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THE OTHER AS  
THE ESSENCE OF EXISTENCE:  
A JOURNAL OF A PHILOSOPHICAL  
PASSAGE TO ALTRUISM



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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**School Of Humanities**

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altruism as the essence of existence: a journal of a philosophical passage to altruism –  
iraklis ioannidis – September 2017

**September 2018**

Cover Photo: Mackintosh House, Glasgow

\* moderating (the) capital writing is part of our quest to altruism.



*To the Mother I call my mother*



## DECLARATION

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing, which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text. It has not been previously submitted, in part or whole, to any university or institution for any degree, diploma, or other qualification.

In accordance with the University of Glasgow guidelines, this thesis is within the word limit specifications.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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# ABSTRACT

## **The Other as the Essence of Existence:**

### **A Journal of a Philosophical Passage to Altruism**

This research is about altruism. In our first chapter, our quest to find whether we are essentially altruistic starts with questioning particular ways of inquiry and proposes a philosophy of *unbracketing*. In our second chapter, we realise that our proposal starts with an imperative – a prescription. We begin by meditating on the phenomenon of prescription which seems to precede all ways of inquiry. Our analysis of prescription reveals that altruism is to prescribe oneself towards an Other. This type of prescription is to promise a future for an Other. To promise is to give one's word and to undertake to realising it.

In our third chapter, we explore the act of “giving one's word.” To give one's word is beyond a speech act. In fact, it is to give one's *logos*. An altruistic attempt is carried out in this chapter to liberate ‘logos’ from particular conceptions and allow for its universal meaning to emerge. *Logos* is traced back to its inceptual conception as existence or will to power – a will to future.

This philosophical excavation leads us to our fourth chapter where we re-encounter our original paradox. That is, while human reality starts with a promise of helping someone to make sense – to understand – we have been trying to understand understanding, or how we make sense, by removing the Other and by focusing only on subjective conditions. In this chapter, we reveal how to understand an Other is an altruistic act.

In our final chapter, we carefully observe that human existence is a gift from the Other. We describe this gift as a metaphysical passage from being to existence – an altruistic act. A passage which is created by an Other who promises to give us the means to be able to create meaning, that is to say, to exist.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

How can one make use of this space which demands particular acknowledgements when the very essence of this work is a universal acknowledgement of the Other who (f)allows this work? To the extent that I shall choose to bring to this area particular Others, would this very marginal section not defy and undermine the whole project? Where does one start and in what criteria of filiation one will have to succumb to particularise others? Acknowledging this question, a question which at least, to a degree, disturbs this section, a section which targets for particular recognition, I shall attempt to mention a few proper names. Among these names shall be the par-ents of this work. My supervisors who adopted the research question I posed to them; *they* who heard the call and *they* who were there all this time until the question was properly written: Dr. Susan Stuart and Dr. Olivier Salazar-Ferrer. And of course another name affiliated in its non-filiation. My sibling, soon to be Dr. herself, Heleni Rizou who was also there for the whole time during this undertaking.

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# 1 FOREWORD: FOR THE WORDS THAT FOLLOW UNQUESTIONED

This is a philosophical research on altruism. With the word ‘altruism’ we usually bring to mind an act or action, a behaviour or patterns of behaviour, or, generally, a way of living consisting in achieving the well-being of others. Our philosophical research is, thus, engaged with ‘well-being’ and ‘others.’

To achieve the well-being of others in altruism is to act for the sake of others unconditionally and without reserve. Doing something good for the other without wanting anything in return. Not wanting anything in return means not expecting anything in exchange for the good act. Properly speaking, it is a non-reciprocal acting at the expense of the one who engages in the altruistic act. This expenditure for the sake of others may sometimes lead to one’s death. In such cases, we say that such an act has as its denouement an unconditioned and unconditional giving in the form of sacrificing one’s life for the well-being of others. We tend to consider such acts as the epitome of altruism. The limit of altruism, the ultimate horizon of altruism becomes the sacrifice of life. With respect to ‘well-being,’ the limit is an unconditioned and unconditional givenness, a sacrifice for the others.

The ‘others,’ the recipient of the well-being to whom the altruistic act aims and ends, could be a single person, a group of people or the totality of the world as in the case

of Christ. Formally, we could use the term the ‘Other’ to include all cases of receivers. The capital ‘O’ will allow us to investigate the altruistic act irrespective of the recipient. Altruism will not depend on who the actor or the recipient is. And since we have announced through our title that altruism is the essence of human existence, then we are warranted, if not justified for this abstraction, this capitalization, and this general investment signified in the collective and encapsulated in this assigned circle: ‘O.’

Altruism is very popular today. One could even say that altruism is in scholarly fashion. There are scientists who provide proof that the essence of the human species is altruistic. We have instincts that are altruistic, they say. We are made to live altruistically otherwise we cannot survive. For that reason, they provide us with ways of enhancing these altruistic instincts that secure our well-being and our perpetuation as a species. In a similar vein, there are philosophers who talk about how we can be altruistic effectively. There are also sociologists and ethnographers who depict human nature with the same colours. With respect to these works, our research is timely.

It is also timely with respect to our times. Currently, we witness a concern with respect to the Other; a concern to otherness in general and our relationships with others. Public opinion is concerned with the future of Europe. Inter-national relations have become an issue – financial crises, Brexit, the future of the European Union to name a few. On a global level, on-going wars around the world produce refugees and the dealing with these other people has become an issue. The threat of a new nuclear war is still there as the media inform us. In this respect, our research is timely, that is, it is aligned with these common concerns.

Yet, at the same time, our research is untimely. Untimely in the sense that Friedrich Nietzsche conceptualised the untimely. This research is untimely since we are using a technology which is rather outdated; one could even say ancient. This technology is thinking (as) questioning. For want of a more fitting word, a more adequate term at this time, we shall use the name ‘meditation.’ And we could then claim that this “meditation too is untimely, because [we are] here attempting to look afresh at something.”<sup>1</sup> We are attempting to look afresh at a timely concern: altruism.

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<sup>1</sup> (Nietzsche 1997, 60)

Our coming to feel that we need to look afresh at altruism will be questioned in our next chapter, our prologue. Through our technology of thinking (as) questioning we shall attempt to show why such a new way of looking at altruism is required – lest we fall into an abyss of paradoxes. In our proper introduction, which comes *after* the prologue, we shall propose another way of looking at altruism with a promise to question it all along in case it becomes hostile to altruism, to the well-being of the Other.

This untimely way, this looking afresh at altruism requires another way of writing about it; a writing faithful to our end, the ‘well-being of the Other;’ in other words, an altruistic writing. But the untimeliness of the new, an absolutely new way of writing, new in-itself, an absolutely new writing risks becoming a foreign language. We cannot afford to estrange ourselves to the point of creating such communicational boundaries. Yet, these boundaries as limits make altruism possible. The movement for the well-being of the Other comes as crossing but not crossing out these foreign boundaries, these boundaries of Otherness. Hence, our technology comes to be a movement of creating a passage between the common and the foreign through questioning. And that is why it will end without ending, without concluding. Our epilogue will be another question. In this respect, once *again*, our research is untimely as there will be no conclusion to be profitably incorporated in the current respects of altruism to be laboured and produce profitable outcomes.



## 2 PROLOGUE

*Where do I **begin**?*

*Shirley Bassey*

*The problem of writing opens **by questioning** the arche*

*Jacques Derrida*

*Any **questing** surmise necessarily **seeks its own confirmation***

*Michael Polanyi*

*The best way will be to **go back to the beginning** and inquire what it is that we can be content to wish for independently of any ulterior result*

*Charles Sanders Peirce*

*Philosophy must **return to the beginning***

*Martin Heidegger*

*The **question** is not simply the objective totality of the words printed on this page; it is indifferent to the symbols which express it. In a word, it is **a human attitude filled with meaning***

*Jean-Paul Sartre<sup>2</sup>*

### **Introduction ?**

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<sup>2</sup> (Bassey 1970); (Derrida 1998); (Polanyi and Prosch 1975); (Peirce 1931); (Heidegger 1989) (Sartre 1993)

Traditionally, introductions are not meant to face a question mark when they appear in the beginning of a writing. Introductions are not questioned when they are supposed to fulfil their function, that is, to be the title of that which they introduce. Yet, here, we resist the tradition, we have already resisted the tradition by questioning it. We have questioned it with a question mark. We have made the introduction face (with) a question mark. The question mark next to the introduction is handmade. This mark, a mark next to the introduction, which is *the word* ‘introduction,’ that is, (*the*) other *marks*; (*that*) marking *next to the other* marks is not a typographical error; not a mis(sed)take. It is not because *that* mark has been forgotten either. Not what in French we call *oubli* or what the ancient Greeks called *λήθη*. It is in fact the reverse. It is *ἀ-λήθεια*: it is true. It is true as it asks, it questions. It is our handmaid to truth. It poses a question. It is the beginning of all research. One mark transforms, so to speak, the previous marks into a question. But what is the question here? This work, as entitled in its very beginning, in its title, on the front page, in the beginning of the whole, in the *ἀρχή* (arche), attempts to find altruism, in *particular*, the being of altruism. It wants to make a point, an argument about what altruism is. The title says “Altruism is the essence of existence.” And this argument is being questioned before it begins. It is introduced by being questioned. Altruism is introduced by self-questioning. Ultimately, altruism is a question about doing for the Other, *l’autrui*; for the Other, who is another ‘I,’ and, yet, *just* here, in this writing, another mark. All *this* work, then, is about *this* and *that* marks, a quest to mark altruism: What is altruism?

