei de artă* (p. 57), unde este determinată dezvăluirea originară a lucrului ca *cel-care-inspiră-încrederea* (*Verlässlichkeit*).

<sup>11</sup> Husserl, *Experiență și judecată*, pp. 60-74.

prin care primim un răspuns la adresarea noastră către lume sub forma unei împliniri a intenției.<sup>12</sup>

Vizările și împlinirile intenționale – care se pot realiza pe mai multe paliere, în mai multe moduri și cu un grad de limpezime mai ridicat sau mai scăzut – sunt fața și reversul experienței ca întreg, sunt ceea ce o propulsează; sau, poate e mai corect spus, experiența *este* această alternare permanentă între vizare și receptare. Ceea ce dă peste cap curgerea fluentă a experienței se manifestă ca eșec al împlinirii. Atunci, în momentul ratării, revenim asupra intenției, ricoșăm de la lumea care ne respinge spre noi înșine, fie reluând vizarea intențională veche, fie modificând-o pe potrivă noutății surprinse. Pentru că experiența are o tendință esențială de a se conserva, rămânând ea însăși – coerentă și bine încheată –, eșecul împlinirii intenționale tinde să fie depășit în primă instanță prin revizuirea obiectului, și nu a subiectului, păstrând cât mai mult cu putință experiența deja *consolidată*.<sup>13</sup> Pot să-mi imaginez că revin noaptea târziu acasă, ajung pe strada care dă în curtea casei și scot cheile cu care am început deja să mă joc în buzunar. Fiecare gest al meu anticipează așadar locul spre care mă îndrept. În pragul ușii, închipuindu-mă deja întins în pat, introduc cheia în yală și încerc să o rotesc, când, spre uimirea mea, cheia se blochează. Prima mea reacție în fața eșecului de împlinire a intenției de a ajunge înăuntru este *de a mai încerca o dată*. Astfel, rotesc iarăși cheia în yală chiar dacă *deja știi* că ceva nu e în regulă. Tind să urmez inerția specifică experienței mele,<sup>14</sup> tind

<sup>12</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Meditații carteziene*, pp. 40-42.

<sup>13</sup> Pentru perechea consolidare/consolare, cf. Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, trad. de Reginald Lilly, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2003, p. 22: „Ființa-unu, ordinea naturală și conștiința constitutivă sunt toate *archai* care consolidează și consolează [Being-one, the natural order, and constitutive consciousness are all consolidating and consoling *archai*].” (Traducerea îmi aparține.)

<sup>14</sup> Un alt fenomen al inerției experienței poate fi observat în statul la coadă. Să zicem că ajungem la magazin unde lipsește vânzătorul, a plecat și paznicul ne asigură că imediat trebuie să vină. La început așteptăm fără vreo problemă, vedem cum se adună lumea în spatele nostru, iar mai apoi începem să devenim iritați de lipsa vânzătorului. Însă, tendința firească nu este de a pleca și a căuta alt magazin (asumând că nu e vorba de o urgență). Dimpotrivă, cu cât mai mult stăm la coadă, cu atât mai mult ne înlănțuim pe loc și tindem să rămânem, chiar dacă vânzătorul nu mai vine, căutând motive pentru a satisface inerția de care ne este greu să ne rupem: căci „nu am așteptat degeaba”, „îndată poate să vină” etc.

să o repet, fiindu-mi anevoioasă nu atât ratarea propriu-zisă, cât nevoia de a mă schimba pentru a o depăși.<sup>15</sup> În acel moment, însă, eu deja trec printr-o transformare a experienței, fiindcă înțeleg că pe calea trăirilor obișnuite, sedimentate în cursul zilelor în care întorceam cheia în yală și ușa se deschidea, eu nu voi mai putea ajunge în casă. Sunt pus în situația de a mă schimba de dragul lumii, de vreme ce în confruntarea dintre *sine* și *lume*, lumea este cea care câștigă. Vom indica acest moment al transformării experienței prin expresia *dislocarea sinelui*. În fața ușii inamovibile, încremenită în balamale, eu sunt cel care „îmi ies din țâțâni”. Sunt astfel nevoit să renunț la coeziunea trăirilor, sunt chemat a le reface, angajându-mă activ în schimbarea acestei situații în care mă aflu și în care, totodată, nu mă simt la locul meu.<sup>16</sup> Or, această *nevoie* reprezintă același mers al experienței, aceeași tendință esențială a ei de a se unifica, pe care am desemnat-o mai devreme drept *consolidare a experienței*. În momentul rateului încep să culeg sensul pe care mi-l oferă lumea și mai puțin sensul pe care vreau să-l aflu în ea. Voi presupune de pildă că cineva a schimbat lacătul ușii. Bat la ușă, trezesc coabitantii, sunt lăsat înăuntru și mi se spune că, într-adevăr, lacătul a fost schimbat. Atunci abia mă reculeg, „s-a rezolvat”, zic, și mă întorc în camera mea, revin la locul meu. În urma neîmplinirii vizării noastre intenționale care – atunci când este suficient de puternică, neașteptată sau persistentă – poate să ne *disloce* sinele, avem tendința de a ne reculege pe care o numim *relocarea sinelui*. Prefixul *re-* exprimă schimbarea: nu mai suntem așa cum am fost. Revenim într-adevăr în aceeași cameră, în același pat, dar cu alte chei, cu un alt soi de trăiri, cu o altă împăcare cu sine decât cea pe care am fi avut-o dacă nimic nu s-ar fi întâmplat.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> În felul acesta ar putea fi citită fraza obscură din Augustin, *Confesiuni*, (trad. de Eugen Munteanu, București, Humanitas, 2018,) p. 165 – „Oare lacrimile nu sunt amare prin ele însele și ne fac plăcere doar atunci când le comparăm cu regretul de a nu ne mai bucura de ceea ce avusesem mai înainte și cu sila pe care ne-o dă această pierdere?” – pe care o interpretăm așa: *în comparație* cu nevoia schimbării, cu faptul că lucrurile sunt în chip ireversibil altfel, lacrimile, care *în sine* sunt amare, se edulcorează, devin mai ușor de suportat.

<sup>16</sup> Acest moment al dislocării sinelui poate fi exprimat în chip judicativ în maniera unei predicății negative: „eu sunt ne-la-locul-meu.” De altfel, decepționarea pe care am analizat-o aici este, potrivit lui Husserl (în *Experiență și judecată*, pp. 140-145), originea pre-predicativă a negației.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Experiență și judecată*, p. 142, pentru schimbarea retroactivă a prefigurărilor de sens avute până la decepționare. Relocarea se petrece ca o reconfigurare a structurii

Așadar, în urma acestei analize ne alegem cu trei elemente structurale ale transformării experienței: 1. *Consolidarea experienței* care reprezintă sedimentarea trăirilor într-un ansamblu coerent și unitar cu efect de *consolare a sinelui*; 2. *Dislocarea sinelui* înțelegându-se ca rupere a șirului de experiențe pentru a face față unei provocări extrane; 3. *Relocarea sinelui* sau revenirea la (o nouă) normalitate.

Crucial în această conceptualizare este să o înțelegem plecând de la un raport dinamic al existenței situate în lume și nu de la o serie de stări mentale. Astfel, dislocarea sinelui își reclamă în chip funciar relocarea sa aferentă, fără ca vreunul din cele două momente să poată fi separat și gândit în mod autonom. Mai mult decât atât, dislocarea nu poate fi prefigurată în cursul fluxului obișnuit al experiențelor, pe baza cărora totuși aceasta se petrece.

## 2.

Am elaborat mai sus structura formală a *transformării experienței* așa cum aceasta ni se oferă în modul nemijlocit și cotidian al descrierii fenomenologice. În cele ce urmează, vom relua analiza făcută, de data aceasta, la un nivel mai profund, nemaifiind vorba de transformarea experienței mundane, ce are loc mereu pe solul certitudinii de ființă a lumii, ci de transmutarea sinelui-în-lume secular către un sine și o lume deificate.<sup>18</sup> Așadar, vom repera la Augustin *dislocarea sinelui* ca unul secular în vederea *relocării sinelui* ca unul creștin.<sup>19</sup> Transformarea experienței mundane, analizată în

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anticipative trecute, ce ajunge să modifice până și retențiile sedimentate în memorie, dedublând astfel experiența în întregul ei.

<sup>18</sup> Husserl susține că originea negației, pe care o înțelege plecând de la suprimarea unei credințe, are loc pe fundalul credinței în lume, așadar pe fundalul unei consolidări fundamentale a experienței realizată în credința de existență a lumii. În felul acesta, transformarea experienței realizată aici atinge nu atât decepționarea parțială, ci totală, cea care suprimă însăși credința de ființă a lumii, ceea ce credem că se manifestă atât în convertirea religioasă la o *altă* lume, cât și în reducția fenomenologică care suspendă *această* lume. Întrebarea rămâne, firește, care este temeiul care sprijină posibilitatea transformării radicale. Răspunsul găsit la Augustin este Dumnezeu însuși, iar în tradiția fenomenologică este câmpul transcendent al eului pur.

<sup>19</sup> Trebuie să remarcăm, încă o dată, faptul că *dislocarea* nu este un moment autonom al experienței, fiindcă omul nu poate exista într-o *ne-aflare-la-locul-său* perma-

exemplele cu laptopul stricat sau lacătul schimbat, ne poartă de la o formă noetico-noematică spre alta și are loc pe fundalul credinței neștrămutate în ființa lumii. Conflictul vizărilor intenționale, așa cum l-a analizat Husserl în *Experiență și judecată*, își poate afla în permanență un garant împăciuitor în lume, în stabilitatea și ordinea sa rațională. Spre deosebire de această transformare slabă a experienței, transformarea forte pusă în joc de convertirea religioasă, cea care dislocă sinele în temeiul său – lipsindu-l de un reper atât în sine sa, cât și în afara sa –, surpă însuși cadrul de referință al lumii.<sup>20</sup> În măsura în care transformarea experienței este fundamentală în acest fel, nemaifiind cu puțință o revenire la sinele(-în-lume) precedent, putem vorbi de o transformare a ipseității (și chiar de o schimbare transmundană). Acest lucru îl remarcăm în exortările creștine de-a lungul veacurilor – de pildă la Augustin și Meister Eckhart – prin îndemnul abandonării sinelui de dragul lui Dumnezeu,<sup>21</sup> ce se remarcă prin repudierea lui *cupiditas* în vederea lui *caritas*.<sup>22</sup>

Vom urmări acum convertirea lui Augustin prin prisma descrierii fenomenologice propuse. Întreaga experiență a convertirii lui Augustin, așa cum aceasta este prezentată în cărțile 1-9 din *Confesiuni*, reprezintă o serie de dislocări și de relocări ale sinelui. Cum spuneam, transformarea experienței poate fi atestată în plină cotidianitate și astfel, în aparență, nu are nimic neobișnuit. Într-un atare caz, relocarea se face de partea lumii și de dragul consolidării sinelui deja format: căutăm să ne schimbăm cât mai puțin și, totodată, căutăm să schimbăm lumea în așa fel încât sinele nostru să persiste în continuare așa cum era. Această tensiune între necesitatea schimbării și rezistența sinelui în fața schimbării apare în prima descriere semnificativă a transformării – incomplete, dar premonitorii, în măsura în

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nentă, astfel încât *dislocarea* și *relocarea* sunt două momente ale aceluiași proces de transformare a experienței. La Augustin însuși întâlnim (în *Confesiuni*, pp. 169-175) ideea de *locus* în acest dublu sens: atât ca loc al odihnei în Dumnezeu, cât și ca loc de recădere, de relocare în lume.

<sup>20</sup> În acest sens, Dragomir scrie în *Caietele timpului*, București: Humanitas, 2006, p. 259: „Viața noastră este oarecum atârnată (suspendată), decurgând pe un temei care nu este unul, ci, dimpotrivă, este netemeinicia însăși, un de la sine înțeles ce nu poate fi înțeles.”

<sup>21</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Iubirea la Sfântul Augustin*, trad. de Georgeta-Anca Ionescu, București: Humanitas, 2022, p. 136: „A te lepăda te tine însuși înseamnă a avea o asemănare mai mare cu Dumnezeu.”

<sup>22</sup> Christian Nadeau, *Le vocabulaire de saint Augustin*, Paris: Ellipses, 2009, p. 14.

care anunță *marea convertire* – pe care o găsim în *Confesiuni*, atunci când Augustin este răpus în copilărie de o boală de stomac și, potrivit mărturiei sale, ajunge „în pragul morții.”<sup>23</sup> În acel moment, resimțind o dislocare a sinelui înspre neantul morții sale, copilul caută „botezul întru Hristos”, caută așadar să renască întru viața veșnică:

dorind parcă și cu mai mare înflăcărare în inima ei curată să mă nască din nou pentru mântuirea veșnică, mama mea se frământa grăbită ca să fiu inițiat întru cuminecarea mântuitoare și să fiu scăldat în apă sfințită, mărturisindu-te pe tine, Doamne Isuse, pentru iertarea păcatelor [...].<sup>24</sup>

Boala și pragul morții sunt cele care rup sinele precedent, îl dislocă și nu-i permit să se refacă. Astfel, Augustin este pus pe calea unei *relocări* menite să schimbe sinele în structura sa, așadar să transforme în chip radical *ipseitatea* însăși: relocarea nu se mai poate face de partea lumii așa cum este ea și nici de dragul sinelui așa cum a fost acesta – întrucât *boala și moartea* atentează tocmai asupra posibilității de a exista a sinelui în cauză –, ci întru lumea de apoi și întru omul nou și veșnic. Dincolo de aspectele teologice ale acestei descrieri, la nivelul fenomenologic, această *renaștere* semnifică *alteritatea* radicală a preschimbării sinelui, așadar deschiderea spre transcendența absolută și de negândit, pe care noi – în calitate de ființe care se definesc înainte de toate ca *fiind vii* – o vedem în *moarte*. Viața copilului este dislocată spre moartea sa înțeleasă ca viitor ultim și, de vreme ce sinele nu poate persista în dislocare, acesta își reclamă drept urmare relocarea sa într-un trecut – presupus a fi abandonat în urma dislocării – mult mai originar decât lumea consolidată a experienței trăite. Dislocarea analizată în paragraful anterior s-a petrecut în maniera decepționării unei anticipări mundane, care l-a *referit* (pentru a adopta terminologia augustiniană) pe subiect înapoi către lumea sa. Spre deosebire de această relocare mundană, anticiparea extremă a viitorului ultim în preajma morții, care aduce cu sine o neîmplinire totală sub forma anihilării oricărei posibilități de vizare intențională viitoare, zădărnicește în principiu orice posibilitate de relocare înapoi spre lumea pe care sinele o deținea înainte. Stabilitatea lumii nu poate garanta nimic în fața perisabilității radicale, cea a subiectului însuși care moare. Căci, de vreme ce sinele este în chip esențial *sine-în-lume*, cel care moare, moare deopotrivă cu lumea sa. Prin urmare, dislocarea radicală spre *sfârși-*

<sup>23</sup> Augustin, *op.cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 71.

*tul ultim* – moartea și neființa – implică în chip colateral o relocare (pe măsura dislocării) spre *începutul prim*: viața (veșnică) și ființa (supremă). Repetarea pleonastică subliniată nu face decât să indice spre faptul că nu vorbim despre un început și un sfârșit temporale, așadar intramundane, ci despre un dincolo de sfârșit (al viitorului absolut) și un dincoace de început (al trecutului absolut). „De aceea”, așa cum remarcă Hannah Arendt într-un mod similar cu linia de gândire pe care o dezvoltăm aici, „întoarcerea la propria origine (*redire ad creatorem*) poate fi înțeleasă, în același timp, și ca o referință anticipativă la propriul sfârșit (*se referre ad finem*). Dublul «înainte» nu-și capătă sensul cuvenit decât după ce începutul și sfârșitul ajung să coincidă.”<sup>25</sup>

Apoi, Augustin continuă să-și descrie experiența din copilărie în felul următor: „[...] când, deodată, iată că m-am simțit înzdrăvenit”. Ce se petrece cu sinele *dislocat* al copilului bolnav atunci când acesta se reface? „Atunci, purificarea mea a fost amânată, ca și cum, întorcându-mă la viață, trebuia neapărat să mă întinez din nou”, așadar ca și cum *trebuia necesarmente*, în virtutea unei legi de esență a experienței umane, ca sinele său să se *reloce* potrivit obișnuinței sedimentate în cursul experiențelor trecute.<sup>26</sup> În acest sens putem relua distincția făcută de Arendt între turnura spre înainte-le originar (Creatorul) – care are loc prin *caritas* – și turnura spre înainte-le derivat (lumea creată) care are loc prin *concupiscentia* sau *cupiditas*.<sup>27</sup> Pe bună dreptate, și nu doar retoric, Augustin se întrebă „pe ce temei a fost amânată botezarea” sa.<sup>28</sup> Chiar dacă sinele său revine la normalitatea copi-

<sup>25</sup> Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 102. Cf. în continuarea textului citat pentru dezvoltarea ideii de coincidență a ceea ce Arendt numește trecutul absolut și viitorul absolut.