We just introduced the work and its aim through a farrago of paradoxes, absurdities and oxymora. The question (mark), which intends to the whole work, which traverses the whole work, since this work is an attempt to answer the question, to face it, seems somewhat unbecoming (while being) only next to the title (of the) ‘*introduction*’ of the work. But traditionally, it is in the very space between the introduction and the chapters that the question is posed. Alternatively, and aligned with tradition, we could have started with the following: “*In this work we shall provide an answer to the question, “What is altruism?”*” The work as a whole is an answer to this question. The introduction is part of the work, part of the answer, part of the whole. If this work as an answer is the whole, then the introduction is a fragment of the whole, a fragment of this answer. Yet, in reality, for us, this question stood outside of the quest to answer it, outside of its

introduction which takes place here. Our question stood outside of this work of which it is an answer. So what does the introduction (actually) introduce?

Again, traditionally, the introduction is meant to (also) introduce, at least provisionally, the answer to the question posed (before the quest to answer it). The introduction introduces the work (of which it is a part) as the result(s) of the quest (to answer the question), (and is presented) traditionally as an argument. Yet, if the work is to stand as an answer to the question, then the work must have already been concluded, finished – at least provisionally. We must have already marked the boundaries of the work somehow, its horizon. The answer to the question as the end (*telos*) of the quest must have already been formed, at least somehow – provisionally, horizontally – in order for the work to be introduced as a provisional answer to the question. We must have already somehow answered our question. For whom, then, is this an introduction? Can something be really introduced without having first, somehow, somewhat, finished? Or, better, can the introduction be without referring to that whole which is to be introduced, its object, its pro-visional horizon? Can the introduction be wholly blind? We are not faced with paradoxes but with the Other. This is an introduction for the Other; the Other for whom this is an introduction both to our question and our work as an answer to it. The introduction is the beginning of (our) presenting (of) our quest. In the *τέλος* (*telos*) of the question for us and the *ἀρχή* (*arche*) of the quest for the Other, “the end makes one with the beginning” as Jean-Paul Sartre<sup>3</sup> – an other *Philosopher Rendering On Us Such Tale* (or *T(r)ail*) – told us. Or, in the words of the poet, “in the end is my beginning.”<sup>4</sup>

But both this beginning and this end is another beginning since the quest here, in this space and time, is not our original quest. On the one *hand*, it is a re-presentation of the quest, a re-quest. On the other *hand*, it is an introduction for the Other, now as it unfolds, (a) present for the Other, a presentation of our written *logos* of and about our quest. The two hands of the one body, the body, which is one at the same time and place, makes all *this to be* a writing of/about our quest, a re-presentation of our quest, a re-presentation of our own course of answering the question, a re-course to the beginning, to our question, to the *ἀρχή*: How shall we write about altruism?

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<sup>3</sup> (Sartre 2007b, 19)

<sup>4</sup> (Eliot, 1943, V: 200)

Paradoxically, without this re-course to the point of introducing the quest for the Other, without this request coming from the Other, there would be *no quest as such*. The quest comes into being as a unity, a unified whole, a *this*, a *this writing*, a *this book*, only through the logos of its re-quest/request, only through the movement to communicate the quest to the Other. The Other's request. To come back and recount it. "Nothing happens when you live...But everything changes when you tell about life... You seem to start at the beginning... And in reality you have started at the end."<sup>5</sup> Before the end of the research, there is no introduction of the research. After the end, there cannot be an introduction except through the recognition of the end which is at the same time an other introduction before *this* (written) introduction. Nothing would have been an answer to the question if this quest had not ended. And the course of the quest would have been without being an answer to be introduced (as an answer) to an Other, if it had not been somehow requested by an Other. This in between, that space and time that opens up in what *looks* like an introduction, "that which passes (comes to pass) always and (yet) never properly takes place"<sup>6</sup> in the meeting of two perspectives, the convergence of two courses; two courses which converge, which come to-get-there, to reach an end, e-gos together with their *Is*, eyes that meet to a point, a point (being marked by a (wh)y, a why to live it and not leave it; to read it and not rid it, who rite and write together till the end, together in the end, till the writing ends, until it dies, until death... all *this*, (is about) altruism.

*Untimely now*, where do we begin? The quest has been finished and it has started as a re-quest. Yet in the beginning, following tradition, we were wont to say in the introduction, that is, in the 'real' introduction of the quest, the introduction before this introduction, the one we wrote before entering the quest, before having finished the quest, the research, the experiment, the project; we were wont to say that we wanted to argue that "the other is the essence of my existence." It was an actual, a real introduction (Figure 1).

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<sup>5</sup> (Sartre 2007b, 20)

<sup>6</sup> (Derrida 1998, 267)

In traditional philosophical thought, ever since antiquity, there has been a tendency to keep boundaries between ethics, metaphysics/ontology and epistemology in a way that a thought as suggested by the title of our research might naturally cause (philosophical uneasiness). In engaging in philosophy we still more or less border ourselves with the residues of Aristotelian categorizing and it seems to be a feat, an inconspicuous agreement not to allow spilling over the categories of philosophy as if it is some sort of Original Sin which could stain the whole undertaking.

Admittedly, we have seen so accustomed to a particular way of thought that it is at least philosophically strange to suggest the possibility of making manifest our being through a particular (ethical conduct), maybe a becoming. Yet, this strange part lies as the objective of our research. It is an attempt to discover what makes human beings human, their essential difference from all other beings. In our (post) modern times, the investigation of our 'and them' of the human reality has changed its title but it changes again and again throughout history - it has been rephrased. I make a footnote to Kant's intro of the 1<sup>st</sup> Critique and the de-throning of the way to Heidegger, Derrida and Derrida - find a way to link it with Levin's *COU* from metaphysics to ontology and to studies of consciousness, to meta-metaphysics and meta-ontology, and also know that in the future, the question is yet always the same. **Being-essence-Being/beingness**  
 ousia - essence - être  
 ousia - ousia - ousia

Insofar as we reach our end, it will for the first time be explained how the essence of human reality is revealed through  
 Altruism

Figure 1.

Such was our first introduction. An attempt to *argue* about altruism being the essence of human reality. In the beginning, we were motivated to follow Auguste Comte and argue that we should live for Others as this is our natural disposition. Our progress as human beings can only be achieved through helping each other, that is, by being altruistic to each other. But we wanted to go further than that and claim that the Other is the essence of our existence; that we cannot be without the Other. That it is through, with, and by the Other that we are what we are. In this schema, we were motivated to demonstrate philosophically the reasons for which we should then engage in altruistic behavior.

In the beginning we had a claim to defend. The claim “*It is ethics* that reveals the being *qua* being. It is ethics that makes manifest the essence of our human existence. It is altruism which un-conceals what human reality is.” We wanted to prove this claim. A claim which is uneasy and not easy to defend. In our quest for altruism, this uneasiness turned into an anxiety. The anxiety for not having realised how much we are living (*with*) in these categories: these definitions, these lines, these borders which mark (what) ethics (is) by prescribing (who) the Other (is). Our quest was to find altruism, define what it is and from that, our quest was transformed into a mission to argue, to convince, to rationally persuade about its importance, and just like Comte, to show why and how we should live for the Other. But in quest of going *after* the Other, the Other requests us to think: How can we talk of/about altruism with(*in*) the category of “argument?” If an argument is an attempt to prove something to an Other, to convince, to persuade through the power of logic, to rationally persuade the Other, then how can this work for altruism? It seemed as if we were trying to convince the Other that we should live for them. For whom is this an argument? If this is an argument, is it to convince ourselves, as oneself as another, about how to be with the Other, including our self as an Other? Or, is it to address the Other about how they should be with/to each other excluding ourselves from this whole, just like the introduction above, just like the *θεωρὸς* (theorist) as the director of an ancient drama overseeing the actors on stage from somewhere above, in Archimedes’ favourite mark?

But there is more. “Ordinarily when we argue with others, we try to persuade them of some point.”<sup>7</sup> But *there* is something violent with this “with” *here*; with this attempt

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<sup>7</sup> (Lepore 2000, 5)

to persuade, to convince. It seems that marks, or signs, such as “argue,” “advance an argument,” “defend a claim,” as well as their relatives “dodge the objection,” and “bite the bullet;” these are all metaphors, that is, means of transport to some place, or in Aristotle’s terms, to some *τόπος νοητός* (semantic/noematic place), which is a place in whose proximity a battle is taking place. A place of violence:

The forms of persuasion are many. We can persuade others by hitting them, by screaming at them, by drugging them, and *so on*. These kinds of persuasion are, unfortunately, prevalent. However, in this book we will use the term ‘argument’ exclusively to pick out sets of statements of the following sort...<sup>8</sup>

But, dividing, putting a vertical line between the elements of the category of persuasion, in other words, by siding with this “sort,” such “*sets of statements of the following sort;*” by siding with them and using them as tools for our re-quest, we will still be siding with the whole category of persuasion, and, possibly, s(l)iding to violence. There is probability in sliding into this “*so on*” whose proximity is violence. Taking out the physical violence of (the things that make up the category of) persuasion, or, taking out the physically violent things (that make up the category) of persuasion, we are still left with the essential element (that makes up the category) of persuasion *as such*, we are still left with a non-physical violence. With arguments, the violence comes from the force of signs. The force of our signs and their organization, their syntax, their logic. Signs in syntagmata are like military regiments. But for us, these signs, regimented as they are, like infantry marching against the Other to conquer them (symbolically), to convince them, is still to con-vince, to *vincere*, to win over the Other. Signs intro-duced, organized and ordered to advance an argument, by a duce, a leader, the writer, the arguer, the ‘I.’ The violence of persuasion is not eliminated in the difference between the symbolic and the physical. The violence is still there, idle, and deferred – in semblance. But how can such violence expressed through “argue” and “argument” relate to/with altruism? Is altruism not alien, foreign, different, to any form of competition and antagonism, to any form of argument of one against the other? Is not altruism one for the Other rather than (one being pitched) against an other? Hence, in what sense and with what reason can we argue? If a “logical”

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<sup>8</sup> (Lepore 2000, 7)

argument comes from in-ducing, de-ducing, ad-ducing or re-ducing signs and concepts in order to convince the Other, does the Other get to respond for all this? And, equally importantly, is it possible to talk about altruism without arguing? Can we win the Other without winning over them, at their expense? These thoughts motivated us to resist these metaphors whilst re-requesting altruism. In so doing, we were motivated to attempt a second introduction as opening of this re-request (Figure 2).



NOTE THE DOUBLE SENSE OF ΕΠΙΧΡΕΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΣ IN ARISTOTELIS.

Let it be clear from the start that this work is not and should not be taken in any way as a 'logical' argument. Neither the pages that follow, nor the handwritten notes there, nor the body to which it belongs, nor are written as the terminus of all the above, as a spirit or as determined evolved selection, argue. To argue in the sense of providing a reasoned defence for a claim, is war, violence and offence derive from war, and here we research altruism - which let it be stated from the beginning is antithetical, antinomical to war.

A philosophy of arguments is a philosophy of antagonism, of war, of dialectics and thus of exchange and capitalism; the master and the slave, the doctor and the patient, the winner and the loser. Altruism is the antipode of all these. As one can see one can but cannot see one night, if we are to attempt to talk about altruism the first thing that seems most opposite to do is to avoid engaging in a way of writing that will not be relevant to what altruism is, to its being. Before Plato and Aristotle, the ancient Greeks called one attempt to do something ἐπιχειρήσειν and the process, the undertaking ἐπιχείρησις. We could have a philosophical ἐπιχείρησις of revealing the phenomenon of altruism. Yet the dictionary shows that the latter means "argument" whereas the former, the ἐπιχειρήσειν, is to attempt, to undertake, embark, wage, quest. The dictionary opts for the Aristotelian definition of ἐπιχείρησις associated with violence. But ἐπιχειρήσειν is literally to engage, to do something with one's hands, to try with one's hands, to under-take, to attempt. - with one's hands, to have something sur-le-main, essayer, un essai, an essay, an attempt. The work at hand is an attempt to explore and make manifest how altruism reveals the essence of human reality.

Figure 2.

There was a second introduction. An attempt to bring back another argument. An argument as undertaking, as an attempt to explore and make manifest how altruism reveals the essence of existence. But because this exploration had already been done in some sense, ‘exploration’ could not properly depict what this work is in reality. Is it a presentation? What is presented here is some signs in different combinations and spatial organizations. But even through such a presentation of signs, we could say that an attempt is being made nonetheless. An attempt to express the experience of altruism through signs. The attempt, then, is to present altruism. To present it with signs. Signs are the tools which appear ready to hand for this attempt. But altruism was not presented to us with signs originally. So this is not a presentation of altruism as a taking in its original presentation, that is, of living it, experiencing it. Rather, it is an under-taking of its re-presentation. This undertaking, this attempt at hand then, the *ἐπι-χείρημα* (argument), is an attempt, an effort, an essay to express how all this was made manifest to us, that is, how altruism revealed us the essence of human reality.

This second introduction led us astray and straight to the one of the most well-known philosophical questions. Can a representation of something match its original presentation, its original experience? In this case, could a symbolic representation, *in this case* representation through written language, re-present altruism in its full being, as what it is when it is experienced, when it is lived? Can language mirror life? Even if it could, life would have to hold still; the painter cannot represent a moving mannequin on the canvas. Both mannequin and mannequin-represented are (re)presented still, almost lifeless; an alive mannequin (being) dead-like and a dead mannequin (appearing to be) alive; one imitating lifelessness and the other imitating life. Representation and reality meet in death. Just like the introduction which comes alive only when the end has come, so representation comes alive only when the presentation has ended. And between presentation and representation, between the lived body and the body on the canvas, there is the hand of the painter. Between life and death, there is the writing hand of the Other. Between Ida Bauer and Dora, a suicide letter, a writing in Sigmund Freud’s hands. A present for Freud to represent.<sup>9</sup> Between John Keats and Adonais, a poem from Shelley

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<sup>9</sup> Besides the suicide notes of Ida Bauer that mark the beginning of Freud’s psychoanalysing ‘Dora,’ there is an interesting story behind this name and its being given. The name was literally a gift to the Freud

Percy's hand;<sup>10</sup> between the abjected thief and Jean Genet, a journal, a present undertaking, an argument, an act of the hand, an *ἐπιχείρημα*, a writing:

If I attempt to recompose with words what my attitude was at the time, the reader will be no more taken in than I. We know that our language is incapable of recalling even the pale reflection of those strange and perished states. The same would be true of this entire journal if it had to be the notation of what I was. I shall therefore make it clear that it is meant to indicate what I am today, as I write it. It is not a quest of time gone by, but a work of art whose pretext–subject is my former life. ... the interpretation that I give ... is what I am—now.<sup>11</sup>

Now, then, without an introduction, without a proper argument to introduce, we, like Genet, *undertake*, we attempt something at hand *now*, an other sense of argument, an *ἐπιχείρημα*, to express how it was made to us manifest that altruism reveals the essence of human reality, how the Other is the essence of our existence.<sup>12</sup>

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family. In *The Psychopathology of Everyday life*, Freud tells the story of how he was inspired to represent Ida Bauer as *Dora*. 'Dora,' which in ancient Greek means 'gifts,' is given to Freud by a nursemaid who had to give up her real name: "When the next day I was looking for a name for someone *who could not keep her own* 'Dora' was the only one to occur to me" (2011, 1313). In both cases, the horizon is sketched out through sacrifice and givenness. In a way, Psychoanalysis starts with givenness.

<sup>10</sup> (Shelley 2017)

<sup>11</sup> (Genet 1954, 31)

<sup>12</sup> In a letter sent to the Sorbonne, even Descartes describes his *Meditations* first as an 'undertaking' (1996, 3); (2006, 1). Before any argument to convince, there is an other argument, an *ἐπιχείρημα*, an essay in all senses.



# 3 INTRODUCING ALTRUISM

## *altruism or living for others*

Philosophically, altruism is traditionally associated with Comte's famous phrase, *Vivre Pour Autrui*. Comte claims that altruism is a 'historical' undeniable fact. Human beings have existed and have progressed over the millennia by ordering their capacities, abilities and actions collectively, that is, by helping each other, by living with and for each other.<sup>13</sup> Collectivities are formed to overcome the material difficulties of life in order to survive. There is an *in-order-to-survive* prior to all these human states of affairs, that is, an order for survival. In order to survive, human beings have worked together, each one in their own capacities and abilities as no one is equal and they could not be.<sup>14</sup> What one lacks and cannot get, one receives from the other. This way of life of removing obstacles by each one for the other<sup>15</sup> leads to progress and its condition is order; the order for survival and self-preservation. Order and Progress, then, are the conditions for human evolution historically proven.

For Comte, altruism is a biological system of instincts, a system located in the brain, that conditions all our sympathetic feelings and all our cooperative behaviours with the others. This system is the ultimate guarantee for securing the purpose of human life, its continual evolution and progress. What becomes imperative then, as Comte will elaborate further in the *Catéchisme Positiviste*,<sup>16</sup> is to remove the obstacles that hinder this natural capacity to function properly. Just as humans remove obstacles in nature in order to survive, so the same needs to be done with those obstacles that thwart the proper functioning of the naturally altruistic brain. This function is not an automatic or

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<sup>13</sup> One for all and all for one just like in Dumas' *The Three Musketeers*, a contemporary novel for Comte (1844/2001).

<sup>14</sup> (Comte 1896, Vol.II: 17)

<sup>15</sup> (Ibid., 47)

<sup>16</sup> (Comte 1891)

spontaneous process, a natural flow of our being, even if it is described as an instinct or a set of instincts. Rather, it needs to be enabled. The enabling of this process is guaranteed by a negative action. This negative action is the limiting of the selfish instincts which can block the altruistic ones. Sometimes in some sort of “control”<sup>17</sup> or “discipline,”<sup>18</sup> but mainly by a natural process of proper upbringing and enculturation; through “habitual exercise”<sup>19</sup> and “training.”<sup>20</sup> We need to “learn to live for others” through habit<sup>21</sup> or, with “une habitude...assez etablie.”<sup>22</sup> Conversely, addressing the deviating cases of people who do not allow the natural tendencies to play out, all those who diverge from contributing to the realisation of the objective of (the evolution of) life must be controlled and then ordered to do so. Such re-ordering will enable the progress of humanity for all. But the re-ordering of those who resist needs be done by practices of discipline and corrective measures which are “not coercive,”<sup>23</sup> but, rather, educative in *order* to be able to help them as well, to bring them to the normal course of life, the proper order, which will enable their natural progress, that is, to become better and evolve. Thus, all members of contemporary humanity reach their full potential through altruism. All for one and one for all.