<sup>26</sup> Evităm să utilizăm forma încetățenită a verbului *a se reloca* la conjunctiv, *să se relocheze*, fiindcă nu vorbim de o schimbare topologică, ci de un concept paralel cu *dislocarea* sinelui.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 132. *Cupiditas* ar putea fi înțeleasă drept modul consolării (imperfecte) a sinelui, resimțită în experiența noetică, racordat la ființa noematică mundană, în vreme ce *caritas* ar fi maniera consolării racordate la Ființa Supremă aflată dincolo de lume.

<sup>28</sup> Augustin, *op. cit.*, p. 71. O parte centrală a analizei noastre ține de *motivația* experienței, căreia, din lipsă de spațiu, nu-i putem dedica aici decât o notă de subsol. Pe scurt, susținem că Augustin nu se putea converti la un adevăr *ne-lumesc* – la adevărul transcendent al revelației divine – printr-o serie de motivații lumești, precum boala de stomac, oricât de puternice ar fi fost acestea. Motivația de a face, de a gândi, de a simți ceva etc. implică deopotrivă reversul său: în măsura în care pot fi

lăriei, cu jocurile și bucuriile sale, chiar dacă revine la lumea sa proprie, în care problemele existenței se rezumă la îndărătnicia în fața învățaturii și la pedepsele din partea profesorilor, cu toate acestea, sinele său este diferit: „frâiele păcatului au fost, ca să zic așa, slăbite.”<sup>29</sup> În continuare, procesul convertirii lui Augustin va fi descris ca o suită de *dislocări* ale sinelui, urmate de *relocările* aferente, sub presiunea fluxului experienței consolidate, al suvoiului „obișnuinței omenesti” (*flumen moris humani*).<sup>30</sup>

Augustin se referă în repetate rânduri la *sinele* său pre-creștin în termenii unei obișnuințe umane, dar nu atât personale, cât colective: moravurile sunt moduri de a fi și de a vorbi pe care le învățăm împreună cu alții.<sup>31</sup> A fi și a vorbi sunt indistinctibile: formele de viață și jocurile de limbaj, cum va remarca mai târziu Wittgenstein, sunt întrețesute și constituie o singură tramă a identității noastre personale, construită în chip narativ.<sup>32</sup> Prin urmare, căutarea lui Dumnezeu ia forma desprinderii de obișnuința vieții sale și a deprinderii unui alt mod de a vorbi.

Astfel, unul dintre aceia care înțeleg sau îi învață pe alții vechile reguli de pronunțare a sunetelor pare să rănească mai mult spiritul oamenilor dacă,

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motivată să iubesc ciocolata, grație plăcerii pe care mi-o provoacă, pot de asemenea să fiu de-motivat să o iubesc, de pildă, prin exces și prin aceeași boală de stomac. Astfel, deși transformarea experienței este întotdeauna *motivată*, cu toate acestea, cu cât transformarea este mai radicală, fiind propriu-zis o *prefacere a ipseității*, cu atât mai mult ea își pierde caracterul de motivație și devine oarecum nemotivată și liberă, scutită de legile naturii și susceptibilă de căile grației. Această idee va fi recuperată mai târziu de către Meister Eckhart în predicarea unui mod de viață lipsit de *de ce* (*ohne warumbe*), așadar de motive, temeieri și rațiuni.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 80-81. Cf. de asemenea Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 141: „lumea pe care a fondat-o omul prin concupiscentă se consolidează prin obișnuință.”

<sup>31</sup> Același lucru îl remarcă Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 156: „Cum lumea aceasta a fost întotdeauna constituită de oameni, ea este definitorie pentru cum se poartă oamenii unii cu alții.”

<sup>32</sup> Cf. de pildă însemnarea numărul 241 a lui Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen/Philosophical Investigations*, (traducere de G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, Joachim Schulte, Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2009,) pp. 94-94e: „So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?” — It is what human beings *say* that is true and false; and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.”

încâlcind învățătura gramaticală, ar rosti *homo*, „om”, fără aspirația primei silabe, decât dacă, împotriva poruncilor tale, l-ar urî un om pe care, întrucât el însuși este un om, ar fi fost dator să-l iubească.<sup>33</sup>

A rosti urât cuvântul „om” este mai josnic decât a rosti lucruri urâte despre un om: astfel era configurat obiceiul în limitele căruia Augustin creștea și era educat să vorbească, așadar să-și formeze o identitate discursivă (*Horum ego puer morum in limine iacebam*).<sup>34</sup> Această indiscernabilitate între a fi și a vorbi pune în lumină câteva elemente esențiale ale experienței: 1. Consolidarea experienței, înțelegând ca formare și conservare a obișnuinței, asumând o axiologie, care stabilește scopuri dezirabile și un model de excelență al sinelui, așadar care stabilește o *ierarhie a relevanței*;<sup>35</sup> 2. Consolidarea experienței, fiind eminent dialogică, se realizează în grup, așadar este *colegială* sau *intersubiectivă*; 3. Consolidarea experienței reprezintă totodată și o îngustare, o închidere, o claustrare a experienței, care constă în stabilirea unor limite ce relevă caracterul ei *local*, dimensiune desemnată în mod obișnuit prin *moravuri*.

Astfel, dislocarea sinelui în procesul transformării experienței se va remarca la Augustin prin trei refuzuri și trei afirmări complementare: (1) refuzul axiologiei mundane sau schimbarea tuturor valorilor prin renunțarea la dragostea mundană (*cupiditas*) pentru dragostea lui Dumnezeu (*caritas*); (2) Refuzul congregațiilor lumești (precum secta maniheistă) și, de altă parte, înființarea unei Biserici Catolice, așadar (3) a unei comunități universale, și nu locale. Cu alte cuvinte, remarcăm o despărțire de *cuvintele* îmbălsămate ale retorilor de dragul Cuvântului întrupat al lui Dumnezeu.

Chiar și în ipostaza sa locală, experiența este marcată de o pretenție la universalitate. Oricât de îngustă ar fi o sectă, ea pretinde că deține adevărul ultim. Același lucru este valabil pentru Augustin, care vedea în adevărul atins *după* convertire o universalitate capabilă să înglobeze experiențele de *până* la convertire. În lumina adevărului aflat, experiența sa trecută i se înfățișează ca o serie de rateuri – „La ce bun faptul că primeam aplauze [...]”? Iar

<sup>33</sup> Augustin, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>34</sup> *Idem*. Astfel, experiența configurată *local*, într-o școală de retorică, este mai puternică și-și impune cu mai multă forță regulile decât o experiență vădit mai universală, precum este cea de a fi om.

<sup>35</sup> Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 75: „Viitorul anticipat stabilește ordinea și măsura iubirii (*dilectionis ordo et mensura*). Potrivit lui Augustin, există întotdeauna o astfel de ordine ierarhică a iubirii.”

toate aceste laude erau ele altceva decât fum și vânt?”<sup>36</sup> – în vederea unui scop necunoscut atunci, dar dat în prealabil, postulat retroactiv ca necesar, ca origine întotdeauna deja operativă în inima tânărului retor: Binele și Adevărul care este Dumnezeu.

Așa cum decepționarea mundană îl referă (sau relocă) pe subiect înapoi către lumea sa, dislocarea care anticipează desființarea subiectului însuși reclamă o relocare pe măsură, așadar relocarea spre o înființare originară.<sup>37</sup> Reperul pentru aceasta din urmă nu mai poate fi găsit în lumea de care sinele se desprinde și, prin urmare, nici în temporalitatea și fluxul experiențial înrădăcinate în ea. În sensul acesta, transformarea experienței nu este o experiență, cât mai degrabă revelarea negativității aflată la lucru atât în ruperea coerenței experiențiale – ce are loc în fața unei morți capabile să suprimă (sau *deconstituie*) sinele și lumea sa –, cât și în refacerea ei prin revelarea unei nașteri originare, capabile să înființeze (să *constituie*) sinele deopotrivă cu lumea sa.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.

Conceptualitatea fenomenologică ar trebui să crească din cadrul hermeneutic al experiențelor analizate și, mai cu seamă, din felul acestora de a se articula discursiv. Experiența comportă o înțelegere de sine care se hotărăște în prealabil, tacit și în cadrul unei tradiții, pentru o anumită punere de sine în cuvinte.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Augustin, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>37</sup> Astfel, pe urmele unei lecturi augustiniene în cheie fenomenologică, poate fi înțeleasă geneza conceptului de *nativitate* la Hannah Arendt.

<sup>38</sup> Acest aspect dinamic al transformării experienței, descris aici prin *dislocarea* și *relocarea* sinelui, poate fi tradus în termenii proiectului filosofic de hermeneutică pre-judicativă ca *deconstituire* și (*re*)*constituire* a sinelui. Acești termeni indică spre aceeași tensiune fundamentală a subiectului aflat la limita (posibilității) experienței, ce relevă o negativitate constitutivă sinelui, dar pe care acesta nu o poate asuma pe deplin fără să dispară ca sine. Cf. de pildă Breazu, „Moarte și nonsens. Interpretare pre-judicativă a ființei întru moarte” (2020), pp. 72-73: „[moartea] este doar o negativitate funcțională, prin care sinele se rostuește ca sine.”

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Heidegger, *Ființă și timp*, trad. de Gabriel Liiceanu și Cătălin Cioabă, București: Humanitas, 2012, p. 207, „[explicitarea] își are temeiul în «ceva conceput dinainte», într-o *concepere-prealabilă* (*Vorgriff*).”

Există cel puțin două motive pentru a utiliza perechea conceptuală *dislocare-relocare* – care stă la baza proiectului de față – pentru a vorbi despre transformarea experienței. Primul este oferit de tradiția pe care o interpretăm – gândirea medievală – cu scopul elucidării fenomenologice a transformării, cel de-al doilea este oferit de tradiția – fenomenologică – în care interpretăm aceste lucruri. Să le expunem pe rând.

1. Există o bogată literatură medievală care descrie convertirea și asumarea adevărului creștin în termeni *topici*. Pot fi invocate multe exemple în acest sens chiar din *Confesiunile Sfântului Augustin*.<sup>40</sup> Însă ne vom opri asupra unor pasaje din Hildegard din Bingen pentru caracterul lor sugestiv. Descriind de pildă modul de a fi trecător și nefericit al ființei umane, aflată „în umbra morții”, Hildegard vorbește despre peregrinare în termenii unei adevărate dislocări: „am fost dusă în loc străin (*alienum locum*)”, „trimițându-mă astfel în loc pustiu (*desertum locum*)”.<sup>41</sup> În plus, așa cum a reieșit din analiza noastră, dislocarea sinelui se manifestă printr-o lipsă de consolare ce rezultă în urma surpării experienței consolidate. Sau, așa cum spune Hildegard în continuarea acelei descrieri: „căci sunt rătăcitoare, fără consolare și fără ajutor.”<sup>42</sup> Un alt exemplu apare într-o interpretare a viziunii ei, care prezintă ruperea (*dirupit*) unei forme printr-o deambulare similară, ce se manifestă printr-o părăsire a „cortului” obișnuinței și o compărare la tribunalul judecății divine: „«după faptele sale» să fie dusă din locul <de aici> la locul <de dincolo> (*de loco ad locum ducatur*)”.<sup>43</sup> Acest fragment ilustrează în special dinamica fundamentală a dislocării și relocării sinelui.

De asemenea, Hildegard descrie subiectivitatea în termenii consolidării unei armate într-un anumit loc – „ca și atunci când o oarecare armată se adună într-un anumit loc (*in aliquo loco coadunatur*)” – care poate justifica conotația militară pe care o are cuvântul *dislocare*. Nu în ultimul rând, găsim ideea caracterului *local* al treburilor omenești (*locale verbum*), ce se remarcă printr-o închidere a experienței întrupate și trecătoare, în raport cu

<sup>40</sup> Augustin, în *Confesiuni*: „așa încât eu am rămas pentru mine însumi un loc (*locus*) pustiu și nefericit”, p. 169; „Cuvântul însuși te cheamă să te reîntorci la el. În el se află locul (*locus*) odihnei care nu poate fi tulburată”, p. 175; „Și care anume este locul (*locus*) din mine în care să vină să locuiască Domnul meu?”, p. 49.

<sup>41</sup> Hildegard din Bingen, *Scivias*, trad. de Marinela Diana Marinescu, Iași: Polirom, 2021, pp. 121-123.

<sup>42</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 136-137.

caracterul ne-local, a-topic sau, potrivit terminologiei adoptate până acum, *dislocat* al vieții eterne (*illocale Verbum*).<sup>44</sup> Trebuie remarcat că pentru Hildegard din Bingen *dislocarea* înțeleasă ca rătăcire este privită în mod depreciativ, așadar, în spirit augustinian, ca ceva ce trebuie depășit printr-o relocare în Dumnezeu. Pe de altă parte, găsim la Meister Eckhart o privilegiere a *dislocării* alături de o insistență la fel de mare asupra ideii de *topos* în descrierea transformării experienței.<sup>45</sup> În contextul predicilor despre *nașterea Cuvântului* (Q101-104), Eckhart își îndeamnă auditorii să ajungă la o transformare a experienței: „Trebuie să ajungem aici la o experiență transformată [*Man sol hie komen in ein uberformet wizen*].”<sup>46</sup> Or, în cursul acestei transformări, spune Eckhart, noi suntem exilați (*ellende*) sau, ca să reluăm încă o dată conceptul propus, suntem dislocați.<sup>47</sup>

2. În tradiția fenomenologică (românească), cea în care se plasează și studiul de față, Alexandru Dragomir a vorbit și a analizat deja anumite aspecte ale transformării experienței chiar în termenii *dislocării*. În felul acesta, Dragomir vorbește despre schimbarea lumii care a avut loc în zorii modernității: „Dislocarea metafizică întâmplată atunci a schimbat așezarea omenească.”<sup>48</sup> Dragomir afirmă că este vorba de „locul metafizic”, scriind apoi, într-o altă notă, că propriu-zis „metafizica este căutarea locului de unde se vede existența.”<sup>49</sup> De asemenea, vorbind despre întoarcerea spre original, pentru a surprinde fenomenul (în acel caz particular al *întunericii*) în caracterul său nedisimulat, Dragomir vorbește despre „locul întâi, real” al acestuia.<sup>50</sup> De asemenea, el utilizează conceptul de *centru* sau *centra-*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 200-201.

<sup>45</sup> De pildă, Eckhart (în *Deutsche Werke IV,1*, pp. 338-339) se întreabă: „Unde își are locul această naștere <a Cuvântului>? [*wā dirre geburt stat si*]”. (Traducerea și sublinierea îmi aparțin.)

<sup>46</sup> Meister Eckhart ar trimite aici, potrivit editorilor operei sale, la pasajul din 2 Cor. 3:18, unde Sfântul Pavel spune în traducerea latinească: „Nos vero omnes, revelata faciem gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformamur.” *Ibidem*, p. 420 (Sublinierea îmi aparține.)

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 483.

<sup>48</sup> Alexandru Dragomir, *Meditații asupra epocii moderne*, București: Humanitas, 2010, p. 86.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 122. Această retrasare a rădăcinii unui fenomen ca *loc* original al acestuia apare în repetate rânduri și în însemnările sale despre timp – în *Caietele timpului* –, de exemplu: „«Așa-ul» este locul răspunsului dat existenței”, p. 44; „Spațiul ca

re, care specifică sinele ca punct de referință al experiențelor sale.<sup>51</sup> Echivalența între *centru* și *loc* apare explicit la Dragomir în interpretarea sa la *O scrisoare pierdută*: „Centrul devine *Locul*, și provincia devine *Localul*.”<sup>52</sup> După cum am văzut, *dislocarea sinelui* se petrece pe fundalul consolidării unor experiențe, închise în manieră intersubiectivă, ca experiențe locale. Toate aceste fragmente oferă legitimitatea necesară pentru a ridica *locul*, precum și construcțiile semantice întemeiate pe acesta, la nivelul unui concept fundamental pentru o fenomenologie a transformării experienței.

Aceste două temeuri istorice vin să susțină conceptualitatea propusă aici, pe lângă potențialul explicativ pe care aceasta îl poate avea pe cont propriu. Așadar, în urma analizei transformării experienței în ipostaza sa religioasă, înțelegem drept convertire, stabilim următoarele concepte: 1. *Dislocarea-relocarea sinelui*. 2. *Consolidarea experienței* care asumă o *ierarhie a relevanței*, constituită prin împărțășirea sa intersubiectivă. La rândul ei, *consolidarea experienței*, înțelegem drept fundalul pe seama căruia se realizează *dislocarea sinelui*, este caracterizată printr-o închidere a experienței în limitele noematice ale unor categorii obiectuale, cu efect de consolare noetică a subiectului experienței. Astfel, deopotrivă cu *dislocare* și *relocarea sinelui*, putem vorbi de 3. o *deschidere* și o *închidere a experienței*. Aspectul esențial al acestei conceptualizări constă în surprinderea transformării ca raport dinamic al sensului aflat în istorie și nu ca proces de alterare mentală, reprezentat printr-o succesiune de stări care se înlocuiesc unele pe altele. Acest raport dinamic pune în joc o tensiune aflată în miezul transformării experienței, care, ca atare, nu poate fi recompusă plecând de la o suită de experiențe adiacente.<sup>53</sup> Transformarea experienței nu se află într-un timp omogen cu experiența transformată. În fapt, *ne-aflarea-în-loc* sugerată de conceptul *dislocării* exprimă caracterul *non-experiențial* al transformării. Transformarea experienței nu este o experiență, ci mai degrabă negativul ei, revelat în

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loc al existenței”, p. 64; „*Locul* «adevărului»”, p. 67; „Ca *ceva* să se întâmple, trebuie ca «întâmplarea» *überhaupt* să aibă un loc și acesta este (=) prezentul ca *Sein*.”, p. 95; „timpul este locul, sălașul *Sein*-ului”, p. 187.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 252-253.