Recently, the same arguments with Comte have been proposed by philosophers and scientists. We shall briefly mention the striking similarity of Comte’s altruism with Donald Pfaff’s argument that we are beings equipped with an altruistic brain, that is, “we are naturally good.” Pfaff’s argument is essentially the same as Comte’s, what in the music industry they call a remix of a previous song. Truth be told, if one puts one text next to the other, even the metaphors employed are strikingly similar. From Positive Science, to Neuroscience we can now believe that “our brains our wired to produce altruistic behavior.”<sup>24</sup> And, as Comte believed, if Positive Science rather than Theology

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<sup>17</sup> (Comte 1875, Vol.II: 10)

<sup>18</sup> (Ibid., 69)

<sup>19</sup> (Ibid., 168)

<sup>20</sup> (Ibid., 176)

<sup>21</sup> (Ibid., 222)

<sup>22</sup> (Comte 1891, 125)

<sup>23</sup> (Comte 1896, Vol.II: 151)

<sup>24</sup> (Pfaff 2015, 12)

and Metaphysics can enable humanity's evolution, does it not seem, then, as a natural (epistemic) evolution that "if suddenly a neuroscientist demonstrates that almost certainly the human race is predisposed toward benevolence, then isn't there an immediate connection between science and real life?" ? We are endogenously altruistic and we should all be altruistic in order to evolve. Comte talked about how to enable the sympathetic instincts and Pfaff restates this imperative as "improving performance of the moral brain."<sup>25</sup> It is all about removing obstacles in Comte<sup>26</sup> and in Pfaff.<sup>27</sup> Habit again plays an important role. "Once we go get into the habit, the brain's adaptation will make that habit a more consistent part of our nature."<sup>28</sup> And for the divergents, those who cannot demonstrate this empathy as acting altruistically, we move from Comte's catechism, from talk therapy and schooling, to pharmacotherapy. "It is likely, therefore, that some combination of talk therapy and pharmacotherapy will best strengthen Altruistic Brain operations."<sup>29</sup>

Before proceeding we ought to pause and pose some questions. If it is the case that we ought to be altruistic, why does it matter whether this argument comes from? Pfaff says that neuroscience "uses hard science – that is, hard neuroscience – to propose a detailed theory of moral conduct founded exclusively on what we know about the brain function."<sup>30</sup> Besides the metaphor of "hard" which seems to deliver a pregnant condition for knowledge, there seems to be something soft, a soft transition from the factual to the proposed. Pfaff uses a theory about how the brain functions, how we are, in order to propose a(n other) detailed theory of moral conduct, how we should be. However, this is not a theory about what the conduct actually is, but about a conduct that should be from what we are. When we pause and pose the movement from how we are, to how we ought to be, the ground seems soft rather than hard. The "how we ought to be" is not itself manifested through hard neuroscientific evidence. That course of "hard" observation, rigorous and consistent testing through the neuro-scientific *organon* has come to an end

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<sup>25</sup> (Ibid., 156)

<sup>26</sup> (Comte 1896, Vol.I: 47)

<sup>27</sup> (Pfaff 2015, 156)

<sup>28</sup> (Ibid., 223)

<sup>29</sup> (Ibid., 264)

<sup>30</sup> (Ibid., 7)

in the posing of what we are. There is a stop of the scientific theory before the proposing of the new theory. There is a break between the two posings, the theory of ‘being’ and theory of ‘ought to be.’ Even if we agree that hard science gives us the facts about how we are, that is, the posing, then the proposing of what we should be is not itself scientific – as the other is. From what we are, from ontology we move to axiology, how we ought to be.

There is also a paradox involved in this proposal. It pertains to what is going to be in the future. What neuroscience tells us now, our current being, will be destroyed in the future if we do as neuroscience tells we ought to do. If we were to compare the hard facts of how we are *now* and how we would be in the *future* –after having done what we are not now but ought to have been based on what we are – these would not be commensurate. This logic echoes the practice of plastic surgery which enhances what is already there; there seems to be some sort of enhancement that is not accounted for in what appears to be hard. There is copulation here. The copulation between the ‘*is*’ and the ‘*ought*’ which is supposed to deliver active being, praxis, is created surgically and leaves a gap. Early enough, Hume had spotted such gaps and declared

surpriz’d to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is, and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; ... For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, ’tis necessary that it shou’d be observ’d and explain’d; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it.<sup>31</sup>

Minding the gap that Hume observed uncovers other interesting points. First, we have the proposing, the proposition ‘we ought to live for others’ – regardless of whether it is Socrates/Plato, Christ/Bible, Comte-Pfaff/anatomy/neuroscience who propose it. The proposing is for us to reach a destination of being, the altruistic mode of being supposedly being better than any other modality of being which is always a possibility.

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<sup>31</sup> (Hume 1896, 245)



The objective is the ‘same.’ All the above, express, be it in different ways, the same proposition ‘we ought to live for others.’ Nietzsche, writing in roughly the same period as Comte, says that Comte, “did in fact, with his moral formula *Vivre Pour Autrui*, outchristian Christianity.”<sup>32</sup> Essentially, Comte found an alternative way to argue for what Christianity was arguing for. And, in logical parity, we can say that Pfaff, in his turn, seems to have found an analogous way to argue for the same proposition.

Second, whether or not the proposition ‘we ought to’ will be awarded the stamp of ‘true’ or ‘false’ depends not on what the proposition proposes, but on the way it has been proposed. For the moment, the proposition ‘we ought to live for others’ does not reflect the world, we do not live for others – not entirely one could admit. Looking at the different ways this proposition has been proposed over time, it seems that the latest versions differ only in the packaging, in the way they are offered, in the way they are formed, in the way they marketed in the stock market of ideas. Looking at the proposition in its historical perpetuation we can see that it is not the position that is changing but the *pro-*, what comes before reaching the final proposition. Truth comes from the title of the proposition, the one who is entitled to propose. Or, it is not the meaning of the proposition that bears its force, or what it prescribes us to do, but the way, the method, the medium through which it is produced. The message itself is lost and its medium becomes the message. As Marshall McLuhan observed, the truth lies in the production of the message not in the message itself.<sup>33</sup> And, as Paul Feyerabend notes, since we are in an era where the role of the priest as holder of the truth has been passed down to the scientist, as the keeper of the *organon* to true knowledge, the gap between the ‘ought’ and the ‘is’ is bridged neither by a scientific formula nor with a logically-deductive one. It is bridged psychologically.<sup>34</sup> It is in the name of science that one is asked to be convinced about the truthfulness of the proposition and be motivated to act accordingly – just as it was in the

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<sup>32</sup> (Nietzsche 2005a, 82)

<sup>33</sup> (McLuhan and Fiore 1967)

<sup>34</sup> This phenomenon is evident in all Comte’s work. The Christian priest is literally replaced by another priest, the scientist. The *Catéchism* of Comte, is a real catechism, a religious catechism. Positive philosophy is a religion in the same way that Christianity is. Positive philosophy is called by Comte “the new universal religion.” In Feyerabend’s work, we get a glimpse of how the advances in knowledge through this new religion are ultimately based on “propaganda” and “psychological tricks” (1975a).

name of God, or in the name of the King, that someone were to be convinced to act in a particular way. *In the name of* regulating ideas in the Kantian sense.<sup>35</sup> The motivating force to realise the proposition ‘we ought to live for others’ is derived from an appeal to some authority, to some principle, to some *arche*, to some title as epistemic authority.<sup>36</sup>

From a historical viewpoint, what we see is not the operation of an altruistic brain but the destruction of it. The altruism proposed by all our thinkers, which essentially should be the determinate behavioural schema proposed by the ‘we ought to live for others,’ is coming forth through an antagonism of who can make the argument for altruism more convincing, “harder.” If, as Comte and Pfaff argue, it is through altruistic behaviour that we progress, certainly, the intellectual behaviour through which the argument of altruism has progressed historically is not of an altruistic kind. Could we try *harder*?

#### *another positivist attempt*

Marcel Mauss<sup>37</sup> advances an argument about a new way of organising our societies based on the principles of reciprocity and generosity. Mauss derives these organising principles from extensive ethnological and anthropological research in/of societies to which we refer as ‘primitives.’ Mauss’s argument is founded on the presupposition that our societies have evolved from a similar stage and by drawing commonalities between contemporary practices with those of the so-called primitive societies he concludes

The system that we propose to call the system of ‘total services,’ from clan to clan—the system in which individuals and groups exchange everything with one another—constitutes the most ancient system of economy and law that we can find or of which we can conceive. It forms the base from which the morality of the exchange-through-gift has

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<sup>35</sup> (Kant 1929, A320/B377)

<sup>36</sup> It is an appeal to the “doctors of life” as Michel De Montaigne used to call these figures of authority (De Montaigne 2015, 487; 531; 545 ).

<sup>37</sup> (Mauss 1954)

flowed. Now, that is exactly the kind of law, in due proportion, towards which we would like to see our own societies moving...<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, let us adopt as the principle of our life what has always been a principle of action and will always be so: to emerge from self, to give, freely and obligatorily. We run no risk of disappointment.<sup>39</sup>

Let us look closely at what Mauss proposes us to do.

The societies that Mauss observes are not like us, they are different, yet, analogous. The analogy is the beginning; we have had the same or an analogous starting point as a *base*. Our difference lies in the fact that we have *flowed*, moved, departed from the base. But this flow in which we are found is evaluated negatively with respect to the base. The base, *as the principle* [ἀρχή] *of our life*, has taken a turn and Mauss proposes to re-turn the turn, to return to the *base*. To flow back to the basic principle, *the kind of law, in due proportion, towards which we would like to see our own societies moving*.

The base, the principle of life, which all these societies manifest in their different ways, is set as a desired, proposed, possible new direction to our current flow. Those societies have not flowed; they still manifest the base. We will not be *disappointed* if we run back to that primitive base. We will be equally or more appointed from what we are now. A progress is revealed through a regression. If we are to return to the base, then that suggests that our path has taken a wrong turn. Life has flown in a wrong direction. It is as if our current flow of life has been an accident to our essential being which these primitive societies show us. From what we are appointed by life we have been disappointed by flowing. We have moved away from the essence of life and are experiencing an accident. The essence of life is manifested, as these societies still illuminate it, in reciprocal empathy. With Mauss, the evolution from the primitive base has negative connotations. The connotations of an accident to our essential being. What Mauss proposes is a progress through regression. While seemingly different positive accounts, they are all, however, based on a logic of supplementarity.

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<sup>38</sup> (Ibid., 90)

<sup>39</sup> (Mauss 1954, 91)

This logic has been explained by Jacques Derrida. He has revealed this theme in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in Claude Levi-Strauss, and in Ferdinand de Saussure. Life as it is lived, as it unfolds, as it *flowed* is considered as an accidental movement. And “this unhappy accident is also a “natural progress.””<sup>40</sup> Life in its manifestations, either as language (Rousseau/Strauss/Saussure) or as morality (Comte/ Pfaff/Mauss) “is born out of the process of its own degeneration.”<sup>41</sup> And the argument of the philosopher, the scientist, the ethnologist, the ethnographer, the linguist comes as a supplement to cure an accident. It is offered as a resistance of what comes about naturally and as a force that will inscribe another *moving* towards what is revealed as a *base*, as an origin of the accidental flow. Here, the supplement is announced as required to arrive at the telos which *accidentally* is the beginning, the *base*. It manifests, however, the same characteristics of the supplement which fills the gaps of any theory of origin. Disregarding this structure, we arrive, inescapably, at the same questions haunting the first step to this re-turn to the *base*, the re-turn to life as it should (have) be(en).

First, as Mauss proposes, “*let us adopt as the principle of our life,*”, that with which we are now living without, as we are flowing. Will the re-turn to what we were at the beginning protect us from flowing back to what we are now? Can we guarantee the possibility of not flowing into another accident? Is it possible to not flow? As Martin Heidegger wonders, “are not beginnings rather in each case there precisely so that after them everything moves away from them?”<sup>42</sup> Second, what would motivate us all to flow back? Why would one be motivated to run back to a system of generosity and reciprocal empathy analogous to that which these basic, ‘primitive’ societies have/are/manifest, even if that running back is done *in due proportion*? And what is quantified here as *proportion* which is *due*? It is *due* to whom? Who owes to whom and why? Is there an other authority (*arche*) to which we are indebted?

These questions have already been posed by Fiodor Dostoevsky:

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<sup>40</sup> (Derrida 1998, 242)

<sup>41</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>42</sup> (Heidegger 2012, 30)

You for instance want to cure men of their old habits and reform their will in accordance with science and good sense. But how do you know, not only that it is possible, but also that it is *desirable* to reform man in that way? And what leads you to the conclusion that man's inclinations *need* reforming? In short, how do you know that such a reformation will be a benefit to man?<sup>43</sup>

But *let us* be convinced for a moment; let us *adopt* this principle. We ought to be altruistic and reciprocally generous *in due proportions*. We believe that we ought to be altruistic based, say, on what these thinkers tell us. Yet, when “we leave our closet, and engage in the common affairs of life, [these logical/reasonable] conclusions seem to vanish, like the phantoms of the night on the appearance of the morning; and 'tis difficult for us to retain even that conviction, which we had attain'd with difficulty.”<sup>44</sup> The logical or reasonable or rational, or scientific conclusion reached is not usually realised in praxis, in everyday life. Life makes theoretical reasoning forgettable.<sup>45</sup> It is at this very moment of the impotence of reason that the power of habit comes in. Being habituated in a particular way has always been the key concept, the force to realise the moral proposal/proposition. The ‘in-between’ between these two realities is tacitly proposed to be bridged with habit. It is not surprising that moral philosophers and scientists resort in one way or another to the mistress of habit as the way for their argument about the good to be realised. The moral proposition is realised in the “*vis inertiae* of habit, ...something purely passive, automatic, reflexive, molecular, and thoroughly stupid.”<sup>46</sup> And what better way, as Nietzsche showed, then, but to make the habit “harder,” making it a custom, a tradition, a culture, an-other reality, something appearing naturally and in-itself? This is what history teaches. (Moral) thinking is but a habit. Is habit then all there is?

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<sup>43</sup> (Dostoevsky 2010, 75)

<sup>44</sup> (Hume 1896, 238)

<sup>45</sup> “My habitual opinions keep coming back,” wrote Descartes, even when reason tries to doubt everything since it is the most reasonable thing to do when it comes to certainty. (1996, 15). It takes time, three days of trying “to have *accustomed* myself to leading my mind away from the senses” (37; emphasis added).

<sup>46</sup> (Nietzsche 1989, 24)

***moving towards the Other beyond arguments and habits***

Taking into consideration all these factors, do we still want to argue about altruism? Is this project *just* about or *just* by providing reasons for being altruistic and see if we could all in the end meet, as “habituated in altruism”? Will we not like “miserable fools”<sup>47</sup> be chasing another *Moby Dick*<sup>48</sup> or a *Snark*?<sup>49</sup> Altruism here is not to be provided as a prescription followed by reasons as possible motivations for future habituation. To arrive at altruism altruistically is to arrive at the Other in the Other’s being, into Otherness, into difference. This movement requires a resistance; a resistance of being driven to the Other based on some sort of egological motivation. In empirical cases, the ego is somehow resisted in its aspirations when it di(v)es to help the Other. This resistance, in our philosophical undertaking, right here, can be a sort of bracketing of a particular epistemological way of approaching the Other. It is the epistemological way of the Other that we need to find first, if we are to find the Other. In other words, it is the very words of the Other that we need to follow; in pursuit of the word of the Other, in Other words. And by this bracketing we have options. In this bracketing, we follow Edmund Husserl<sup>50</sup> though not till the end. Our bracketing is not exactly that of “putting out of play” or “inhibition”<sup>51</sup> proposed by classical phenomenology. Instead of holding in check epistemologies in order to arrive at the foundational *episteme*, the bracketing we shall perform does not have a direction of outside to inside “()” in order to find the (transcendental) I/ego/episteme which would make altruism possible. Rather, we shall reverse the bracketing and make it from the inside to the outside “());” instead of epistemological closure or reduction to one way of philosophising, we have an openness as affirmation of all ways the Other could be expressed. Along then with the scientist, the theologian, the materialist, the idealist, the phenomenologist, the feminist, the poet, the

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<sup>47</sup> (Nietzsche 2005b, 175)

<sup>48</sup> (Melville 1851)

<sup>49</sup> (Carroll 1876)

<sup>50</sup> (Husserl 1983)

<sup>51</sup> (Husserl 1960, 20)

singer, the sculptor... the Other here is not in “*adiaphoris*,”<sup>52</sup> we are not indifferent to what the Other has to say. The Other is welcomed in their difference.

This philosophical openness is something like the epistemological anarchy of Paul Feyerabend where “anything goes.”<sup>53</sup> The bracketing turns into, comes to be an *unbracketing* or an *apoche*, an abstaining from a particular way of doing our inquiry towards altruism. This anarchy allows us to avoid committing a performative paradox in our philosophising. The limits of our openness are the limits of the words that we shall employ in this writing. But we can overcome this quantitative limitation by allowing time to understand the Other. We can promise to act like Rousseau: “While reading each Author, I made it a law for myself to adopt and follow all his ideas without mixing in [introjecting] my own or those of anyone else, and without ever disputing with him.”<sup>54</sup> Bracketing the ‘I’ allows for an unbracketing of the Other to speak in their own words. It is a move toward the Other, an altruistic move. Following the thought of the Other is like carefully carrying out an experiment: their experiment, their thought. Where does their thought, their noetic-cognitive paths lead us? To undertake the noetic paths of the Other, is that not pure altruism? Is not altruism first and foremost trying to understand?

Trying to understand the Other is altruism. Making sense with the foreignness of Other is altruism. This is our hypothesis. Thus, this work takes the form of a displacement of the traditional concept of altruism. Altruism will be traced back to the nothingness of the logos of existence, a nothingness which the Other makes a plenitude. The Other (being) *as* the reason why I live. The Other *as* the reason to why (we) live. Borrowing an expression from Gabriel Marcel, we hypothesise *the Other as (my) ontological counterpart to death* in this project, in project, in any project, in life. We articulate the Other *as* giving their logos for our existence, for the *Eleusis* of our logos. My existence cannot come to be without the Other and reciprocally the Other cannot come to be without me. I-and-the-Other as noema, as dia-logos (dialogue) in existence. Without the Other, I am a thing and with the Other I am no-thing-and-every-thing, free. The Other is the essence of existence.