<sup>52</sup> Astfel, experiența modernității înțelegem ca *dislocare* este descrisă de către Dragomir și ca *descentralizare*: „Totodată, descentralizarea omului și a Terrei prin astronomie.” (*Caietele timpului*, p. 323).

<sup>53</sup> Husserl, *Experiență și judecată*, p.144. Noua credință nu se află *alături* de cea veche, ci o suprimă.

momentul în care cursul firesc al experienței se întrerupe, iar trama identității noastre narrative se destramă.

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# A CHRISTIAN HUMANISM VS. THE TRANSHUMAN APPROACHES ON FINITUDE AND DEATH

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**Abstract:** *The human being experiences in the depths of his being a longing for plenitude. However, pain, disease and death accompany their existence. Transhumanism tries to overcome the limits of man through all a technological scientific development and ventures to predict the definitive triumph over death. In this study, we carry out a historical journey in which we analyze the meaning of finitude and death for both transhumanism and Christian humanism, focused on the person. Transhumanism and Christianity coincide in the desire to conquer death. The understanding of the concepts studied and the means to save humanity that they are proposed differ in both approaches. We understand that in transhumanism there is a reductionism of the definition of person and therefore of the solution that it is offered to respond to the deep longing inscribed each human being.*

**Keywords:** *vulnerability, limit, Human nature, death, plenitude.*

## Introduction

There are many differences in different cultures, societies and historical moments. However, in all human beings there is a deep desire to be happy, and in order to achieve this, the aim is to eradicate everything that is an obstacle: pain, illness, death, etc. The transhumanist project aims to improve the human species by making use of the advances that science and technology can offer. It proposes an evolution of humanity towards a situation in which physical, cognitive and emotional capacities are developed in such a way that an improvement and improvement of the species is achieved. The aim is to banish any deficiency that would diminish the individual in order to overcome the natural limits of our species.

Albert Cortina gives a brief definition of transhumanism as follows:

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Transhumanism is an ideology that affirms the moral duty to improve the physical and cognitive capacities of the human species, and to apply new technologies to man, so that the unwanted and unnecessary aspects of the human condition - suffering, illness, ageing and even mortality - can be eliminated" (Cortina, 2017: 66).

Transhumanism recognises that human beings in their present situation are limited in their various capacities, vulnerable to themselves, to others and to the environment around them. He is irremediably faced with a known destiny: death. This makes it impossible for him to achieve the longed-for happiness. Transhumanist approaches believe that science and technology will provide an answer to the longing of the human being, not to use all the potential they offer would be immoral as it is the way to defeat the limits of the species this time and definitively.

This project raises an infinite number of questions: some about the technical feasibility, others about the economic cost and the possibility of extending it to all individuals. But we could say that these are minor questions; what is really questionable is whether we have thought in depth about what it means to be human. Then, it is necessary to answer what it means to be a person, to get to know human nature; to understand the notion of limits and see if there are some that can be overcome and others that cannot; when faced with the existence of insurmountable obstacles, to ask ourselves if it makes any sense that they are inevitable; in short, are human beings capable of achieving the longed-for happiness if these limits do not exist, and if they can overcome them, would we be talking about truly full persons or would it be a different kind or another type of fullness that is not the one we yearn for?

In this study we will put transhumanism in dialogue with a person-centred anthropology. We believe that this approach is viable because both recognise the obstacles of our species and seek to offer a salvation, a hope for the human being. Let us look at both proposals to identify whether both approaches and answers are of the same order or whether one is more complete in its premises and conclusions for our species.

### **Starting point on the human being from transhumanism and Christian humanism**

As we have already indicated in the introduction, we believe that it is possible to establish a dialogue between transhumanism and a person-centred anthropology because we share a common desire. A desire implicit in the

heart of every human being that leads us to yearn for a fullness that we cannot seem to conquer definitively on our own.

It is impossible for human beings to stop time and with it all the effects it has on our bodies. To circumvent old age, to overcome our limits, to banish the effects of illness from our nature, and so on. The transhumanists, from a purely materialistic starting point, propose the solution by turning to the NBIC: Nanoscience, Biotechnology, Infotechnology and Cognotechnology: science and technology come together to provide solutions to the weaknesses that undermine the human body. New divinities promise eternal youth to those who worship them. Quintili explains that in just a decade, damage that was previously irreparable has now been solved without leaving any after-effects on individuals (2012: 125-155). The pace of progress is dizzying. We are one step away from conquering the dream world, a reality in which pain, illness and death do not have the last word.

The improvement of the body will be of such an order that concepts such as limit, finitude, vulnerability will have no place in our vocabulary. Overcoming will be possible by resorting to the new elixir that technoscience promises us. Marcos comments that in transhumanism "the component of techno-scientific optimism and the will to overcome human nature, understood always and only in terms of limitations, is still present" (2018: 111). An optimism that is a fallacy because it is based on a way of understanding human nature that reduces it to pure matter. If the human being is pure matter, they propose to investigate and improve it in order to overcome its limits.

From a person-centred anthropology, the human being is not just pure matter. Made up of two co-principles: body and soul, he cannot overcome his limits by attending to only one of them. Moreover, the anthropology provided by Christian humanism according to Ruiz de la Peña, in his *Theology of Creation*, interprets the world and the human being as God's creatures, but the act of creation must not be understood as a closed and concluded process, quite the contrary. The human being, in the image and likeness of the Creator, is called to perfect both his being and the world around him according to a preconceived plan, but open, at the same time, to the will of man (Ruiz de la Peña, 1988). The creative work, which in principle was good, is tinged with mystery at its very origins and, along with the goodness of the work, both physical and moral suffering arises. An eternal, infinite and kind God creates a valuable world, a reality different from that of the Creator, with a finite, limited and temporary character.

His existence implies a precariousness, a relationship of dependence that makes him vulnerable, but at the same time worthy of being loved by the other.

Let's leave aside the theological conception of this anthropological proposal, let's not talk about God and let's replace the beginning of the world and of life, if we wish, with a random beginning. Be that as it may, we note the same thing: the finite, limited and temporary character of the cosmos and of our species. Let us not enter either into an assessment of why a God who we say is Almighty and Omnipotent is capable of creating a world where pain and death are present. We could try to understand that, since creation is an unfinished work, in the evolutionary development physical evil arises (Teilhard De Chardin, 1982) and through the misuse of human freedom, the so-called moral evil. Transhumanism does not delve into moral evil; it focuses on eradicating physical evil. However, from the anthropology of Christian humanism, we understand that some of these limitations can be overcome, but many others are inevitable because they are part of our own nature and we cannot eliminate them, among them, death. It is then that we are invited to reflect on whether the world, man and society are better precisely because they are vulnerable. In short, we are questioning the meaning of human finitude.

### **The desire to circumvent death in transhumanism**

Transhumanism does not pretend to reflect on the meaning of finitude, it is something that cannot be studied from its techno-scientific parameters because it is not proper to its formal object. Therefore, we believe that the solutions it proposes to overcome the limits are based on a reductionist consideration of the person. It cannot provide a complete answer as it ignores the true nature of the person. The great challenge of transhumanism is not to overcome deficiencies, but to overcome death. But, again, it studies the possibility by looking at the corporeal, material part. The yearning for immortality arises with an impetus that directs all fields of research, but the solutions offered do not seem to respond to the deep desire inscribed in the human heart.

A number of objections arise in the face of his proposals. Thus, although we note the existence of the desire, we should not accept that every human being aspires to live forever. We should qualify that we are talking about maintaining ourselves in the world with an adequate quality of life. But we are opening a debate that goes beyond the intentions of this study.

Talking about the meaning of an adequate quality of life and living forever at a time when the euthanasia law has been passed in our country is paradoxical. Even so, let us consider as valid the transhumanist argument that everything will have evolved in such a way that physical pain and even the pain of the soul will have been eradicated; that there would be no difficulties to subsist because there would be natural resources for everyone; that we could continue to maintain our bonds of friendship and family since we would all be immortal, although it is difficult to control accidents that trigger the death of a loved one; that we would be able to assimilate history as an endless process and time as a magnitude that is in some way no longer meaningful;? trying to find a satisfactory answer to all the objections that may arise, it is worth asking ourselves what they offer me to overcome this death and what is the proposal to live this life eternally.

Thanks to technology, Bostrom and his disciples believe it is possible to overcome death through post-biological existence. Paradise on earth can be reached through information. In the future, the necessary software and hardware will be available to migrate the synaptic matrix of each individual and reproduce it inside a computer. We would leave our biological body subject to change, at risk of accidents, burdened by multiple limitations and needs, to live forever in a digital substrate (Postigo, 2009: 267-282).

When Matt Damon and Ben Affleck wrote the script for *Good Will Hunting*, we don't know how the famous scene in the park between Robin Williams and Damon himself would have played out if Damon had been a transhumanist. Williams makes the young man see that he is ignorant, that he thinks he is back from life and yet he knows nothing:

If I ask you something about art you will answer me with facts about all the books that have been written, Michelangelo, you know everything, life and work, political aspirations, his friendship with the Pope, his sexual orientation, whatever it takes? But you can't tell me what the Sistine Chapel smells like, you've never been there and looked at that beautiful ceiling. You haven't seen it... (Damon y Affleck, 1997).

Is the dream of transhumanism to overcome death that we leave the shells of material bodies to be imprisoned in electrical circuits? As Ballesteros states: "Posthumanism, with its information piety, ignores the essential distinction between the degrees of compression of reality, which go downwards from wisdom to information, passing through knowledge" (2012: 19).

Transhumanism doubly undervalues the person, first by dispensing with one of the co-principles that shape us: the body, and replacing it with an electronic substrate; second, by transmuting the synaptic matrix into a computer in which only syntactic-level processes fit, without considering the greatness of human intelligence. One wonders whether this experiment proposed by the transhumanists will put an end to the existence of man. Let us recall the paradox of Theseus' ship: after replacing all the parts of the ship, could we consider it the same or would we be facing a different ship? The transhumanist project goes further, it does not change the pieces, but only seeks to rescue a rudder from the whole being in order to assemble it not in another ship, but in an object that has nothing to do with the great ship.

Transhumanism fragments the human being, destroys him as an individual and isolates him from society. It takes away his biography, removes him from history and forbids him to grow old in order to sell him the eternal habitat of an electrical connection in which to develop. However, as Roberto Casas tells us, "the opinion is spreading that this humanity characterized by finitude (...) is destined to give way to a new reality that will no longer be subject to these limitations" (2020: 24) but let us not deceive ourselves. But let us not deceive ourselves, the author warns that we are talking about a different reality, which will no longer be us. It seems that society is blindfolding itself in the face of the drift that events may take and prefers to give credibility to slogans such as those that can be read in works with a high transhumanist content: "Death is just a technical problem. Goodbye equality. Hello, immortality" (Harari, 2017). And as Casas himself reflects, it seems that we do not realise that the fundamental problem that technological advances will bring is not scientific but philosophical (2020: 25). We do not know what the world would be like inhabited by these new beings who, a priori, do not seem to have much in common with what we understand as people.

Transhumanism aims to circumvent death under different formulas. Some investigate how to slow down human ageing to the point of controlling the natural biological processes that can be reversed and achieve an unlimited existence of the physical body. Others are looking to transfer the consciousness of the mind to alternative media such as computer equipment. To create mechanisms that escape the laws of physics and thus transform us into beings with indefinite longevity, barring accidents or hecatombs, who would no longer die.

At last, transhumanism will have won its victory over death. Man will see his desire for happiness fulfilled, he will be eternal. For Justo Domínguez, this infinite end that they propose does not coincide with the yearning of the human being:

It would be desirable not to have to die, but if not dying entails eliminating fundamental elements of the human person, then it may be that the consequence of what is achieved or the path by which it is achieved leads to a negation of the human being itself" (2020: 68).

When the yearning for immortality has been studied throughout history, it has been in relation to death and a life beyond death. Of course, it is legitimate to improve the life expectancy of our species and to do research to contribute to the biotechnological development of mankind, but when we aspire to prolong life we want to "live better in the broad sense of all the dimensions of the person and to live more to the extent that it helps to live more fully" (Justo Domínguez, 2020:68). Deep down we know that the challenge for man is to know how to face the mystery of evil (pain, suffering, death, etc.) on a daily basis with our whole being, with wisdom, will and, why not, also with faith. The person who knows how to give meaning to suffering shows a greatness beyond any machine. Ballesteros recognises this with the term *homo patiens*, capable of fulfilling himself even in failure, his categories are not success or failure but fulfilment or despair, the goal is to reach the end of existence with the conviction that everything has been fulfilled (2012: 21). However, we are easy to deceive. And transhumanism, starting from the premise of the intellectual arrogance that characterises our species, locks itself into the illusion of technology and science. And the problem of pain, dissatisfaction and the legitimate longing for a full life, do the rest of the work (Díaz. 2020). When someone offers a magic solution, we take it because we want to think it is infallible. We don't want to see that perhaps to find the answer to our desire we must come down from our pedestal and raise our eyes upwards.

### **The human being: mortal being**

We cannot forget that all limits ultimately lead us to the extreme and definitive limit of death: life is a dying every day. Life is given up piece by piece. The person suffers because, at the same time as he perfects himself, he expires and is exposed to annihilation and time. He or she lives in a permanent stare at the empty space of time, which slips away like water through

his or her hands. As Gómez Sancho puts it: "The life of every man is an intermediate sigh between two tears: that of birth and that of death" (1998: 149). The only condition necessary to die is to be alive. From the very moment we come to life, we are exposed to death. This radical possibility reveals an aspect of the truth of what the human being is, or rather, of who the human being is, although it is a truth that is not conceptually apprehensible, as Domínguez states (2011:85). From a person-centred anthropology we understand that this mortal condition must be assumed and accepted if one wants to live in the truth of what one is, of one's authentic identity. In spite of this, we often live as if death did not exist, nourishing a false illusion of eternity and losing awareness of the unrepeatability of each moment. We forget that it is the *cotidie morimur*, as Seneca pointed out in his Epistles, that allows us to live the present to the full.

In our society, human beings often seem to be anaesthetised in relation to the reality of death: first they ignore it as a possibility in their youth, only to forget it later and then reject it in old age or in illness (their own or someone else's) as if it were something that has not yet arrived. In short, death is not accepted as a stage of life, the last one, which is called to be lived with its own value and meaning; as Spaemann points out, death is not taught now: "Children no longer see how old people die; most people meet death for the first time in their own" (2004). Today's culture has succeeded in expelling the reality of death from the everydayness of life. People no longer die at home as they once did, surrounded by family and the warmth of home. Now it is more common to find a private and solitary death, isolated in a room alone or with medical staff, surrounded by tubes and machines, everything and everyone well sterilised to avoid infection; the hospital allows death to be removed from the home, to be placed at a certain distance. It is another way of dying and watching death: with a glass in between or through a screen at the touch of a remote control, without the danger of being splashed by blood or invaded by the smell.

Death is part of everyone's life and constitutes a personal and unique moment. Dying is something strictly personal, it is one of the parameters of living. And even if the reality of death is removed from everyday life, the human being is determined by it, before, now and always. It is part of their essence, since the finiteness of human existence structures the real from Heidegger's being for death, as Alonso Cano states: "The fact that we are entities traversed by death is what gives us our paradoxical entity (I can

die for the other, but I can never die their death would be the precept that would condense this perspective)" (2017).

### **But, death hurts, isn't there a way to beat it? I need to be saved**

The formulas offered by transhumanism do not seem to respond to the deep desire inscribed in our nature. Justo Domínguez understands that its approaches "provoke a reduction in the understanding of death and in the way to overcome it" (2011:65). To be immortal by living indefinitely or in a cybernetic form, if technology were to develop in such a way that it could be achieved, does not seem to be the aspiration of human beings. As we noted at the beginning of this paper, both transhumanism and the vision proposed from a Christian anthropology share the goal of definitively overcoming death, but the answer they give is not the same. With the transhumanist solution we are faced with problems of various kinds: demographic, psychological, social, ... but, what is more, it supposes a renunciation of what each one of us is, a being born to love and be loved unconditionally, that is to say, also in its limits.

The fact of being born means that life has been given to us, no human being can make himself born, nor is he able to make another be born out of nothing. Life as a gift has been given to us, but not in a complete, full way, but for each one of us to build it according to a mission that we discover day by day: "life has not been given to him already made, but he receives himself with the mission to become in a certain way" (Domínguez, 2011:70). This open condition of man allows our freedom to acquire meaning. The human being in the use of his freedom is becoming. And again, both transhumanism and Christian humanism seem to have something in common: the importance of the faculty of freedom. For the sake of freedom, the former justifies it as an absolute faculty that allows human beings to become themselves. However, from the point of view of Christian anthropology, it is not an absolute faculty, as our own experience shows: not every human action perfects us, and not every time man acts freely, he does well. Freedom, like life, is also a gift received and is related to the origin of our being and to other beings. We recognise our freedom as the faculty that enables us to reach the fullness we long for, but we recognise it as finite and as imperfect as ourselves. Man's misuse of freedom leads him to be capable of moral evil. This reality and that of our own death reminds human beings of their condition of being in need; we are not gods; we are creatures in need of something or Someone greater to take us in despite this constitutive fra-

gility. Man becomes aware that he is incapable of explaining himself, not even through that collective consciousness that could be dumped into a computer could we explain our species, not even if we were given all eternity to see our software in a new hardware.

The finitude that characterises us implies that human freedom is creative because it needs to travel a path to reach a fullness. This fullness, which he sees is not within his reach, allows him to realise that the relationship with the other also constitutes him and is a prerequisite for the continued development of one and the other. In this relationship we understand that we are all, although necessary, contingent beings. We humans do not explain ourselves; we did not give ourselves life, we received it. Trying to deepen the meaning of life as a gift and death as an inability to accept that it can be the end of something as marvellous as being, leads us to search for the Maker and the Saviour. Can the one who created life be the one who conquers death?

Christian anthropology identifies death as evil, so it cannot be the end of life understood as being, the beautiful, the good, the true. At the same time, we are not capable of overcoming it, at least in the sense of doing so in a way that eradicates evil. With the transhumanist proposal we see that it annuls true nature, it is reductionist and partial. Death must be defeated not only biologically, but beyond: my whole self in body and soul awaits a fullness that is not the transhumanist dream that implies renouncing what I naturally am: it dilutes me, it attacks my person, my historicity, my capacity for relationship, my freedom insofar as the supreme act of it is to love the other unconditionally, now I can only "love him" if my synaptic matrix is united to his. To overcome death is not to overcome some biological aspects technically. Overcoming death, as a metaphysical evil, is impossible for the human being. Overcoming death as a symbol of the evil that threatens mankind in the world is unthinkable. This is why death makes man question the existence of God, even as a protest against the evil in the world, or to ask for an explanation of the mystery, or to fall on his knees when he discovers his greatness and begs for salvation (Domínguez, 2011:75).

The Christian hope of overcoming death can already be found in the eschatology of the Old Testament, where we see God's faithful relationship with his people, who never leave him despite the constant falls of the chosen people. In the biblical texts the conception of time is linear and teleological, far from the vision of cyclical time which is maintained outside the

biblical sphere and which in a certain sense is taken up by transhumanism. There is a faith in creation and a hope in promise. Man recognises that the ultimate vitality is manifested in God's relationship with man, acting in communion, and hence the people intone the psalm: "Your grace is worth more than life" (Sal 63,4). Life is thus existential fulfilment even in the midst of difficulties, hardships and sorrows. God accompanies us in this human pain even when we do not feel it and believe that we are abandoned in the deepest loneliness. The figure of Job is a clear example of remaining faithful to God even when his ways are not understandable. Job believes in God because he is God himself, ungraspable in his greatness for the created being. Throughout the Old Testament, the idea of joyful union with God is deepened, and this life with God is given a claim to eternity (Ruiz de la Peña, 2002: chapter I). In the book of Wisdom, the doctrine of immortality is taken up not in the Greek way, but as the fruit of righteousness, of holiness. It seems that the fulfilment of the promise begins to be interpreted as the eternal communion of divine life (Ruiz de la Peña, 1988: chapter II).

With the coming of Jesus Christ, the promise to the Jewish people overflows, in God made flesh everything is fulfilled: Christ has come into our history (incarnation, earthly existence and death, resurrection and ascension) but at the same time he has remained in it through the sacraments and the Church and is to come at the end of time in a definitive form of presence in created reality.

And what does this plan have to do with each one of us, with the possibility of definitively overcoming death, but not in the transhumanist sense? If transhumanism seems like science fiction, although increasingly plausible, Christian anthropology seems inconceivable for our reason.

First of all, we are asked not to stick to a reason in the scientific sense, but to an open reason in which we make room for mystery. Moreover, we must be ready to come down from our intellectual arrogance to recognise that there are realities that escape our intellect: we are faced with the question of God who is impossible for us to grasp in our categories. But the most important thing is to recognise that our nature, which seems so perfect, in order to feel complete, needs a piece that it cannot find, a desire that it does not satisfy. Perhaps the Christian proposal, if it does not do violence to the being, if it gives it peace, if it is not a pill to satisfy that longing, can be that piece that we cannot find (Manglano, 2009).

Christ came to offer salvation to mankind, to manifest God's love, capable of pouring it out on us unconditionally. In this loving relationship,

human beings know that they are accepted and comforted by the only one capable of overcoming metaphysical evil and death as its most radical representation. Only a God could definitively overcome death. Our history begins in the act of creation; we are called to consummate this work of salvation in Christ, the merciful judge of our life, who proposes eternal life to us. Once the personal barrier of death has been overcome, man is called to eternal life with Christ, a pneumatic participation in this eternity is not proposed, we are told of the resurrection of the flesh itself: a pneumatic corporeality: "a mortal body is sown, a spiritual body is raised" (1 Cor 15, 44). The subject of the resurrected existence is the same as that of the mortal existence, but at the same time transformed, having overcome the crucible of death and sin, we can speak analogically of a qualitative mutation that reaches the coating of the corruptible and mortal to make it incorruptible and immortal: man, body and soul that was sometimes fragmented, becomes a "spiritual body". Up to the moment of the resurrection of our body, Benedict XII in *Benedictus Deus* maintained that there is no delay, man already enjoys eternity, eternal life with the intuitive vision of the divine being. After the Parousia, it is the whole man who is resurrected, who is saved, the whole community is called to salvation and the whole reality (Manglano, 2009: chapter V).

In both the Old and the New Testament, we are told of the "new heaven and the new earth", Christ himself speaks of a regeneration or "restoration of all things" (Hech 3, 21). Anthropology and cosmology find their synthesis in Christology.

The question about death is the question about the meaning of life; about the meaning of history; about the ethical imperatives of justice, freedom, dignity; about the present-future dialectic; about the person, who am I, what will become of me? Death, which in fact holds us back in our earthly existence, presents itself as a scandal to reason. Our whole being is revealed before it before the absurdity of a life condemned to death. Victory over it is necessary, it is the hope of all humanity. With Christ, death makes it possible to open up to eternal love; man's faith and hope are fulfilled in Him. If life has meaning, death must make way for the human being to remain eternally in what he longed for during his earthly existence: the eternal enjoyment of infinite love for the one who welcomes me always.

## Conclusion

In this article we have attempted to enter into a dialogue with transhumanism from a Christian anthropological perspective centred on the person. For both, the discovery of the finitude of the person is a challenge. It seems that it is necessary to overcome it in order to live in fullness. As a radical evil, the problem of death arises. The transhumanist vision tries to offer a series of solutions to overcome the truncation of human existence, but it is presented with partial solutions. Either because they refer to the lengthening of existence, or because they project an emptying of our mind on a computerised support. In all of them, the meaning of being a person is reduced. The concepts of human nature, vulnerability, deficiencies acquire a meaning from Christian anthropology that goes beyond the transhumanist sense. Moreover, limitations are interpreted as opportunities to open up to others and to a reality beyond ourselves that requires an expanded reason to access it. Being willing to renounce our intellectual pride and open ourselves to a transcendent reality allows us to encounter a God the Father who encounters humanity throughout history.

In Christ the victory over evil, his message of salvation to humanity allows human beings to discover the meaning of their life and the vocational call to love and be loved in eternity. It is not man who gives himself eternal life, but God the Creator and Saviour himself.

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# HEURISTICS, DUAL-PROCESS THEORIES, LOGIC, AND MENTAL MODELS

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**Abstract:** *Dual-process theories differentiate two components in the human mind. Intuition is the main ability in one of them: System 1. The essential ability of the other one, System 2, is deliberation. Heuristics have been linked to System 1, to System 2, and to both of them. The latter alternative is adopted by Nadurak. This paper follows that alternative too. It takes an example Nadurak gives and, based on it, shows that deliberation is indeed necessary to modify heuristics. The paper shows this from two perspectives: from an approach considering the human mind to be led by standard logic, and from a framework rejecting that very idea: the theory of mental models.*

**Keywords:** *classical logic; dual-process theories; logic; mental models; possibility.*

## Introduction

Heuristics have been related to intuition (e.g., Bruers, 2013). They have also been linked to deliberation (e.g., Liao, 2016). There is one more possibility: they correspond to both of them, that is, to intuition and deliberation. The latter is, for example, Nadurak's (2022) position. Nadurak (2022) bases this idea on the framework provided by dual process theories (e.g., Stanovich, 2012). These theories understand that intuition and deliberation are two manners of processing or systems (see also, e.g., Evans, 2008). The systems are sometimes named 'Type 1', which is the manner or system corresponding to intuition, and 'Type 2', which is the manner or system referring to deliberation (e.g., Evans & Stanovich, 2013). Another usual denomination is

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that of ‘System 1’, for intuitive processes, and ‘System 2’, for deliberative processes (e.g., Khemlani, Byrne, & Johnson-Laird, 2018). Conventionally, this paper will follow the System 1 and System 2 terminology.

The aim here is to show that, both if the idea that the human mind is led by standard logic is adopted and if the theory of mental models (which denies any relations between the human mind and that logic) is assumed, it is possible to argue that heuristics can be linked to deliberative processes, that is, System 2. Thus, the present paper will try to give further support to Madurak’s (2022) thesis that System 2 can also have an influence on heuristics.

It will do that by means of three sections. The first section will explain what heuristics are and the general lines of dual-process theories. Likewise, it will describe an example given by Nadurak (2022) in order to show that heuristics (or, at least, their updating or modification) can be results of System 2. The second one will argue that, from a framework mainly based on standard logic, it is also possible to conclude that Nadurak’s (2022) example reveals the need for deliberation and System 2. Finally, some relevant theses of the theory of mental models will be indicated. This theory proposes a mental dual-process too, and rejects that human reasoning follows classical logic. It will be claimed that, if the theory of mental models is accepted, Nadurak’s (2022) example also leads to the idea that System 2 can be involved in the development of heuristics.

### **Heuristics and dual-process theories**

As Nadurak (2022) indicates, there are several definitions of heuristics. The one Nadurak’s paper assumes is that of Shah & Oppenheimer (2008, p. 207): “...methods that use principles of effort-reduction and simplification. By definition, heuristics must allow decision-makers to process information in a less effortful manner than one would expect from an optimal decision rule” (see also Nadurak, 2022, p. 49). This will be the definition taken here.

From the point of view of dual-process theories, to link heuristics to intuitions, deliberations, or both intuitions and deliberations is to link heuristics to System 1, System 2, or both System 1 and System 2. Nadurak paraphrases the definition of the two systems Kahneman and Frederick (2002) give. Thus, Nadurak says that, following Kahneman and Frederick (2002), “the processes of System 1 (intuitive) are automatic, effortless, associative, rapid, parallel, opaque, and result in skilled action. The processes of System 2 (deliberative) are effortful, deductive, slow, serial, self-aware, and rule-

based” (Nadurak, 2022, p. 50). The present paper assumes this definition with an important exception. System 1 sometimes leads to generalizations, prejudices, and stereotypes. It is hard to accept that a generalization, prejudice, or stereotype is a skilled action.

As said, Nadurak (2022) thinks that heuristics are related to both System 1 and System 2. Nadurak’s thesis is that what characterizes System 2 is a ‘continuum’ between its different levels, and that it is possible to speak about a ‘spiral model’ in which the two systems interact with heuristics. As shown in most of the works in the literature (e.g., Kahneman & Frederick, 2005), the relations between the two systems are in the core of dual-process theories. This can be seen even with physical skills. A simple case can be that of some activities that are learned via System 2. After a number of repetitions, because of System 1, the actions corresponding to those activities become quick and unconscious. An example can be that of people learning to drive. When people are learning to drive a car, at first, they should resort to System 2 to make the right movements with their hands and feet in order to control the components of the car. With practice, the movements are progressively transformed into automatic and unconscious. The result is that, lastly, System 1 leads and the movements are rapid (examples such as this can be considered from works such as that of Kahneman, 2011). But one of the examples of heuristics offered by Nadurak in this way is as follows:

A rule in System 1 can be (1).

- (1) “Help if you are asked for help” (Nadurak, 2022, p. 57).

The people with this rule in their System 1 can remind that an individual asking them for help hurt them a lot. This memory causes System 2 to act. This modifies (1) into (2). One might think that, over time, (2) becomes the new rule in System 1.

- (2) “Help only those who have not done you much harm” (Nadurak, 2022, p. 57).

Nadurak’s (2022) arguments are clear. However, the present paper will try to present further support in this way. Both if it is assumed that reasoning is consistent with classical logic and if it is thought that is not the case, Nadurak’s arguments seem to hold. The next section will address the alterna-

tive that reasoning is coherent with standard logic. The third section will deal with the opposite idea.

### **Modification of heuristics and standard logic**

There are different theories claiming that human reasoning is logical (see, e.g., Braine & O'Brien, 1998; Henlé, 1962; Rips, 1994). Many times, those theories point out that the mental logic should be different from classical logic in some senses (see also, e.g., O'Brien, 2014). Nevertheless, the explanation below is so general that, perhaps without much theoretical effort, can be admitted for all the theories stating the existence of a mental logic in human beings.

A sentence such as (1) can be presented in standard propositional logic as (3).

$$(3) P \rightarrow Q$$

In (3), 'P' represents the fact that people ask for help, 'Q' stands for the fact that you help the people asking for help, and ' $\rightarrow$ ' symbolizes logical implication.

Likewise, a well-formed formula in that very logic to capture (2) can be (4).

$$(4) (P \wedge R) \rightarrow Q$$

In (4), 'R' means the fact that the people asking for help have not hurt you and ' $\wedge$ ' is the symbol for conjunction.

Therefore, to support Nadurak's (2022) thesis, it is necessary to argue that the step from (3) to (4) cannot be taken without using System 2. System 2 is needed if cognitive effort is required. So, what should be shown is that the step from (3) to (4) requires a great deal of deliberation, analysis, and mental effort.

Lukowski (2013) explains some circumstances in which formulae such as (3) can be converted into formulae such as (4). They are cases of apparent non-monotonicity. As Lukowski (2013) reminds, in propositional calculus, if (3) is true, (4) has to be true as well. This is because, in that calculus, if (3) is correct, (5) is correct too.

$$(5) P \therefore Q$$

In (5), '∴' indicates logical derivation.

And (4) is correct if (6) is correct too.

(6) {P, R} ∴ Q

So, if it is possible to derive proposition Q from proposition P, it should also be possible to derive proposition Q from propositions P and R. However, in daily life, it is easy to find cases in which this does not apparently hold. For example, one might think that (3), and hence (5), are true with these equivalences.

P =<sub>df</sub> they go to the movie theater

Q =<sub>df</sub> they watch a film

But if it is assumed that

R =<sub>df</sub> the tickets are sold out

While (3) and (5) can be accepted, (4) and (6) can be rejected.

One might consider this to be an instance of non-monotonicity. It can be thought even that this challenges the ability of logic to address everyday situations. Nevertheless, Lukowski's (2013) explanation is that this apparent non-monotonicity is not real. The antecedent of the conditional in (3) is not expressed in its entirety (accordingly, all the premises in (5) are not expressed either). In general, a conditional such as (3) has in its antecedent implicit conjuncts that are not explicitly mentioned. Those conjuncts refer to facts having to happen in order that the consequent has to be the case. The real structure of a formula such as (3) is often (7).

(7)  $(P \wedge F_1 \wedge \dots \wedge F_n) \rightarrow Q$

In (7), 'F<sub>1</sub>, ..., F<sub>n</sub>' are implicit facts needing to occur in order that Q has to hold.

If it is supposed that

$$F_i =_{df} \neg R$$

Where,  $i > 1 < n$  and '¬' represents negation.

It is possible to come to (8) from (7)

$$(8) (P \wedge F_1 \wedge \dots \wedge F_i \wedge \dots \wedge F_n) \rightarrow Q$$

And to (9) from (5).

$$(9) \{P, F_1, \dots, F_i, \dots, F_n\} \therefore Q$$

From Lukowski's (2013) point of view, formula (4) and deduction (6) do not offer examples of non-monotonicity with regard to (3) and (5), or, if preferred, (7) -or (8)- and (9). (4) only shows that the antecedent of (3) is not true. (6) only reveals that not all the premises necessary to derive Q are true (works such as that of Stenning and van Lambalgen, 2005, are also interesting with respect to this argumentation).