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<sup>52</sup> (Nietzsche 1997, 170)

<sup>53</sup> (Feyerabend 1975a, 159)

<sup>54</sup> (Rousseau 1995, 199)

But before going along with the Other, before we quest for the Other, we have a question left to pose. If we must *unbracket* in order to find the Other, it is with the “must” with which we shall begin. We shall unravel our masts for this quest. We must explore what imposes itself in the beginning as prescription. This is the first thing we encounter in the move from the “I” to the Other. We say we shall or we must unbracket. But if we *must* unbracket which could be read dialectically as (“*we must bracket the bracketing*”),’ then we shall first pause at the *must* and pose it as a question. Unravel our masts for the quest to begin. *Mustn’t we not?*





# 4 PATHWAY ONE: WE MUST LIVE FOR OTHERS

## *minding the gap of prescription*

Our proposition we “must unbracket” is logically on a par with “*we must live for others.*” They both prescribe a specific way of being. In a prescriptive mode, prescription, is expressed linguistically by utterances such as “must,” “should,” “need to,” “ought,” and the like, or just by any imperative. It is also imperative that the imperative form be construed in its wider sense since in everyday interactions an imperative form depends on its contextual birthplace. Indirect ways of suggestion may very well fall under prescriptions: “I would do that if I were you” or “It might be advisable to” or “have you thought of doing that?” accompanied by prosodic and gestural cues which unite with the words to imply an imperative meaning. We can construe the boundaries of the imperative form as any form of communication which suggests a particular course of action either literally or metaphorically where the relevant meaning is generated by all possible elements of communication: any act that has an imperative meaning-intention. Conversely, as Husserl has explained, expressions with a grammatically imperative form need not necessarily fall under what we refer to as imperative meaning. “John must harness the horses”<sup>55</sup> may as well communicate a wish of mine instead of an imperative act from me to the Other; “there is no mere objective obligation... but my own will, and this not in my words, but rather in my tone and in the circumstances.”<sup>56</sup>

Since we are performing a logical investigation of prescription, we can follow Husserl and proceed into identifying the intentional essence of the genus of prescriptive propositions using the criterion of act-quality based on the presentative intention that makes such compound acts what they are. That is, direct our reflection to prescription as a phenomenon appearing through prescriptive propositions and, by marking the

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<sup>55</sup> (Husserl 1970, 330)

<sup>56</sup> (Ibid.)

boundaries of meaning between prescriptive and non-prescriptive propositions, arrive at the essence of these propositions, that is, at the being of the phenomenon of prescription.

Let us start again with Comte's proposition "*we must live for Others.*" This proposition seems to be a synthesis of the following. Firstly, what has conditioned the genesis of such a proposition is an evaluation of our current mode of life which as different from the one proposed is negated with respect to its value. The way we live our lives insofar as it is not for Others means that it is not the proper, the correct, the right, way of leading our lives. This clandestine evaluative mechanism which negates the present with respect to a possibility is a *sine qua non* of every prescriptive proposition. This mechanism, hides yet another mechanism which operates at its background. "We must do X" is a proposition which negates the value of the current mode of doing but it can realise this negation only insofar as there is a presupposed objective, a *telos*, an end. That is to say, that the negation of the current state of affairs or being is conditioned upon a projected, wished, or pursued being or state of affairs which is not currently actualized – or not fully actualized – while the current actualization is somehow not contributing to what the preferred actualization is deemed to be.

Let us use an example to clarify. Suppose that I am waiting at the bus station with a friend and it is 15.25. I have an appointment at 15.30 and the distance between the bus station and the place of the appointment is usually ten minutes by bus. My friend says "You must take a taxi." What this prescriptive proposition reveals is an evaluation of my current state which must be altered if I want to reach my objective, that is, to arrive on time in the place of my appointment. The axiological power of any prescriptive proposition is derived unquestionably from such an implicit objectively (we can even admit the term intersubjectively here with no philosophical residue) presupposed *telos*. It goes without saying that if I do not care if I am late for my appointment or if I am short of cash which I value more than being late for my appointment, then, the prescriptive proposition of my friend loses its power in terms of motivating me in the prescribed action. And if that happens it follows, *a fortiori*, that I implicitly approve my current ontological status as right contrary to the possible one, that which is expressed in my friend's proposition. One might object that I might well desire to be on time and also be aware that my current situation needs modification if my objective is to be met, yet, practically, as I am short in cash a gap emerges between thought and action. Suffice it to mention for the moment the following. If I value being on time would it not be reasonable

to suggest that I would try to exhaust all the ways in which such an objective could be achieved – even if that means sprinting to be on time? If I truly want to be on time would I not be motivated to an action which I perceive will fulfill my objective? So far, a prescriptive proposition of this sort seems to be constituted by *dynamic evaluative synthesis*. Dynamic because the *telos* which conditions the evaluation of the present is itself conditioned by the present which negates it.

Let us unfold our story. In this situation, another possibility would be to ask my friend for money. Does it now make sense to talk about how my friend should act based on the above? Based on our earlier elucidation, since we both share the same objective i.e my arriving on time, if no other objective could cannibalize it, that is, at that very moment, my arriving on time is valued equally and authentically by both of us, does it not logically follow that my friend *should* help me by giving me the money? If she opts not to then we cannot assume that she *indeed* valued the same objective with the same force as I do. If we wish to assume it, valuing will lose its meaning.

It might be objected that not all propositions of the prescriptive kind are conditioned upon such a negation of the present. For instance, if my friend and I, a couple of days before, were found to be discussing about my future plans and the appointment rises in the discussion, and she then mentions “you must take a taxi to get there on time,” it seems *prima facie* that there is no negation of the kind discussed above. However, reducing the phenomenon of the utterance, we see that in these cases the same evaluative synthesis is still at work. What motivates my friend to utter such a proposition? If I habitually take a taxi and my friend knows this, then such a proposition cannot occur meaningfully. But if I do not, then we see the evaluation operating in the background. These cases reveal an evaluation of my regularities which, if continued in the future, then they are evaluated as not being conducive to the attainment of my goal. If I act as I habitually do, which is not taking a taxi, then I cannot secure this goal based on my friend’s evaluation. Suffice it to say, what is evaluated is my habitual past deemed to continue in the future. Therefore, what is negated is a present(ed) regularity.

As we reflect further on prescriptive propositions, two more interesting points emerge. While we have presented an example of another person uttering the proposition, due to the reflective reality of our being, the whole interaction could occur with oneself and oneself as another, me-to-myself, which, while giving another dynamic, still demonstrates how the evaluative synthesis is at work. Instead of a synthesis, we are

accustomed to call it reflection in philosophy but its structure is basically the same. A crucial difference is revealed which uncovers another phenomenon. In the ek-static mode of reflection where I commerce with myself about the situation, the alignment of the telos of myself with myself gives rise to motivation for action. With the case of myself in reflection the manifestation of the conceptual alignment will be manifested in *my* action, whereas with my friend this very same manifestation will be revealed in the action of either persons depending on the possibilities of the interaction (me ordering a taxi or my friend giving me the money).

The second interesting feature that emerges relates to what we can refer to as punctuation. The example offered was an abstracted moment during a series of events in one's life. The conceptual alignment which is at the core of the prescriptive proposition, if it occurs, it must somehow be conditioned. These conditions are to be found somewhere, but where? For the moment, precisely because we abstracted life and created an episode situated in its punctuated form at a bus station, the prescriptive proposition revealed how it operates with respect to a potential future. What about the past and the present? Once the prescriptive proposition is situated properly in experience we are faced with something magnificently absurd. The proposition "You must take a taxi" works not only in comparing the present with a possible future, but, also, it presupposes a specific conceptualization of the unfolding of events which logically cohere with reference to the attainment of the implicit objective. What this means is that the power of the proposition relies on certain presuppositions based on past experience either lived by the interactants or mediated in the form of reasoning or knowledge, and at the same time beliefs and expectations about the future; that is, taking a taxi supposedly will get me to my destination – to which I might never have been before – only if I also believe that a taxi will be faster than a bus *in this specific empirical ensemble*, where I also assume implicitly that my appointment will not be cancelled, that I will not die in the process and so on and so forth. But how can I believe that? We can say here with Hume that the paradox of induction is revealed. There is some kind of belief of a future which is presently unjustified since I cannot control the monstrosity of the infinite of the possibilities that might take place. This projection to a future based on past and present which is crystallized in the beliefs of the interactants reveals this absurdness; a tendency to commit to an objective which we cannot ultimately control.

One cannot object here about whether there is inductive reasoning going on or not. Insofar as the course of action is (stopped in the sense of) *paused* by uttering a proposition, which suggests a negation of the course of action unfolding till the beginning of the utterance, and insofar as the telos of the course remains implicit, that is, *presupposed* in both courses of action (waiting for the bus – prescribing its negation through another act – the taxi), then there is spontaneous thought. And insofar as the thought does not rely on a whole, based on which the best course of action can be deduced, the thought is inductive. These (conceptual/reflective) syntheses may happen at the speed of light, which we mistake as not happening at all, yet they do happen. If one objects with the use of the concept of reasoning or reflection here, one could, with Hume, refer to this phenomenon as a “secret operation.”<sup>57</sup>

But the problems of prescription do not lie only in the punctuation of the future. In our bus-taxi example, reflecting on the proposition “you must take a taxi” we have situated our analysis as if the starting point of the genesis of the proposition is the appreciation of that very moment. As if the experience of the prescription commences there. We have ignored the historicity of the interaction and most importantly the historicity of the interactants. A proposition does not stand in an experiential vacuum. As an expression it communicates something. What it communicates must be sought after apprehending the complexity of what conditions it precisely because this conditioning will affect the way the telos is to be attained. For instance, while I might well value being on time for my appointment I might also have excluded the possibility of asking my friend for money if I know that she is not well-off. The possibilities of realising my aim will be conditioned on other values and facts that relate directly to the very moment that the prescriptive proposition is uttered even if those values and facts do not immediately reveal themselves in the context of the prescriptive uttering; and so, prescriptive propositions are characterised by a historicity of various levels (personal, cultural, and so on) toward a presupposed telos. Earlier, we mentioned that the presupposed telos is similar to both the action that is unfolding and the prescription that stops this unfolding to propose another, an alternative one based on the presupposed telos – at that moment we thought that “arriving on time” was the presupposed. When the layer of historicity is taken into consideration, the presupposed becomes just a supposed telos of the present under-gear-

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<sup>57</sup> (Hume 1896, 60)

under-labored by another, a real presupposed, the ultimate telos, the eschaton, the ultimate end; one can even characterise it as the unconscious end – posing any presupposed to face the question ‘why,’ as in ‘why ‘being on time for the appointment’’ will open a regress of “in order to” which will ultimately reveal the ultimately presupposed, the end in the end as a beginning, as a principle as an *ἀρχή*: ‘why live?’ Prescription is revealed as the other side of ontology and epistemology.<sup>58</sup> What this means is that prescriptive propositions rely on a sort of agreement about an objective to be attained based on how things were, are, and how things *should* unfold based on something ultimately presupposed. If this agreement cannot initially hold at the conceptual level between the persons engaged in the prescriptive event – if we can call it so – then it is doubtful if the proposition can bound any person and motivate relevant action. The greatest affinity of morality – as prescription – with ontology and epistemology will, however, be denuded

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<sup>58</sup> Our (western) modern thought has so far been ultimately teleological – even in its attempt to be free of teleology; to be free from teleology is still a telos, an *in order to*. For scientific theories to work we must set an ideal fixing point; a punctuation. For instance, for evolutionary theory to work there must be a presupposed telos at hand, i.e., the reproduction of the species. All the mechanistic theorisation is implicitly conditioned on a presupposed possible unexpressed telos, a punctuated effect. All simple factual propositions like “Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius” can be formed in terms of prescription: “*In order* for the water to boil, 100 degrees *must be* reached.” No theorisation can be formed if a telos is not implicitly accepted. As Sartre has shown, whenever something is to be interpreted through the concepts of cause-effect or means-end which are indistinguishable, the deon-teleological morality has been introduced unquestionably and unquestioned-ly (1962). Moreover, precisely because scientific thinking is attempting to provide one big long, yet in micro form, a form of the excell(ent) world, it becomes instrumental *par excellence*. The *in order to* phenomenalises itself in all sorts of *deductive-inductive-abductive* reasoning. But it is always driven (*ducted*) by transcendentalism: either by a transcendental beginning (signifier/I) or by a transcendental end (telos, purpose, signified) evident in both Aristotle’s and Kant’s ethics theorisations. If the noumenal were not proved, a groundwork for morality could not be established. For Aristotle, if the issue of consciousness after death were not solved, all theorisation about ethics will have to be punctuated in the experiential boundaries of life-death. Thus, Marcel seems to be justified in surmising that at this very deon-teleological way of thought which characterises our modernistic scientificofunctional thinking and being rests on our inability to accept and exercise metaphysical investigations whose “purpose... lies outside of the order of the practical [the telos, the function, the end, the result]” and which investigation “cannot be translated into the language of action” (1950, Vol.I: 7). Heidegger calls this inability an illness of thinking, an “*asthenia*” (1989, 127).

if, holding on to what we have analysed so far, we approach the different levels of generality in which prescriptive propositions operate.

The example we offered above is an example about a practical everyday (prescriptive) proposition. It is a very concrete proposition which suggests a course of immediate action. However, Comte's proposition '*vivre pour autrui*' operates on a different level of generality. This is a prescription which operates as a framework based on which other practical prescriptive propositions can be derived or, better, deduced. This proposition works as a principle, an *ἀρχή*, a whole. Comte's proposition does not give a specific direction about how one needs to act but only a general orientation about how we need to act. In a sense, such propositions work as a theoretical foundation based on which the more concrete propositions will be derived; the axiomatic. The theoretical foundations which precede such axiomatic propositions are usually the general orientations based on which societies are organized and lie dormant in cultural norms and lawmaking processes. For these general orientations, however, the same dynamic evaluative synthesis that was described earlier must be at work if they are to bound a motivation to relevant action, which in this level is the formulation of axiomatic propositions which, in turn, will be formulated as practical guidelines to be materialized in actual behavior. These theoretical foundations must be accepted somehow. But what does it actually mean to accept?

Let us explore with an example. If we are to accept the Christian framework of organising and leading our lives, then for this framework to bind and motivate action other relevant presuppositions must be tacitly accepted; one must believe. For example, to believe in the existence of the Christian God, and most importantly to believe that the way our lives need to be lived is such that will lead to the telos that the Christian framework posits. But this acceptance, this belief, is not just a conceptual acceptance. To believe is not just to think but, as Normal Malcolm says, to have thought embedded in action.<sup>59</sup> With respect to the Christian framework that would be to act in Christian ways. In *Resurrection* Lev Tolstoi is exploring through his characters how this could be possible, but in the process he reveals an absurdity. Nekhlyudov, the main character, is going through the process of realising the absurdity of professing to have a state organized and guided by the principles of a Christian God where people suffer and die out of

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<sup>59</sup> (Malcolm 1977)



ignorance; where the penal system is anything but Christian and where prisons, and the whole reformatory system is causing more suffering. In a series of observations, he becomes *convinced* that “all the vices which developed among the prisoners.... were not causal, nor due to degeneration, nor to the existence of monstrosities of the criminal type (as dull scientists, backing up government, explained it)...,”<sup>60</sup> but by the very penal system itself which is exactly the reverse of the Christian way of life. A Christian society can never be commensurate with a penal system. Tolstoi reveals the hypocrisy of confessing a belief when the latter is not manifested in praxis; to think that one believes and to profess that one believes when in fact they are in a state of self-deception, or what Sartre called bad faith, *mauvaise foi*, is hypocrisy. To believe is when the having phenomenalises itself as being in action, in praxis, in behavioral terms. The proof of holding a belief is to attest to it. And to attest to a belief is to testify it in oneself, to be-have it. “Here *having* seems really to pass into *being*.”<sup>61</sup> So to believe in the Christian framework would be to behave like Christ. But the problem is not only that no one apart from Christ can be Christ – in all possible senses of ‘be’ – as Nietzsche book-marked.<sup>62</sup> The problem is that one is not actually *convinced* into trying to be like Christ. They profess a belief they do not actually believe since they do not be-have it. The belief is, in Mill’s words, a “dead dogma, not a living truth.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> (Tolstoy 1899, 533)

<sup>61</sup> (Marcel 1963, 100; emphasis in original)

<sup>62</sup> (Nietzsche 2005b)

<sup>63</sup> (Mill 2009, 59).

There are many philosophers who believe that, concerning any one person, “what views he holds is not a matter of how he behaves” (Taylor 1970, 62). They ‘hold’ this belief by an illicit shift in perspectives and clear ambiguity. Daniel Taylor tells us: “Consider the following argument: people often think they want something x when *it is clear* from their behavior that they really want y” (60; emphasis added). It is not at all clear what exactly the ‘it is clear’ is supposed to be clear about. Clearly, not for the person who says that x. Therefore, either for an observer, another person, or God, or the same person down the temporal line. *Quid?* Also, it is also not clear what exactly we hold when we hold a belief. Clearly, when I hold a belief is not like holding a watermelon. It seems that what is clear is Nietzschean hypocrisy, Sartrean bad faith or what Michael Polanyi (Polanyi and Prosch 1975) calls living in two worlds. The example of the Christian that we mentioned is on a par with the reductive scientist who ‘holds the belief’ that everything is material and tries to reduce it to mechanical processes of cause and effect; hence, ‘holding’ another belief that

It is this being convinced that we need to look for. Let us have a thought experiment. Let us think about how we can convince a person about the prescription ‘Thou shall not kill.’ The person whom we want to convince has killed before all sorts of animals and is an atheist, hardcore Darwinian and determinist. The person believes in the survival of the fittest and, by removing the paradox, they believe that they are or they need to be the fittest to survive – or that in order to survive they need to become the fittest. They are determined to do whatever they need to survive and if killing another human animal is an option for their survival so be it. To complicate it further, they are also sympathetic to various philosophical ideas which propose that in life all we do is in vain since the only sure thing is death. They also view society as degraded because it restricts our animalistic instincts. And here is the challenge for us: what kind of reason or logic can we employ in order to convince them otherwise? Employing the democratic principle in the sense of objectivity, that is, to argue that most people think it is wrong to kill, so they must be wrong not to align with a *sensus communis* or the ancient *κοινόν λόγον* (common logic) is not an argument which will carry weight. It lacks the intermediate premise for why the majority would have access to truth and reality better than the individual, or, to put it in the poet’s words “*Si 50 millions de personnes disent une bêtise, c’est quand même une bêtise.*”<sup>64</sup> We cannot either appeal to any religious or theological argument since it goes beyond their scope of beliefs. If any argument is to be offered as convincing in this case, then it needs to work within the boundaries of their presuppositions of atheistic-deterministic persuasion. It needs to be based on fundamental principles of evolutionary theory and scientific methodology. But even if they professed they were convinced not to kill as they are made to be altruistic, how could one be sure that they were indeed convinced other than by the person manifesting that in their behavior? And this being convinced must be secured by some continuity for it can always be the case, that if the person is like Dostoevsky who wants to live his life as “he chose

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intangible things, our values, do not exist i.e. love, justice, freedom to name a few. In this case the scientist “allows himself to be duped when he so honors them” – that he is permitting himself willingly to suffer from illusions of their grandeur” (68).