The point is that, if  $F_1, \dots, F_i, \dots, F_n$  are implicit content, they cannot be considered without cognitive effort, that is, System 2. If all of this is applied to Nadurak's (2022) example, it can be said that the equivalences for P and Q (i.e., respectively, 'people ask for help' and 'you help the people asking for help') are correct. Nonetheless, that of R is not. A suitable equivalence for R can be:

$R =_{df}$  the people asking for help have hurt you

Thereby, to come from (1) to (2), previously implies a process akin to that to come from (3) to (7) -or (8)- and from (5) to (9). Only in this way it is possible to realize that a fact that should happen in order that Q has to happen (i.e., you help the people asking for help) is  $F_i$ , that is,  $\neg R$  (i.e., the people asking for help have not hurt you). If R is the case, Q does not have to be the case. As argued, System 2 is necessary to notice this.

### **Modification of heuristics and the theory of mental models**

If it is thought that cognition has nothing to do with classical logic, it is also possible to argue that the step from (1) to (2) needs deliberation. If the thesis that the human mind follows a logic is rejected, an alternative is the the-

ory of mental models (e.g., Johnson-Laird & Ragni, 2019). The theory of mental models considers the human mind not to work based on formulae or rules such as those in propositional calculus (see also, e.g., Quelhas, Rasga, & Johnson-Laird, 2017). People only deal with iconic possibilities corresponding to sentences (see also, e.g., Byrne & Johnson-Laird, 2020). But the theory of mental models is a dual-process theory. This means that the iconic possibilities people recover depend on the system, System 1 or System 2, which is working (see also, e.g., Johnson-Laird, Quelhas, & Rasga, 2021). This is clear in the case of the conditional (see also, e.g., López-Astorga, Ragni, & Johnson-Laird, 2022). Given a conditional such as (10),

- (10) If they go to the movie theater, then they will watch a film

System 1 only gives one possibility to it:

- (11) Possible (they go to the movie theater & they watch a film)

Reflection and effort, and, accordingly, System 2, can lead to note two more possibilities, that is, to (12).

- (12) Possible (they go to the movie theater & they watch a film)  
& Possible (they do not go to the movie theater & they watch a film)  
& Possible (they do not go to the movie theater & they do not watch a film)

The theory deems sets of possibilities such as (12) as ‘conjunctions of possibilities’ (see also, e.g., Khemlani, Hinterecker, & Johnson-Laird, 2017). The two new possibilities added are presuppositions: they can hold whether or not (10) is true (see also, e.g., Goodwin & Johnson-Laird, 2018).

However, the important point here is that the information that the tickets are sold out does not lead to formulae such as (4). So, it does not cause monotonicity problems. That information implies to add one more possibility to (12): the possibility in which they go to the movie theater and they do not watch a film. That possibility is the last one in (13).

- (13) Possible (they go to the movie theater & they watch a film)  
& Possible (they do not go to the movie theater & they watch a film)  
& Possible (they do not go to the movie theater & they do not watch a film)  
& Possible (they go to the movie theater & the tickets are sold out & they do not watch a film)

If to get (12) already requires effort, to get (13) needs even more effort. An objection could be that the possibility corresponding to ‘they go to the movie theater & the tickets are sold out & they do not watch a film’, that is, the fourth possibility in (13), could be directly added to (11), without the need to first consider (12). In this way, it would be possible to come to (14) from (11) more quickly.

- (14) Possible (they go to the movie theater & they watch a film)  
& Possible (they go to the movie theater & the tickets are sold out & they do not watch a film)

The literature seems to suggest that, following the theory of mental models, the process is from (11) to (12), and from (12) to (13). But even if it is assumed that the process is from (11) to (14), the action of System 2 is also necessary, since System 1 only leads to the possibility in (11).

If Nadurak’s (2022) example is taken into account, (1) only needs System 1, which reveals (15).

- (15) Possible (people ask for help & you help those people)

In the same way as (11) only includes what is mentioned in (10), just what is pointed out in (1) is in (15). So, System 2 is not necessary. Nevertheless, if it is required to consider the cases in which the people asking for help have hurt you a lot, a higher level of reflection is necessary. This allows thinking about more possible scenarios, in particular, a scenario in which the people asking for help have done a lot of harm to you, and hence you do not help them. That scenario sums one more possibility to (15):

- (16) Possible (people ask for help & you help those people)

& Possible (people ask for help & those people hurt you & you do not help those people)

Conjunction of possibilities (16) requires System 2, as it implies to address an additional scenario. Nonetheless, the required effort can be even higher. Intermediate steps can be needed. For example, individuals can note that, apart from the possibility in (15), there are other possibilities. One of those possibilities can be that you help the people without their request, or that neither they ask for help nor you help them. This would lead from (15) to (17).

- (17) Possible (people ask for help & you help those people)  
& Possible (people do not ask for help & you help those people)  
& Possible (people do not ask for help & you do not help those people)

After detecting all the possibilities in (17), the case in which the people that hurt you ask for help and you do not help them would be added. The result would be conjunction of possibilities (18).

- (18) Possible (people ask for help & you help those people)  
& Possible (people do not ask for help & you help those people)  
& Possible (people do not ask for help & you do not help those people)  
& Possible (people ask for help & those people hurt you & you do not help those people)

The processes from (15) to (17) and from (17) to (18) require more effort than the process from (15) to (16). However, as in the previous case, the process from (15) to (16) already needs effort, and, therefore, System 2. This allows stating that, from a perspective rejecting classical logic, it is also possible to support the idea that heuristics are not only related to System 1.

## Conclusions

As Nadurak indicates, from dual-process theories, there are three options with regard to heuristics: they are linked to System 1, they are linked to

System 2, and they are linked to both System 1 and System 2. Nadurak's theoretical position is the third one.

This paper has tried to present further support to Nadurak's thesis from an example (coming from Nadurak, 2022). It has been intended to show that the example reveals that, even adopting opposite cognitive alternatives, System 2 can be necessary in the processes for reviewing heuristics.

Two perspectives have been considered. The first one is that there is a relation between the human mind and a logic akin to standard logic. The second one is that of the theory of mental models, and, accordingly, it proposes that the mental processes are different from the logical processes. From the first perspective, the example leads to consider hidden contents. Those hidden contents can be understood as implicit conjuncts in the antecedents of conditionals, or as implicit premises in deductions. In any of those cases, the hidden content causes System 2 to act.

From the second approach, that is, the framework of the theory of mental models, the mind works addressing iconic possibilities. Here, what the example reveals is that it is necessary to think about at least an additional possibility. But an additional possibility means additional effort, and, again, System 2.

One might think that the action of System 2 in cases such as that analyzed in the present paper is limited. It only operates when certain circumstances lead to review heuristics. Once the revisions are over, heuristics are linked back to System 1. Even if this is correct, it is already important. Beyond the fact that System 2 can also review rules such as (2) and show that there are occasions in which you should help people asking for help that hurt you (e.g., when those people hurt you with no intention), System 2 can correct heuristics that are actually generalizations, prejudices, or stereotypes. So, the study in this direction is relevant. In any case, it is necessary to remind that Nadurak's idea is not that simple. Nadurak proposes a continuum within System 2 and a model that is spiral-shaped.

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**CONSIDERAȚII ISTORICO-TEORETICE LIBERTARIENE  
DESPRE “OBICEIUL PĂMÂNTULUI” SPECIFIC SATELOR  
DEVĂLMAȘE ROMÂNEȘTI – SEC. IV- XIX-LEA.  
UN STUDIU DE ISTORIE SOCIALĂ ȘI FILOSOFIA CULTURII.  
PARTEA a II- a**

**Cristinel TRANDAFIR<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** *There is today among jurists or a widespread tendency to consider that the institutions of positive law, in their capacity as late creations of the modern state, can be considered, based on their ideal, formal, general, logical and rational, as independent realities, which can be studied in themselves, separated both by the living conditions of the society to which they apply, and by the manifestations of the popular spirit of the latter. However, modern legal norms are not established solely as a result of direct state action. Other sources are involved in their construction. Thus, at the base of the legal norms we discover the moral-practical doctrines, the jurisprudence, the tradition, but especially the customs. It is a series of primary sources through which the norms maintain their connection with the conditions and needs of social life, which, moreover, they norm. This finding leads us to say that legal institutions and norms are not the exclusive products of a well-determined state legislator, a logical, objective and general production of his imagination, will and especially reason, but the creation of an anonymous and continuous process of the whole cultural, the expression of a more or less long historical evolution of the human community on which it is reflected.*

**Keywords:** *Obiceiul Pământului, natural law, customary law, positive law, individual freedom, legal equality, responsibility, devalmas villages, state.*

## **6. Teorii despre originea Obiceiului Pământului**

Cum contactul istoric al Românilor cu populațiile învecinate s-a răsfrânt inclusiv asupra culturii lor, el trebuia să-și pună amprenta, desigur, și asupra *Obiceiului Pământului*.

Totuși, în opinia multor istorici și folcloriști români acest contact nu a presupus doar o succesiune de ocazii prin care dreptul cutumiar autohton a suferit - urmare a diverselor procese de schimb cultural - influențele modelelor culturale străine, ba din contra, el ar fi reprezentat chiar sursa sa

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fondatoare. Pornind de la „credița greșită că orice drept cutumiar trebuie să provină neapărat dintr-un alt drept mai vechi, ei sunt înclinați a crede că anterior seriilor de norme juridice, formulate sau nu <paremii juridice>, haotice și lacunare, cum le întâlnim în ziua de azi, trebuie să fi existat cândva un drept perfect elaborat, organic încheșat, produs al unui „geniu național”, din care astăzi nu ne-au mai rămas decât „rămășițele tradiționale”<sup>2</sup>.

Influențați de această credință eronată, autorii în cauză au plecat în studiile lor de la o falsă problemă teoretică, cea a *obârșiei* dreptului cutumiar românesc, și au ajuns în cele din urmă la o sumă întregă de soluții care s-au redus în fond la indicarea unor așa zise surse juridice primare ale acestuia, începând de la cele traco-dace și romane, continuând cu cele slave și bizantine și terminând cu cele maghiare ori germane și care, la rigoare, presupuneau ideea că Românii nu au avut în materie de juridică o contribuție substanțială la crearea propriului lor drept obișnuielnic. Acești autori nu sunt puțini. În ciuda faptului că teoriile lor monogenetice și aculturaliste despre *geneza* Obiceiul Pământului au fost susținute prin ignorarea ori pe încălcarea flagrantă a unor adevăruri ale științelor sociale, ponderea lor este una considerabilă în istoriografia românească. Inclusiv astăzi întâlnim autori care ignorând caracterul de bază al comunităților agricole, comunități istorice, teritorializate și producătoare de bunuri de consum, neagă acestora puterea istorică de a-și fi ridicat singure instituțiile culturale capabile să răspundă necesităților lor sociale, explicând formarea instituțiilor băștinașe prin intermediul unor diverse procese de împrumut ori de asimilarea culturală.

Urmare a acestei influente prejudecări teoretice, în istoriografia românească s-au proliferat o multime de teze fabulatorii, care în ciuda diversității lor remarcabile, se găsesc toate înrudite cel puțin printr-un mare neajuns epistemic. Ce anume ar putea, de exemplu, să aibă în comun teza potrivit căreia după cucerirea Daciei, romanii ar fi exterminat populația locală și ar fi înlocuit-o cu proprii coloniști, transformați, ulterior, în agricultori de ocazie, ori teza care pornind de la recunoașterea faptului că Imperiul Roman a fost unul sclavagist, iar Dacia, după cucerire, o provincie romană, afirmă că, urmare a acestei colonizării, ea s-ar fi transformat într-o societate sclavagistă? Mai mult, ce anume să aibă în comun afirmația potrivit căreia

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<sup>2</sup> Stahl, H.H., *Eseuri critice despre cultura populară românească*, Editura Minerva, București, 1983, p. 46.

odată cu retragerea administrației aureliene ar fi avut loc o strămutare a întregii populații agricole locale de la nord de Dunare, strămutare care ar fi lăsat pustii teritoriile acestei zone, cu teza retragerii montane din calea jafurilor populațiilor migratoare a populațiilor agricole autohtone, ori, mai ales, ce legătură ar avea toate aceste teze cu celebrele poncife ale istoriografiei clasice de la noi referitoare la așa zisele *descălecări* întemeietoare ale Țărilor Românești?

Corelate teoriilor despre originea “Obiceiului Pământului”, aceste teze aculturaliste împărtășec faptul ca ele ignoră în bloc atât evidența istorică a caracterului stabil și statornic al comunităților agrare, cât și adevărul teoretico-deductiv potrivit căruia aceste comunități sunt înzestrate de la bun început – indiferent de amploarea rețelelor lor de schimb și interacțiune socială – cu un mediu cultural propriu, de sine stătător, peste care acțiunile și influențele alogene nu pot trece fără o prealabilă remodelare.

Deși nu putem nega rolul și influența pe care procesele de aculturație le-au jucat de-a lungul timpului în viața comunităților agrare românești, nu ne putem, totuși, hazarda, în a explica geneza instituțională a asezămintelor lor culturale recurgând la acest tip de procese. Inhibiția noastră are legătura cu faptul că deși aculturatiile pot fi ușor de presupus a se desfășura pe fondul interacțiunii diverselor grupuri de populație, sensul și direcția lor de propagare, anume fie de la grupurile alogene la cele băștinase, fie în ordine inversă, sunt unele foarte greu de stabilit. Iată de ce, în aceste condiții, ar trebui să ne apară „ mult mai plauzibil ceea ce ne spune sociologia, atunci când arată că formațiunile comunitar-sătești sunt pretutindeni băștinașe, fiind generate de condiții economice similare, astfel că e inutilă, pentru a le explica, recurgerea la teorii de aculturație.”<sup>3</sup>

Totuși, în ciuda faptului că teoriile despre *sursa originară a Obiceiului Pământului* au marele neajuns de a fi fost elaborate cu începere de la o problemă greșit formulată, cea a *obârșiei* dreptului consuetudinar, ele au, începând cu a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, incontestabilul merit de a fi slujit cauzei perfecționării legislației moderne de inspirație occidentală de la noi, respectiv pe acela de a fi contribuit - prin urmărirea legăturii acesteia din urmă cu vechiul drept obișnuielnic - la dezvoltarea istoriei dreptului românesc, un domeniu încă neacoperit la acea vreme în cultura română. În cele ce urmează vom face o scurtă prezentare a acestor teorii.

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<sup>3</sup> Stahl, H.H., *Teorii și ipoteze privind sociologia orânduirii tributare*, Editura Științifică și enciclopedică, București, 1980, p. 170.

Mai întâi, plecând de la constatarea istorică că în geneza poporului român se găsesc elemente tracice ori daco-getice, unii istorici au emis ipoteza că *Obiceiul Pământului* ar fi de origine tracă. Printre aceștia, N. Iorga, George Fotino, I. Andrieșescu, ori mai ales Ion Nădejde. Dacă Hașdeu încercase fără dovezi satisfăcătoare să demonstreze originea tracă a unor vechi obiceiuri juridice românești, iar Nicolae Iorga, mergând în studiile sale pe urmele lui Vasile Pârvan<sup>4</sup>, ajunsese atât la concluzia că dreptul românesc „este un străvechi obicei, cu îndoite rădăcini tracice — cele mai puternice și mai vechi — și slave”<sup>5</sup>, cât și la convingerea ca toate instituțiile Sud Est Europene provin dintr-un fond comun iliro-trac, Ion Nădejde a sfârșit prin a realiza, în cunoscutele sale articole polemice din *Noua Revistă Română*, un adevărat sistem juridic de argumentare a originii trace a *Obiceiului Pământului*.

Vorbim însă de o argumentare nu doar insuficientă, ci pe ansamblu una destul de îndoielnică: autorul pleacă, pe fondul unei analize de drept comparat, de la premisa că orice instituție veche românească, dacă nu poate fi atribuită unei anumite origini străine, trebuie să fie cu necesitate tracă. Folosind supoziții nefondate și deducții încâlcite, operând cu interpretări neclare, demonstrația lui Ion Nădejde, ca de altfel toate demonstrațiile tracizante s-au lovit mereu de o obiecție greu de înlăturat: ele urmăresc să demonstreze comparativ originea tracă a dreptului obișnuielnic românesc fără a avea știința documentară despre obiceiurile și instituțiile juridice ale tracilor, ale daco-getilor ori ale celorlate seminții înrudite cu acestea. Blocajul acesta argumentativ nu ar fi devenit unul fără ieșire pentru adepții teoriei tracizante, ca ci pentru totii celorlalte teorii ale originarității *Obiceiului Pământului*, dacă toți aceștia ar fi beneficiat de suficiente cunoștințe prietoare la ce înseamnă de fapt un fenomen folcloric, dar și noțiuni despre ce presupun metodele de cercetare la teren, informații care ar fi putut să-i ajute să-și verifice și să-și întărească studiul comod de cabinet al puținelor documente existente în biblioteci (pravile, codice, coduri, etc) cu investigația cercetarea concretă a manifestărilor juridice obișnuielnice românești cu caracter folcloric, încă nestinse în secolul al XIX-lea.

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<sup>4</sup> Examinând formele civilizației dacice, Vasile Pârvan susținea că istoria națiunii daco-romane era încă dinainte cu patru sute de ani înainte de Hristos o națiune „larg culturală”.

<sup>5</sup> N. Iorga, *Scurtă privire asupra Obiceiului Neamului Românesc*, 1939, p. 5.

Interesați profund de viața și istoria geto-dacă, dar fără a îndrăzni să afirme că vechiul drept românesc s-ar origina cumva în aceasta, B.P. Hașdeu și Vasile Pârvan, autori valorificați, de altfel, de către susținătorii curentului tracizant, susțin alături de Gr. I. Alexandrescu, Grigore Tocilescu ori Ștefan Longinescu, Nicolae Blaremburg că *Obiceiul Pământului* și-ar avea originea, de fapt, în dreptul roman.

Ceva mai bine argumentată decât teoria tracizantă, teoria originii romane a *Obiceiului Pământului* s-a bucurat de succes în rândul intelectualelor români, dând însă la rândul său ocazie unor serii de exagerări la fel de mari ca cele inspirate din *Dacia preistorică* a lui N. Densusianu. Pornind de la constatarea că limba română este prin structura și lexicul său o limbă de sorginte latină, că urmele latine se întrevăd, de fapt, în toate manifestările vieții cotidiene românești, de la cele religioase la cele artistice, adepții acestei teorii au considerat că reminiscențele în cauză nu au cum să nu se găsească și în manifestările juridice ale poporului român. Faptul latinității civilizației românești și prin urmare și caracterul roman al *Obiceiului Pământului* ar trebui să ne devină cu atât mai evidente cu cât noi suntem siliți să recunoaștem forța și influența civilizației române la nord de Dunăre, continuitatea neîntreruptă a românilor în zona carpato-danubiană, caracterul latin al creștinismului românesc.

Astfel, dacă pentru Gr. I. Alexandrescu „poporul român, în ciuda barbarilor năvălitori, trăiește și astăzi de sine stătător, cu marca latinității și originalității lui, așa precum a răsărit, ca o vlăstară tânără și viguroasă, din puternica sămânță romană, azvîrlită în fertilul pământ al Daciei.”<sup>6</sup>, pentru Grigore Tocilescu devine firesc ca acesta “să aibă în sânul său un drept, Obiceiul Pământului, moștenit de la muma Romă, drept nescris, care se manifestă din primele momente ale existenței noastre ca națiune, un drept latin, rămas după invazia barbarilor, și care a fost modificat mai târziu de dreptul scris extern bizantin...”<sup>7</sup>

Afirmațiile lor sunt întărite de Ștefan Longinescu care, neîndoindu-se „că regulile de drept roman, care au cărmuit Dacia atât în vremea Românilor cât și în vremea Bizantinilor, au putut continua să se aplice ca și în Moldova, sub formă de obiceiuri ale pământului”<sup>8</sup>, concluzionează că aceste reguli romane, aduse de colonoști trebuie să se găsească și în pravila lui

<sup>6</sup> G. I. Alexandrescu, *Studiu asupra istoriei generale a dreptului*, 1905, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> G. Tocilescu, *Juriul la români*, în *Foaia Societății Românilor*, 1870, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> S.G. Longinescu, *Istoria dreptului românesc*, 1929, p. 10.

Vasile Lupu, cel care „a făcut ca dreptul roman să fie primit a doua oară în Moldova, nu în starea de odinioară, ci așa cum se aplica pe atunci în apusul Europei...”.<sup>9</sup>

Folosindu-se inclusiv de studiile și descoperirile unor istorici occidentali precum F. Savigny, Fitting, Flach, P. F. Girard, dar mai ales K. Mitteis și T. Mommsen - autori care dovedeau prin traducerea tăblițelor cerate cu caracter juridic de secol II d. Hr. de la Roșia Montană, faptul menținerii dreptului roman vulgar în provinciile estice ale Imperiului Român, inclusiv după invaziile barbare - adepții teoriei latiniste își manifestau convingerea că viața romană, atât de pronunțat atestată în Dacia, a pătruns adânc și fără de ștergere în sufletul populației autohtone și după retragerea aureliană. Își manifestau însă o convingere poate prea puternică care i-a împiedicat să-și documenteze concret tezele privitoare la geneza romană a instituțiilor juridice românești. Analizând lucrările acestor autori, observăm, într-adevăr, că din ele lipsește analiza genealogică particulară a diverselor norme juridice ale Obiceiului Pământului care să demonstreze legătura lor cu dreptul roman. Este vorba de o întreprindere teoretică care i-ar fi pus în fața unor dificultăți insurmontabile, precum acelea de a arăta că practicile juridice de bază ale *Obiceiului Pământului*, precum protimisul, frăția de moșie, cojuratorii, etc își au corespondent în dreptul roman, ori că instituția fundamentală dreptului românesc, co-devălmășia, în jurul căreia găsim construit, de fapt, întreg Obiceiul Pământului se originează în legislația latină.

Aceeași convingere puternică despre originea latină a românilor i-a împiedicat mai apoi pe latiniști să-și evalueze critic intuițiile istorice necesare imaginării adecvate a proceselor socio-culturale ce au însoțit romanizarea. Deși cultura română a pătruns în mod evident în ținuturile de la nord de Dunăre, chiar înainte de cucerirea Daciei de către romani, și deși este la fel de evident, că după această cucerire, teritoriul și orașele Daciei au fost supuse de către romani unui accentuat proces de colonizare și organizare administrativă, la fel de evident trebuie să ne fie faptul că populația băștinașă, concentrată în majoritate la sate, însușindu-și mai mult sau mai puțin obiceiurile, portul și ceremoniile religioase ale negustorilor, coloniștilor, legionarilor și administrația romane cu care vrând-nevrând se afla în contact, nu avea cum să asimileze întreaga cultură romană, mai ales aspectele tehnice, complicate și savante ale dreptului roman cuprins în aceasta. Iată

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 33.

de ce trebuie să ne fie mai presus de îndoială că normele de viață ale locuitorilor provinciei Dacia au fost cu totul altele decât cele aplicate la Roma, ori în celalate provincii ale Imperiului Roman. Situația aceasta este cu atât mai lesne de probat, mai ales, dacă discutăm despre perioada celei de-a doua jumătăți a secolului al III-lea, perioadă marcată de retragerea aureliană a administrației, armatei, și negustorimii romane din Dacia. Ducându-și viața pe mai departe în teritoriile fostei provincii, băștinașii, coloniștii și veteranii rămași în urma retragerii din 270 d.Hr. au trebuit să facă față nenumăratelor valuri de migratori barbari și să se adapteze noilor condiții de viață impuse de acestea. Din necesitatea conviețuirii cu barbarii au apărut, desigur, anumite obiceiuri juridice, despre care cu greu am putea să ne imaginăm astăzi că au fost de origine romană, în condițiile în care, oricum, cu mare dificultate, am putea crede că ele au fost înțelese, asumate și aplicate în timpul romanizării de către comunitățile băștinașe.

După retragerea aureliană, începând cu secolul al VI-lea, pe teritoriile nord dunărene pătrund și staționează timp de mai multe secole triburile slave, triburi care sfârșesc prin a fi asimilate de populația băștinașă, nu înainte ca ele să-și pună la rândul lor amprenta asupra acestei populații. Pentru unii istorici români precum slaviștii, Ion Bogdan, Ilie Bărbulescu, D. Onciul, N. Iorga, Iorgu Iordan, Ovid Densusianu ori P.P Panaitescu, această amprenta se dovedește mai puternică decât ne-am aștepta: „fără această înrâurire, ne spun aceștia, nu poate fi vorba de poporul român”.<sup>10</sup>

Autori de mai sus își susține teza prin dovezi filologice articulate care atestă prezența unei serioase moșteniri slave în limba română, descoperită în toponimia și onomastica românească, în terminologia religioasă, economică și politică de la noi, moștenire care ne obligă să considerăm elementul slav ca preponderent în limba română. Firește, dacă moștenirea slavă (atestată în principal lingvistic) este atât de prezentă în domeniile vieții culturale românești, ea nu poate să nu se regăsească și în vechile instituții juridice românești. De altfel, A.D. Xenopol este unul din primii istorici care a afirmat că vechile instituții juridice românești au, ca urmare a văditei influențe culturale a slavilor asupra băștinașilor daco-romani un neîndoielnic caracter slav. Lui i se adaugă numeroși juriști și universitari precum George Popovici, Paul Negulescu, Ion Peretz ori C. Dissescu, care analizând câteva instituții importante ale Obiceiului Pământului, *comunitatea de familie, pro-*

<sup>10</sup> Ioan Bogdan, *Istoriografia română și problemele ei actuale*, București, Institut. De Arte Grafice „Carol Göbl”, București, 1905, p. 21.

*timisul, sistemul administrativ, boeriile, inegalitatea copiilor la moșteniri, frăția de cruce, cojurătorii, șerbua*, ce se întâlnesc și în dreptul slav, concluzionează că vechiul drept românesc a apărut ca efect al grefării unor dispoziții ale dreptului slav pe fondul cel vechi roman, drept slav care este infiltrat nu doar în *Obiceiul Pământului*, ci și în pravilele scrise, el fiind în vigoare la noi până la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea, epocă în care noi am împrumutat noul drept francez.

Afirmațiile lui C. Dissescu sunt întărite și de Paul Negulescu, cel care, aflat în polemică cu Ion Nădejde, demonstrează pe bază de documente cât de importantă a fost înrâurirea slavă asupra *Obiceiului Pământului*, încheind în *Studii de Istoria dreptului roman*, astfel: „...se poate spune că principiile slave au avut o mare influență, poate cea mai considerabilă în dezvoltarea instituțiilor noastre[...] în ce privește însă dreptul nescris, *Obiceiul Pământului*, știm că în cea mai mare parte el este de origină slavă. E necontestabil că influența slavă a fost covârșitoare la noi în țară...”<sup>11</sup>

Totuși, deși teoria caracterului slav al *Obiceiului Pământului* se sprijină pe cercetările unor nume mari ale istoriei românești, ea este departe de a fi întemeiată. Lăsând la o parte obiecțiile generale pe care le avem față de orice teorie privitoare la originea dreptului cutumiar, obiecții asupra cărora vom reveni la sfârșitul acestei expuneri, nu putem să nu observăm punctele slabe particulare ale acestei poziții.

Întâi faptul că teoria se sprijină și mizează pe o supralicitare a rolului filologiei în cercetările de istorie socială: împrumutul unor cuvinte dintr-o limbă în alta nu este obligatoriu urmat și de un împrumut al realităților și instituțiilor la care aceste cuvinte se referă. Într-adevăr, nu putem deduce din constatarea filologică în limba română a unor termeni juridici de origine slavă, existența concretă în viața Românilor a instituțiilor juridice slave pe care acești termeni le semnifică.

Apoi ea nu poate explica diferențele categorice ce apar între instituțiile și procedurile de drept românesc și acelea slave, mai cu seamă cele legate de regimul juridic al proprietății, componenta centrală a *Obiceiului Pământului*. Asta ca să nu mai amintim de instituțiile și procedurile românești ce reglementează regimul libertății, egalității și responsabilității personale. Astfel, obiceiurile procedurale ale “*gineriiri pe curte*”, cele ale “*privilegiului ultimogeniturii masculine*”, “*răzbunării private*” și “*împăcării*”, cele ale “*jură-*

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Negulescu, *Studii de Istoria dreptului român*, Editura Tip. Gutenberg, Joseph Göbl, București, 1900, p. 6.

*mântului cu brazda pe cap*", ale „*protimisulului*” „*frăției de moșie*” și „*cojurarii*”, odată trecute printr-o analiză riguroasă ne apar ca substanțial deosebite de acelea ale slavilor. Afirmând aceste obiecții, și recunoscând totodată dovezile incontestabile ale influenței slavilor asupra culturii juridice românești, considerăm că este cu mult mai credibil pentru cazul de față, să vorbim, nu de o înrădăcinare a *Obiceiului Pământului* în culturile populațiilor slave, ci mai degrabă, de o conviețuire a acestora entități, conviețuire care a permis, în timp, nenumărate influențe și schimburi reciproce.

Ca un soi de anexă la teoria originii slave a *Obiceiului Pământului*, prezentăm, mai departe, *teoria originii bizantine* a vechiului drept românesc. Potrivit acelorași, Nicolae Iorga, Ion Peretz ori D. Russo, influența laică și religioasă a Bizanțului asupra Țărilor Române, desfășurată prin intermediul bisericilor și mănăstirilor de la noi, responsabile de împrumutarea și tălmăcirea în slavonă a legilor laice și canonice ale Constantinopolului la Nord de Dunăre, dar și de transferurile culturale, de anvergură, ale patrimoniului bizantin în viața românească, în domenii ca cel artistic ori social politic, a trebuit să se răsfrângă de timpuriu și asupra vechiului drept românesc. Ca urmare a acestei răsfrângerii, am fi siliți să recunoaștem faptul că unele din instituțiile fundamentale ale *Obiceiului Pământului* sunt marcate de o puternică și neîndoielnică amprentă bizantină. Dincolo de aceste considerații generale, teoria originii bizantine a *Obiceiului Pământului*, neputând să se sprijine pe argumente concrete, este de la început contrazisă de dovezi factuale. Într-adevăr, diferența dintre dispozițiile *Obiceiului Pământului* și legislația bizantină este atât de evidentă, încât ne scutește de orice discuție. Totuși, ea poate să facă loc întrebării cu privire la cauzele acestei severe deosebiri între dreptul obișnuielnic românesc și dreptul bizantin, deosebire apărută în ciuda frecventului contact dintre civilizația românească și cea bizantină. Este vorba de o întrebare la care nu putem avea decât două răspunsuri: sau *Obiceiul Pământului* a fost format deja în momentul în care populațiile românești au intrat în contact cu Bizanțul, sau instituțiile dreptului bizantin, spre deosebire de cele ale *Obiceiului Pământului* au fost prea savante, complicate și greu de înțeles românii acelor timpuri, pentru a mai putea înțelege și urmate.

Oricum ar fi, deosebirea de fond dintre dreptul cutumiar valah și societatea veche românească, pe de o parte și legislația greco-bizantină, model al pravilelor și codurile românești din secolele XVII-XIX –lea pe de altă parte, este confirmată nu doar de vădita inaderența istorică a acestei legislații la condițiile de viață românești, ci și de eșecul sistematic al legiuitorilor

din acea perioada de a o împământeni la nivelul comunitatilor agrare traditionale.

Din expunerea teoriilor privitoare la geneza *Obiceiului Pământului* nu trebuie să lipsească teoria originii maghiaro-germane a dreptului obișnuielnic românesc. Având la baza tezele lui A.D. Xenopol<sup>12</sup>, Mihail V. Demetrescu ori Grigore I. Alexandrescu privitoare la originea germană a anumitor așezăminte juridice valahe, mai cu seamă cea a cojurătorilor, această teorie a fost susținută cu precădere de I.D. Condurachi potrivit căruia “dacă ținem seama de contactul avut de Români, în cursul vremurilor, cu diferite neamuri, este exclus ca dreptul românesc nescris să nu se modificat sau, în unele privințe, chiar transformat prin acest contact. De aceea, consider ca hotărâtoare o influență ungaro-germană asupra Obiceiului Pământului. În adevăr, practicile juridice rudimentare, pe care le aveau Românii, la apariția lor în istorie ca mici organizațiuni cneziale și voevodale, au fost puternic influențate de dreptul ungar și german, care au contribuit, într-o largă măsură, la formarea Obiceiului Pământului, așa cum îl constatăm în documentele ungurești și în cele din Principatele române, începând din primele decenii de la întemeierea lor”<sup>13</sup>

Deși I.D. Condurache recunoaște faptul că românii din Transilvania dețineau încă dinainte de *regnum Hungariae* un drept propriu, îngăduit ulterior în principat de înșiși regii maghiari și atestat pentru secolele XIII-XIV în cronicile cancelariei ungare ca : „*antiqua et approbata lex districtuum volachialium universonum*”, „*ritus volachie*”, „*ius volachie*”, „*patriosque ritus*”, el considera că intensificarea dependenței satelor românești de comitatele nobile ungurești, asimilarea în timp a cnejilor, juzilor și a celorlalte categorii conducătoare românești, nobilimii maghiare, și integrarea cnezatelor și

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<sup>12</sup> “Cât despre faptul că juriul sau jurătorii ar fi așezământ roman, care nici odată nu ar fi fost cunoscut de popoarele germane, asemenea părere este atât de potrivnică acelei unanimități cercetătorilor instituțiilor juridice, în cât credem de prisos a o mai combate cu amănuntul. Este admis ca un adevăr neîndoielnic de către toate autoritățile în materie de drept, că sistemul roman de judecată se deosebea radical de acel german, cel întâi primind ca justiția să fie rostită de organele statului, cel de al doilea, făcând din ea atribuție a poporului. Juriul este deci de origine germană; de aceea s-a dezvoltat el la poporul acela ce au fost mai puțin supus de cât toate celelalte înrâuriri romane” (A.D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiana*, vol. VII, 1929, p. 127).

<sup>13</sup> I.D. Condurache, *Obiceiul pământului. Formarea vechiului drept românesc nescris*, Institutul Cartografic Unirea, Brașov, 1935, p. 24.

voevodatelor românești în organizarea administrativă ungară au supus acest drept obișnuielnic unei puternice influențe venite din partea dreptului maghiar, și au contribuit astfel la modificarea adâncă a lui.

Înrâurirea Obiceiului Pământului de către legislația maghiară nu se lasă explicată, în opinia sa, doar de constrângerile socio-culturale pe care comunitățile românești transilvane le-au suferit de pe urma politicilor autorităților maghiare, ci și de anumiți factori etnici, cum ar fi puterea de receptivitate și mai ales spiritul de imitație specific românilor. Lor li se adaugă faptul că dreptul ungar ca și acela valah ar fi fost formate amândouă într-un mediu de cultură romanică. Numai ținând cont de acestea toate putem explica de ce „multe dispozițiuni și practice juridice au trecut din dreptul maghiar în cel românesc, de ce alte norme din dreptul românesc au fost numai modificate prin contactul cu dreptul ungar[...], dreptul națiunii stăpânitoare”<sup>14</sup>

Totuși, susținătorii acestei teorii nu se limitează la a vorbi doar despre înrâurirea maghiară a *Obiceiului Pământului*. Ei vorbesc în egală măsură și despre existența unei influențe germane pe care dreptul cutumiar românesc ar fi înregistrat-o de-a lungul vremii. E vorba de o influență explicată de așezarea, începând cu secolul al XII-lea, a coloniștilor germani proveniți din Flandra, Rinul de mijloc, Luxemburg, ori din nordul Germaniei în zone din Transilvania și în sud-estul Carpaților, acolo unde, în centre teritoriale compacte, ei și-au organizat și desfășurat viața după obiceiuri juridice proprii. Prin așezările lor din țara Bârsei, Bistrița și Rodna, din regiunea Sibiului ori de pe Târnavă, din Cârța și Brașov, din Făgăraș, Câmpulung ori de pe Siret, etnicii germani au servit ca model - în special în ceea ce privește organizarea orășenească - a comunităților românești băștinașe și au contribuit astfel la schimbarea vieții lor juridice. Înrâurirea maghiaro-germană a *Obiceiului Pământului* survenită, în mod surprinzător, încă dinainte de constituirea statelor medievale românești și manifestată pe întreaga perioadă a Evului Mediu, nu a afectat - în opinia lui Condurachi - doar comunitățile românești din Transilvania, ci în egală măsură și comunitățile românești de peste Carpați. Așa se face că “dacă de vechiul drept românesc de peste munți nu se mai pomenește nimic în documentele ungurești după a doua jumătate a veacului al XVI-lea, constatăm, în schimb, în documentele din cele două Principate Române, începând chiar din primele decenii de la în-

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<sup>14</sup> I.D., Condurache, *Ibidem*, p. 29.

temeierea lor, existența unui drept consuetudinar românesc, ce se formase sub influența ungaro-germană”<sup>15</sup>

Teza aceasta ar fi dovedită printre altele de forma de inspirație maghiară pe care actele domnești, altfel scrise în slavonă, ale cancelariei Moldovei o aveau și o respectau încă odată cu secolul al XIV-lea, precum și de anumite așezăminte ale dreptului obișnuielnic românesc printre care confirmarea domnească de stăpânire a proprietății, instituția protimisului, practica aldămașului, egalitatea la moștenire a femeii și bărbatului, instituția cojuratorilor, jurământul cu brazda pe cap etc, procedura împăcării dintre părți în schimbul unei despăgubiri oferite părții lezate, etc, care ar demonstra toată influența dreptului ungaro-german. Explicată prin trăsăturile etice românești, prin conviețuirea dintre români, maghiari și germani, precum și prin fondul cultural comun de sorginte romanică în care s-a constituit atât legislația maghiară, germană și valahă, această influență este considerată - de partizanii originii ungaro-teutonice a vechiului drept românesc - a fi singura influență hotărâtoare în formarea și evoluția *Obiceiului Pământului*.

### **7. Neajunsurile teoriilor despre originea *Obiceiului Pământului***

Încheind scurta expunere a teoriilor privitoare la originea *Obiceiului Pământului*, mărturisim că, în ciuda diversității acestora, din punct de vedere formal, pentru noi, toate aceste teorii nu se deosebesc cu nimic unele de altele.

Întâi de toate, ele sunt constituite, așa cum am mai amintit, cu începere de la ridicarea unei false probleme: cea a originii externe a dreptului cutumiar. Într-adevăr, dacă o instituție culturală se găsește înrădăcinată în comunitatea de viață umană pe care o servește, atunci orice încercare de a-i explica geneza prin recurs la o sursă situată în afara sferei de viață a acestei comunități, privează de sens nu doar instituția în cauză, dar și comunitatea însăși la care aceasta ar trebui să facă referire.

Apoi, pentru că, aproape fără excepție, adepții acestor teorii au căutat să rezolve problema originii *Obiceiului Pământului*, adunând, fără metodă, diverse frânturi și conținuturi disparate ale dreptului cutumiar românesc cu scopul de a le compara ulterior cu presupusele lor surse juridice originare, unele din ele cu totul dispărute, (traco-dace, romane, bizantine, etc), pe

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem.*, p. 30.

care, atunci când nu le-au avut la îndemână, le-au reconstituit după cum au găsit de cuviință. Într-adevăr, fără a studia în prealabil și pe îndelete ce este Obiceiul Pământului, nu ne putem pune temeinic în situația de a-i căuta izvoarele.

Mai mult, pentru că în toate aceste teorii, istoricii români, formați la școala idealismului nesocotesc caracterul folcloric al dreptului obișnuielnic, împrumutând fără voie *Obiceiului Pământului* o parte a trăsăturilor specifice corpurilor juridice scrise. Reducând folclorul la literatura populară, ei ratează perspectiva din lăuntru a căreia se poate reprezenta adecvat fizionomia dreptului obișnuielnic românesc. Odată cu ratarea acesteia, teoriile lor pornesc de la presupuziția potrivit căreia izvoarele obiceiurilor juridice cutumiare trebuie căutate în mod exclusiv în legislațiile scrise pentru a fi logificate și codificate cu începere de la ele. Vorbim de o presupuziție care a încurajat printre cercetători docta și lejera muncă de bibliotecă, scutindu-i, în același timp, de anevoioasele, dar atât de necesarele cercetări directe la teren ale ansamblului instituțional – juridic al *Obiceiului Pământului*.

În sfârșit, pentru că, deși unele din aceste teorii tratează *Obiceiului Pământului* ca pe o creație folclorică, ele sfârșesc asemeni tuturor celorlalte, prin a o considera ca pe o sumă de rămășițe, impure, disjuncte și dezordonate ale unei de mult dispărute culturi tradiționale, o sumă de relicve care ar trebui întregită și supusă unor operații de logificare ori după caz, de codificare juridică „*ad legem ferenda*” necesare atât practicii filologice, cât și nevoilor interne ale justiției actuale.

Parte a culturii folclorice românești, mijlocind adaptarea comunităților țărănești la mediul lor natural și social de viață, *Obiceiul Pământului* nu este nici o simplă producție artistică populară, nici vreun *text* literar de sine stătător, care ar putea să facă obiectul exclusiv al analizelor hermeneutice; îndeplinind, în calitatea sa de componentă a culturii spirituale, economice și politice a comunității țărănești, mai mult decât o funcție juridică, *Obiceiul pământului* devine imposibil de înțeles în afara întregului său complex socio-cultural de proveniență. A-l studia separat de acesta va fi nu doar efectul unei grave erori teoretice, ci și prilejul unei regretabile pierderi academice de vreme.

Evident, noi nu suntem în măsură să negăm legitimitatea ridicării problemei posibilelor influențe ale dreptului traco-daco-getic, român, slav, bizantin, maghiar ori german asupra *Obiceiului Pământului*. Dreptul obișnuielnic românesc poartă cel mai probabil amprenta influenței acestor așezăminte juridice. Totuși, una este a identifica influența acestor așezăminte

te asupra dreptului cutumiar românesc, alta este a le desemna ca surse ale sale. A nu face această diferență înseamnă a reduce geneza dreptului cutumiar românesc la condiția unui simplu proces aculturativ și a uita, prin comiterea unei grave erori metodologice, de capacitatea proprie de manifestare culturală a comunităților românești, capacitate cu care, fără excepție, este înzestrată orice colectivitate umană.

### 8. Influența Statului asupra Obiceiului Pământului

Normele Obiceiului Pământului, provenite din necesitățile conviețuirii țăranilor români în diversele lor organizații sociale au suferit de-a lungul timpului modificări nu doar ca urmare a contactului pe care aceștia l-au avut cu alte neamuri, ci și sub influența aparatului de stat prin care s-au lăsat administrați.

Într-adevăr, “după întemeierea celor două Principate, al Țării Românești și al Moldovei, și după instalarea la conducerea noilor state a unei Domnii autonome, multe din normele Obiceiului Pământului, care păreau pe deplin fixate și admise ca o lege a țării, au suferit, în aplicarea lor, unele modificări sau chiar transformări totale sub înrâurirea Domnitorilor și a Divanurilor țării.”<sup>16</sup>

Deși nu putem cântări ponderea pe care fiecare domnie autohtonă a avut-o în modificarea dispozițiilor dreptului obișnuielnic românesc, știm cu siguranță că activitatea administrativă a centralelor statale din Moldova și Țara Românească a condus la uniformizarea și apropierea în timp a diferitelor obiceiuri juridice țărănești din teritoriu, unele care în ciuda unității lor de fond, variau nu doar de la o regiune la alta, ci și de la o comunitate la alta. Această modificare a fost favorizată și de caracterul militar al vechilor state românești, caracter ce impunea administrarea puterii printr-o conducere unică.

Totuși, influența acestui caracter nu trebuie exagerată. Deși este adevărat că domnitorul român concentra în mână sa atât puterea militară cât și pe acelea legiuitoare, executivă și judecătorească, aceste puteri nu aveau un caracter discreționar. Fără a putea acționa asemeni un despot, investit cu puteri absolute și considerat de origine divină, domnul “deținea în ambele principate, o putere, care departe de a fi absolută, era îngrădită de o parte de așezămintele dreptului nescris, «Obiceiul Pământului», care corespunde atât de deplin și de precis acelei *consuetudo terrae* amintite de documentele

<sup>16</sup> I.D. Condurachi, *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

Evului Mediu apusean, de alta de sfatul principalilor demnitari, pe care îi consulta în toate împrejurările insemnate. El nu, așadar, era un autocrat obișnuit să dispună fără nici o considerație de persoana și bunurile supușilor săi”.<sup>17</sup>

Astfel, deși “principiul separației puterilor în stat era necunoscut în vechea organizație judecătorească”<sup>18</sup>, fapt care permitea săvârșirea a numeroase abuzuri, Domnul era îngrădit și supus înainte de toate “*Legii țării*”, cu alte cuvinte de “*Obiceiului Pământului*”. Trebuie să spunem că “*Legea țării*”, creație anonimă a *Obștilor Sătești* supunea în principiu imaginația, voința și judecata Domnului. Existau însă trei căi prin intermediul cărora Domnia și clasa boierească a aparatului de stat puteau modifica *Obiceiul Pământului*.

Departea de a avea vreo putere în modificarea directă a dispozițiilor acestuia, domnitorul putea să-și pună amprenta asupra lor întâi prin interpretarea pe care le-o dădea în practica aplicării acestora. De altfel, acesta este unul din mecanismele cele mai la îndemână prin care *Domnul* împreună cu Sfatul Domnesc au putut să modifice *Obiceiul Pământului* până în secolul al XVI-lea. Într-adevăr, dacă *Domnul* nu are puterea directă de a modifica *Obiceiul Pământului*, el deține însă rangul cel mai înalt în a-l aplica: așa se face că el are responsabilitatea de a judeca cazurile juridice cele mai grave și mai complicate. Nu o face însă niciodată de unul singur, ci întotdeauna alături de Sfatul Domnesc. Intervenția Sfatului Domnesc este necesară mai ales atunci când trebuie să judece cazuri noi, aflate în afara obișnuințelor de interpretare ale *Obiceiului Pământului*, ori cazuri excepționale ce nu sunt nici măcar acoperite de dispozițiile acestuia. În aceste situații, lipsit de autoritatea și de suportul *Obiceiului Pământului*, *Domnul* judecă fie arbitrar, după bunul plac, fie *pravo* după bunul simț.

Rezolvarea acestor cazuri reprezintă cea de-a doua cale indirectă de modificare a *Obiceiului Pământului*, deși am putea spune mai degrabă că pe această cale se crează un addendum la *Obiceiul Pământului* decât o modificare a acestuia.

Cea de-a treia cale de modificare indirectă a *Obiceiului Pământului* este reprezentată de practicile juridice de confirmare hrisovială a actelor de proprietate privată, de acordarea privilegiilor comerciale, de imunități fiscale, de donații domnești, de convenții juridice cu statele vecine, în general de acte cu caracter feudal care se sustrag normelor juridice comune ale

<sup>17</sup> C.C. Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, II, 1, p. 343.

<sup>18</sup> Condurachi, *Op.cit.*, p. 33.

*Obiceiului Pământului*. Aceste practici juridice, suprapuse dreptului cutumiar, conduc la modificarea *Obiceiului Pământului* prin faptul că ele, conducând la aservirea comunităților țărănești și la consolidarea proprietății boieresti, transformă modelul de raportare al comunității rurale la mediul său de existență<sup>19</sup> precum și structura relațiilor devălmașe de producție, adică întreg ecotipul său țărănesc tradițional<sup>20</sup> și îi alterează, astfel, baza sa structurală.

Totuși, în raport cu obiceiurile juridice românești, puterea de intervenție și creație a domnului este incomparabil mai redusă decât puterea conservatoare a *Obștii Sătești*, instituția și forul de proveniență a *Obiceiului Pământului*. Astfel, comparând puterea de înrâurire a domniei asupra vechiului drept românesc cu aceea deținută de Obștea sătească, am putea spune alături de Nicolae Iorga faptul că "Domnul nu a dat nici o interpretare, nici o sporire, nici o creațiune de drepturi. El nu face, în Moldova ca și în Țara Românească mai veche, decât să confirme și să împartă daniile. El nu este astfel nici legiuitor, nici amestecat în procese cari nu pot să se deschidă din cauza condițiilor încă patriarhale ale țărilor. El își culege dijele, poruncește cu străjnicie să i se facă slujbele, își păzește braniștile etc."<sup>21</sup>

Așa se face că nu toate modificările aduse *Obiceiului Pământului* erau definitive. Multe din ele erau urmate de reveniri la vechile dispoziții ale dreptului comun peste care fuseseră inițial suprapuse. Astfel nu puține sunt cazurile în care, după ce un domnitor a hotărât într-un anume fel într-o chestiune particulară pe perioada stăpânirii sale, aceasta să-și piardă imediat valabilitatea odată cu încheierea acestei stăpâniri și să fie înlocuită dacă nu dispoziția dreptului cutumiar atunci de o nouă hotărâre suprapusă ei stabilită de urmașul acestuia. Când însă modificările juridice erau menținute în uz până la modificarea ecotipurilor țărănești, respectiv până la împământenirea lor în conștiința colectivă, atunci ele ajungeau să înlocuiască vechile dispoziții ale *Obiceiului Pământului* și să sfârșescă prin a fi admise ca *legi ale țării*.

Odată cu implicarea boierimii române în procesele economice de producție, respectiv cu acapararea de către aceasta – începând cu secolul al XVI-lea - a dreptului de proprietate asupra pământului și asupra forței de muncă țărănești capabile să-l muncească, se creează treptat con-

<sup>19</sup> Claude Levi- Strauss, *Toți sîntem niște canibali*, Polirom, Iași, 2014, pp. 57-78.

<sup>20</sup> E.R. Wolf, *Țăranii*, Editura Tehnică, Chișinău, 1998, pp. 19-6.

<sup>21</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Românilor*, vol. III, 1937, p. 117.

dițiile istorice favorabile pentru ca centrala statală controlată de boierime să aspire la mai mult decât la o modificare indirectă a Obiceiul Pământului, și anume la transformarea fățișă a lui, mergând chiar până la a ordona înlocuirea în întregime a acestuia. Cele mai însemnate încercări de acest fel au loc în secolul al XVII-lea la inițiativele lui Vasile Lupu și Matei Basarab, sub autoritatea cărora sunt elaborate și impuse, de altfel, primele legiuiri scrise ale Țărilor Române.

Pravilele lui Vasile Lupu și Matei Basarab nu au avut însă forța de a înlocui Obiceiul Pământului, ele fiind silite să funcționeze în paralel cu vechiul drept românesc<sup>22</sup> sau să se întărească pornind de la acesta până la căderea lor definitivă în desuetudine. Inspirare din dreptul româno-bizantin ori din diverse coduri și publicații apusene, ele formau un corpus juridic de cultură străină, mult prea prea savant, complicat și eclectic pentru a fi primit, înțeles și aplicat în comunitățile române agrare ale secolului al XVII-lea. Fără a avea vreun impact asupra vieții juridice țarnesti, pravilele au sfârșit prin a deveni o legislație cu caracter de clasă, ele fiind folosite mai cu seamă în rezolvarea conflictelor interne ale boierimii ori al aparatului de stat dregătoresc.

Situația a rămas aceeași și pentru Pravilniceasca condică din 1780 a lui Alexandru Ipsilanti, pentru Codul lui Calimah din 1817 ori pentru Legeuirea lui Caragea din 1818, cărora Obiceiul Pământului le-a supraviețuit, silindu-i pe boierii Divanului lui Mihail Sutu II să afirme: „Obiceele pământeste sunt mai puternice decât pravilele și că prin ele se întăresc sau se oboară pravilele ce nu vor fi potrivite cu stările vreunui neam; deci, nu rămâne îndoială că în orice pricină, întâmplându-se a fi pravila cu deosebite de pământescul obicei, acesta negreșit se cuvine a se urma.”<sup>23</sup>

Totuși, ceea ce nu a reușit boierimea feudală până la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea și anume conversiunea juridică/ dezafectarea funcțională la nivel de masă a *Obiceiului Pământului*, a reușit neoburghezia română începând cu a doua jumătate a acestui secol. A reușit acesta nu atât prin procesul de reformare și modernizare a statului român început odată cu anii

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<sup>22</sup> Pravila lui Vasile Lupu, glava 2, glava 4 § 1, glava 56 § 3, glava 8§ 28: „obiciailui leagei are putere”, iar „unde nu e leage scrisă, acolo trebuie să păzim obiceiul locului”, „giudatul giudecă cateodată și în potrivă pravilei pentru acest obicei al locului” în *Carte românescă de învățătură*, Editura Academiei R.P.R, București, 1961, pp. 84-167.

<sup>23</sup> V.A. Urechia, *Istoria românilor*, vol. VII, Tipografia Thoma Basilescu, București, 1897, pp. 524-526.

1859-1866, stat cu care oricum comunitățile agrare/pastorale românești au întreținut în mod tradițional o slabă legătură, cât prin stimularea procesului de pătrundere a capitalismului în viața țărănească tradițională.

Într-adevăr, ar fi o greșală să considerăm că introducerea la baza organizării juridice a statului român modern a Codului Napoleonian și a unei legislației de inspirație apuseană a stat la originea slăbirii și dezafectării dreptului obișnuielnic românesc. Fără dezagregarea prealabilă a vieții tradiționale țărănești, cea în care erau originare și înfipte cadrele și structurile de funcționare ale *Obiceiului Pământului*, acțiunea politică a neoburgheziei românești nu ar fi avut niciun efect. Eșecul anterior al încercării de împământenire juridică a pravilelor domnești începând cu secolul al XVII-lea este, de altfel, grăitor în acest sens.

Totuși, ar fi însă o prejudecată să ne închipuim că dacă procesul de dezagregare al vieții țărănești tradiționale nu a fost efectul prefacerilor politice orchestrate de neoburghezia română, el ar trebui să fie, în schimb, consecința economică exclusivă a forței de pătrundere din afară a capitalistului occidental, un proces care în Principate s-a intensificat fără precedent după 1829.

Ar fi o prejudecată, în primul rând pentru că, trebuie să recunoaștem, capitalismul nu apare/ pătrunde oriunde și oricând în istoria societăților: el apare și pătrunde doar în zonele în care modurile de viață socială permit și sunt deschise dinamicii sale transformatoare, și anume acolo unde nevoile, cunoștințele și scopurile majorității agenților grupurilor sociale caracterizate prin aceste moduri de viață, recunosc, reflectă și comunică – mai mult sau mai puțin - cu oportunitățile de câștig și cu sistemul de principii al pieței libere. Intensificarea pătrunderii capitalismului în vechea Românie începând cu anii 30 ai secolului al XIX-lea nu se lasă explicată, așadar, doar prin deciziile politice ale elitelor românești ori prin urzelile comerciale ale burgheziilor europene, cât mai ales prin efectul unor anumite deschideri, permisi, afinități și comunicări de adâncime existente între principiile și valorile economiei de piață și condițiile culturale ale vieții românești autohtone.

Iată de ce fenomenul accelerării procesului de dezagregare a vieții țărănești tradiționale ca efect al pătrunderii treptate a capitalismului occidental ar trebui să ne ajute să înțelegem un fapt mai puțin intuitiv, și anume că între valorile liberalismului european care legitimează și întrețin economiile pieței libere și valorile culturii *obștilor țărănești pe bază de tradiție difuză* nu există, așa cum ne-am obișnuit a crede în general, o opoziție sis-

temică radicală, ba din contra, o sensibilă și foarte veche unitate de fond. Este vorba de o unitate de fond la care ne referim nu ca la un rezultat evolutiv al diferitelor procese aculturative, uniformizatoare prin care comunitățile românești tradiționale, supuse influenței și presiunii istorice ale societăților occidentale, ar fi ajuns să asimileze bunurile și valorile acestora din urmă, ci ca despre semnul deținerii și de către unele și de către altele a acelorași tipuri de modele mentale și dispoziți de acțiune, elemente comune care pot fi observate în dosul faptelor istorice în ciuda varietății veșmintelor culturale sub care ele au stat acoperite.

Pe baza acestei unități de fond vom fi în măsură să reinterprețăm mult discutatul fenomen de dezagregare a vieții țărănești tradiționale, înțelegându-l acum nu ca pe un proces de corupere și degenerare a acestei vieți societale, ci ca pe unul de evoluție, simplificare și de reînnoire a ei de la rădăcină, după cum tot pe baza ei vom putea să demonstrăm că între vechiul drept obisnuielnic românesc și valorile legislației moderne europene, departe de a exista un hiatus structural, a existat o adâncă, nevăzută și ne bănuită afinitate.

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## Recenzie

Laurențiu Staicu, *Socrate în blugi sau Filosofia pentru adolescenți*, București, Editura Trei, 2020, 366 pp.

Un roman filosofic pentru adolescenți, o introducere în filosofie prietenoasă, atrăgătoare prin stilul narativ al autorului care expune într-un mod cât se poate de accesibil probleme ce au frământat mințile învățaților încă din cele mai vechi timpuri, această carte nu ne poate lăsa indiferenți, începând cu titlul – și o dovadă în acest sens este și recunoașterea valorii ei prin premiul „Ion Petrovici” al Academiei Române, acordat pe 7 decembrie 2022.

O carte în care un „Socrate” contemporan, prin invitație la dialog și provocări speculative, întocmai ca adevăratul Socrate, cel din secolul V î.H., le transmite unor adolescenți învățături despre filosofie, adică acea îndeletnicire a oamenilor care nu se mulțumesc cu aparența lucrurilor, ci caută esențele chiar și în domeniile în care esența stă în aparență (cum se întâmplă în artă).

Înțeleptul antic le-a deschis mințile tinerilor din vremea sa, iar lecțiile lui a fost atât de convingătoare și exemplul său de cetățean responsabil atât de puternic, încât după sfârșitul tragic al maestrului, după cum se știe, unul dintre ucenici, Platon, a făcut din el personajul principal al *Dialogurilor* sale: operă fundamentală a umanității, pe care Whitehead a situat-o atât de sus, încât a afirmat că tot ce s-a scris după aceea în filosofia medievală și modernă este o lungă notă de subsol la aceasta.

Într-adevăr, în *Dialoguri*, prin intermediul lui Socrate, personajul principal care puneă întrebări meșteșugite pentru a afla adevărul căutat împreună cu învățăceii săi, Platon a povestit filosofic despre tot ceea ce îl poate interesa pe om atât din punct de vedere al cunoașterii raționale, cât și al vieții personale și sociale: despre realitate, lume, ființă, despre suflet, despre bine și frumos, despre legi, despre dreptate, despre adevăr, despre iubire, despre idei, despre lucruri drept copii ale ideilor, despre metafizică, despre libertate, despre virtute, despre fericire.

Ei bine, actualizându-le pe toate acestea, „Socrate” în blugi cel din zilele noastre, de altfel un distins profesor univesitar de filosofie ajuns la vârsta maximei înțelepciuni îi înțiază pe liceenii Radu (nepotul său) și Tudor (prietenu nepotului) în tainele filosofiei – într-un loc pitoresc, situat într-o zonă de deal, în mijlocul naturii, tot așa cum Socrate își expunea învățături-

le dialogale nu numai în *agora* ateniană, dar și în plimbări îndelungi, în afara orașului, printre platani.

Timp de șase zile, pornind la drum însoțiți de lătratul vesel al dulăului Hector, cel mai fidel „discipol”, inițial sceptici (mai ales Radu) sau refractari (Tudor), cei doi adolescenți, datorită discursului deopotrivă cald și convingător al profesorului Toma (Socrate cel din zilele noastre) înțeleg binefacerea și rostul filosofiei în viața lor și în lumea de azi, în devenirea lor ca adulți pe care rațiunile practice nu trebuie să-i împiedice să viseze: „(...) Dacă stăm să ne gândim puțin, viața de zi cu zi e un soi de metafizică aplicată pentru fiecare dintre noi (...) Fiecare dintre noi trăiește pe fundalul unei viziuni metafizice despre lume, crezând, de pildă, că anumite tipuri de entități sunt reale, altele nu (...) Dar ele, așa cum am văzut, merită toată atenția noastră, merită să fie chestionate (...)” (pp.136-137).

Această gândire iscoditoare tipic filosofică, i se transmite cititorului (i.e. adolescentul ideal, visător) pentru a-i arăta că filosofia poate oferi nu numai o viziune adecvată asupra lumii cât mai apropiată de adevăr, dar și o mai bună înțelegere a sinelui, o deschidere spre descoperirea identității personale, o cale spre împlinirea propriei vieți nu numai prin posibilitățile materiale de a fi un consumator al celor mei recente produse. De exemplu, în problema binelui (află din carte adolescenții imaginari, prin intermediul personajului Toma), Aristotel, elevul lui Platon, pornind de la ideea că „oamenii sunt ființe menite să trăiască în comunitate, laolaltă, de unde și nevoia de a se călăuzi după reguli morale” considera că „Nu poți trăi în comunitate, împreună cu alții, dacă nu te străduiești să fii mai bun, dacă nu te gândești cum trebuie să te comporți în raport cu ceilalți”. Profesorul Toma le explică celor doi discipoli cât de actual (și valabil) este acest gând aristotelic: „E în regulă, desigur, să te îngrijești de propria ta bunăstare, dar nu trebuie să uiți că bunăstarea ta depinde, într-o măsură foarte mare, de bunăstarea întregii comunități. Asta e un lucru pe care unii gânditori de azi, susținători înfocați ai libertății individuale, par să-l uite sau să-l ignore, la grămadă cu alte idei de-ale anticilor, care nu mai sunt potrivite azi, fără îndoială. Dar asta e, în continuare, o idee importantă, care ar trebui să ne ferească de excesul de a ne gândi numai la bunăstarea proprie sau doar a celor apropiați nouă și atât” (pp. 358-359).

Cele șase capitole ale cărții lui Laurențiu Staicu (I: Originile; II: Realitatea; III: Adevărul; IV: Libertatea; V: Binele; VI: Iubirea) sunt precedate de un „Prolog” (unde sunt prezentate cele două personaje-elevi, Radu și Tudor) și de un revelator „Cuvânt-înainte” sub forma unei scrisori adresate

unui adolescent imaginar, văzut ca „un tânăr visător, rebel și mistuit de dorința de a face ceva important cu viața lui, de a-și aduce contribuția la o lume mai bună” care, fără îndoială „are nevoie de filosofie” (pp. 13-14). Și aceasta pentru că: „filosofia ar putea sau ar trebui să fie privită nu doar ca o disciplină utilă pe traseul maturizării noastre cognitive și emoționale, ci și ca o propedeutică pentru viața de adult”; filosofia îl poate ajuta pe adolescent „să-și dezvolte capacitatea de a analiza rațional lumea” (p. 14), căci „după ce învățăm să comunicăm prin intermediul unei limbi oarecare, nimic nu e mai important decât abilitatea de a gândi critic, sistematic și profund” (p. 16).

Cum „în privința cunoașterii, adolescența nu se încheie niciodată” (p.18), o introducere în filosofie ca aceasta poate fi convingătoare pentru că temele de discuție alese sunt unele pe care „nu le poți evita în viață, oricum ai încerca să trăiești și oricare ar fi țelul după care te vei ghida pe parcurs” (p. 21). Dintre acestea, de exemplu, în privința libertății este important de știut că „nu orice restrângere a libertății este un lucru rău”, că „unele limite sunt bune, chiar necesare pentru a putea dobândi ulterior libertăți mai ample” (p. 21).

Legat de adevăr și familia acestei noțiuni, profesorul Toma precizează, pe scurt: „Faptele sunt ceva care există în lume, pur și simplu, nu pot fi adevărate sau false. Doar opiniile noastre despre ele pot fi astfel” (p. 141). În problema empirismului și a raționalismului este adus un elogiu geniului lui Kant: „Odată ce înțelegem că ceea ce numim cunoaștere este rezultatul colaborării, ca să spunem așa, între simțuri și intelect, nu mai are sens să încercăm să arătăm care dintre cele două surse este mai tare, cum făceau Locke și Descartes, într-un fel” (p. 148).

Cum tema iubirii este foarte importantă, autorul îl „previne” pe adolescentul imaginar că dincolo de imaginea „pe care o proiectăm noi înșine asupra persoanei reale”, „Dragostea perpetuă cere o muncă susținută, un exercițiu constant al imaginației și gândirii” (p. 23) și se poate spune că începe „abia când nu mai ești îndrăgostit” (p. 24).

În „Epilogul” acestei (în mod paradoxal) dense și aerisite cărți aflăm că vacanța petrecută pe „dealul lui Toma” (p.357) a rămas un reper în discuțiile celor doi băieți, de unde putem deduce că personajul principal a jucat un rol în decizia lui Radu de a se înscrie la Filosofie, și a lui Tudor, de a urma Informatica (spre dezamăgirea trecătoare a părinților celor doi, care și-ar fi dorit alte cariere pentru băieții lor). Ultima scenă este începutul unui

urcuș al celor trei personaje însoțite de un cățel, pe deal, dar și pe „cărarea filosofiei” (p. 366).

Scriitorul însuși, profesorul Laurențiu Staicu de la Facultatea de Filosofie a Universității din București a dedicat această carte celui pe care îl consideră maestrul său, profesorul Vasile Tonoiu, la rândul său autorul unei cărți cu titlul *Omul dialogal* (1995) și al altor lucrări din ultima parte a vieții (3 februarie 1941 – 9 iunie 2023), expuse sub formă dialogică (*Înțelepciune versus filosofie* – 2007; *Laudă icoanei* – 2011; *Altfel de proze* – 2011). Fericiți elevii care au astfel de profesori și profesorii care au astfel de elevi, capabili să ducă mai departe mesajul operei și vieții exemplare.

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## CONTENTS

Adriana NEACȘU, <i>Michel Foucault on Care of the Self in Plato and the Neoplatonists</i>	5
Kathrin BOUVOT, Gianluigi SEGALERBA, <i>Knowledge of God, Empowerment of the Mind and Transformation of the Subject in Spinoza</i>	30
Darius PERSU, <i>Instrumental Rationality and Skepticism. Can Hume's Conception of Practical Rationality be Understood as Skepticism?</i>	71
Ionuț RĂDUICĂ, <i>Property as A Postulate in Kant</i>	82
Ana BAZAC, <i>Up to a Point, the Dialectical Materialism is Dialectical Idealism, in Hegel's Meaning; but then It is More</i>	94
Anton ADĂMUȚ, <i>A Substantialist Example: the Discovery of America</i>	132
Constantin STOENESCU, <i>Could Paul Taylor's Biocentrism be Interpreted as A Rawlsian Theory of Justice?</i>	143
Vasile VISOȚCHI, <i>Fundamental Concepts for A Phenomenology of Experience Transformation</i>	159
Susana Miró LÓPEZ, Carmen de la CALLE MALDONADO, <i>A Christian Humanism vs. the Transhuman Approaches on Finitude and Death</i>	177
Miguel LÓPEZ-ASTORGA, <i>Heuristics, Dual-process Theories, Logic, and Mental Models</i>	191
Cristinel TRANDAFIR, <i>Libertarian Historical-Theoretical Considerations about the "Obiceiul Pământului" in the Romanian Villages between the Fourth and the Nineteenth Centuries. A Study of Social History and Philosophy of Culture. Part II</i>	203
<i>Review</i>	
Laurențiu Staicu, <i>Socrate în blugi sau Filosofia pentru adolescenți</i>	
Lorena STUPARU	223
AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS	227
CONTENTS	229