<sup>64</sup> Anatole France as quoted in Nichols and Lewis (1954, 74). Or, with Ludwig Wittgenstein that, “from seeming to me – or to everyone – to be so, it does not follow that it *is* so” (1969, 1).

and not in the least as his reason and advantage dictated” and who believes that “one may choose what is contrary to one’s own interests, and sometimes one POSITIVELY OUGHT (that is my idea”)), then all logical “systems and theories [will] continually [be] shattered to atoms.”<sup>65</sup> Is there, then, any prescriptive foundation that could be *believed* in such a way as to be ‘freely’ chosen to *be-lived*?<sup>66</sup>

*from teleology to deontology and back*

We are aiming to ground altruism in belief that reverberates through living by everyone and in all circumstances that could ground all subsequent practical prescriptive propositions. Such an attempt is common in the history of philosophy. We can see such attempts in all great thinkers who engaged in ethics and morality. We shall introduce two prominent traditions and evaluate them laconically. John Stuart Mill<sup>67</sup> took as an indubitable fact that happiness is the ultimate foundation based on which we can construct all our morality. Taking happiness as the ultimate foundation since everybody is seeking to be happy and avoid negative experiences, seems to meet the criterion of experience in terms of this ‘something’ that could be universally *believed* and actively *be lived* by all people. It seems that everyone is motivated to act by the desire to be happy. But, is that happiness construed in the same way by all people? How can we secure that the way I construe and pursue happiness is in essence the same with others? Most importantly, can we secure that one’s happiness will not become another one’s misery? This difficulty must be precisely understood. It is not just a theoretical issue to play with logically and

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<sup>65</sup> (Dostoevsky 2010, 33)

<sup>66</sup> This point of unfettered motivation can be seen in reverse as well. It challenges all new critical discourses about how we should be. We propose or promote different figures that *we should* realise but never really tell ourselves a story of why one *should* realise it. From ambitious rejections (Goh 2015) to the most sophisticated proposals of so-called posthuman subjectivity “which has to embrace” “the criticisms of narrow minded self-interests, intolerance and xenophobic rejection of otherness” (Braidotti 2013, 52), the motivation of atelic why or how one can be motivated to enacting or re-enchanting the world with such figures and such proposals is ultimately wanting. We wholeheartedly agree with Rosi Braidotti in that respect but my capitalist father does not. (How) do I convince him? (How) do I motivate him to such a direction? How *should* I direct (t)his drama?

<sup>67</sup> (Mill 2001)

from which a definition could be agreed and all will/would be happy. The issue of a definition of happiness has been adequately tackled by Aristotle. However, in its practical application it discloses a monstrous problematic. The way our society has been organized cannot secure a uniform pursuit of happiness for all since, as Michel De Montaigne observed,<sup>68</sup> the doctor will never be happy with the health of his fellow citizens, since his livelihood and being *are conditioned on the non well-being of the others*. This difficulty is paramount and Mill fails to resolve it adequately in his treatise. Unable to derive universality of happiness he reduces his claim from “the happiness for all” to “happiness for the majority” – from presentation to representation. In addition, once again, people are to be motivated to this ethical conduct through the power of habit and not by an unfettered motivation.

Kant, aware of the contingency of anything empirical had looked elsewhere. That is, morality if it is to lead to action that bounds, the move from conception to action, cannot be justified and cannot be realised unless there is a foundation common to all, irrespective of the accidental way one could be, how a society could be organized, or what goals one sets in their lives. So the purpose of the Groundwork is to lay the foundations on which everything else can be derived. Kant is looking for a structural form that is lawlike and can hold for any circumstance universally and necessarily, for everyone, at any time, in any place. Yet, Kant, while trying to avoid the contingency of the empirical falls victim to. In trying to set out the foundation of moral philosophy Kant begins by stating

For that there *must be such* a philosophy is clear of itself from the *common idea of duty* and of moral laws. *Everyone must grant* that a law, if it is to hold morally, that is, *as a ground of an obligation*, must carry with it absolute necessity.<sup>69</sup>

What is striking is that Kant, even before laying the Groundwork, appeals to a common idea, that of obligation. Methodologically consistent, in that Kant is starting from experience in order to arrive at that which does not arise out of experience, he seems

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<sup>68</sup> (De Montaigne 2015)

<sup>69</sup> (Kant 1998, 2, emphasis added)

merely to assume a common idea without derivation. The problem is that Kant starts from the empirical, but never gives justification for the apodeictic certainty of the common idea. Even if we give the benefit of the doubt to Kant, as Paul Ricoeur does, in that “as in Aristotle, moral philosophy in Kant does not begin from nothing; the task is not to invent morality but to extract the *sense* of the *fact* of morality,”<sup>70</sup> should we not be offered a justification of such *common idea* even as supposed common opinion, as *ἔνδοξα* (endoxa)?

Kant’s quest for providing a groundwork is infected at outset with empirical vagueness which is obvious in his exposition of real life examples of what constitutes duty which reveals ‘moral worth.’ The latter must for Kant be experienced as an obligation to be absolutely good no matter what. To be absolutely good can only be achieved by a will to be absolutely good – an absolutely good will. Moral worth is revealed through such a good will which obliges to act accordingly. In a way, morality is this accord between willing the absolutely good and realising it in action. In between the will and the act is the feeling of obligation, our duty. To follow one example from Kant, a person cannot be moral without feeling that they are obliged to act in some way. So a shopkeeper who treats everyone equally is moral insofar as they are aware of the obligation of treating everyone equally. If they do not, then they are not moral. The contentment the shopkeeper might feel as the result of acting in accordance with the demands of an absolutely good will, could not and should not be used as (further) motivator for action as such motivation would undermine the absolute goodness of the will to be good, but will be a will to feel good passing through the will to be good. Such a diversion of the will good, will not be autonomously good but driven by an intermediate end, what Kant calls heteronomy. That is, the deed would not be motivated by an absolutely good will and the obligation felt to realise it, but as a result of an end to feel good from the deed. The end becomes the contentment and not the good will itself which is the absolute moral worth. As Ricoeur underscores, the moral worth must be found in a will to action which is good without qualification, universally and necessarily, good in-itself, intelligibly as good in and of itself without other qualifications. This stipulation of

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<sup>70</sup> (Ricoeur 1992, 205)

morality in an unqualified will is what anchors “the deontological moment in the teleological aim.”<sup>71</sup> But there is more.

Let us follow Kant in the obligation felt in the good will. We shall explore the nature of this obligation and ask how many times such an obligation *should be* felt? We introject temporality in the categorical imperative to find another manifestation of the phenomenon of punctuation. Suppose, that with Kant, I am wondering whether I should lie to get something. I reason that lying is not good absolutely. This reasoning about whether what I am willing is good absolutely, that is, universally and necessary, is the categorical imperative. This reasoning allows me to arrive to the logical conclusion that lying is not absolutely good, hence I should never lie. I now feel obliged not to lie because I formulated the categorical imperative and reasoned the contradictions that such an act would imply and entail. It is my duty now to realise this universality in the particular instance that I am found – that I should not lie to get what I want.

Let us lay out the process. I have broken off from the world of sense and its causality and I experience “independence from the determining causes of the world of sense.”<sup>72</sup> I freely and with no obligation pause my course of action and think what I should do. I reason freely that the act of lying is fraught with contradictions. I then set up a contract with myself based on the logical demands of reason (my being autonomous) and I formulate the maxim “I shall not lie ever.” In the current situation in which I find myself motivated to question whether I should lie or not, I now feel the obligation of reason when I need to realise the maxim ‘I should not lie now, in the present.’ The obligation is not felt when I freely decided not to lie henceforth. Rather, the obligation is going to be felt when I need to realise the maxim in the causal order of sense. The steps are: (a) I break off the causal order of sense, (b) I freely exercise my understanding and formulate the categorical imperative, and (c) I freely materialize it in the world of sense.

For we now see that when we think of ourselves as free we transfer ourselves into the world of understanding as members of it and cognize autonomy of the will along with its consequence, morality; but if we

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<sup>71</sup> (Ricoeur 1992, 205)

<sup>72</sup> (Kant 1998, 57)

think of ourselves as put under obligation we regard ourselves as belonging to the world of sense and yet *at the same time* to the world of understanding.<sup>73</sup>

Besides the platonic echoes of *Phaedrus* in being *metaxy*, in-between two worlds<sup>74</sup> – which by the way destroys the principle of non-contradiction on which the categorical imperative is founded, that is, how we reason – I only experience my freedom positively while formulating maxims aligned with reason. In the world of understanding of which I am a member, I am free, unbounded by the causality of sense. Here, there is no feeling of obligation just pure understanding. If we apply the schema of movement, however, then we see how deontology is found(ed) on a double negation. Contrary to what Kant says, the freedom which each time conditions the (re)entering to the world of understanding is negative, that is, by resisting the causal order of sense. And the freedom to realise the autonomy of the will in the world of sense is again negative in so far as it goes contrary to the causality of the world of sense. There does not seem to be any positive motivation to initiate the circuit of the categorical imperative however – we shall come back to that.

Our first question was how many times such an obligation should be felt; our analysis now needs to add another question: How many times should I perform the ritual of the categorical imperative with respect to the act of lying? If I formulate the categorical imperative *now* and I freely believe that reason demands of me to ‘not to lie ever,’ and I oblige myself to live by this maxim, how many times should *this* be experienced for me to be moral? Down the path of my life, and following the axiomatic principles set forth in the *Second Critique* I repeat the practice for such morally good conduct.<sup>75</sup> So, I experience the same process one, two, three, ..... n times. How many times would such an obligation *should be* felt when I am not lying? At one point, I will be so habituated into not lying that the feeling of obligation will surely wear off. Will I not be moral then? Do I always have to perform this ritual and always feel obliged? Since, I have arrived at the universality of ‘I shall never lie’ why should I keep coming back to reason about it? Kant replies thus:

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<sup>73</sup> (Kant 1998, 58; emphasis added)

<sup>74</sup> All translations of ancient Greek texts are ours unless otherwise noted. (Πλάτων, Φαίδρος 2001).

<sup>75</sup> (Kant 2002, 193-4)

for, if someone asked us ... how it happens that a human being *believes* that only through this does he feel his personal worth, in comparison with which that of an agreeable or disagreeable condition is to be held as nothing, we could give him no satisfactory answer.<sup>76</sup>

It seems that we can't touch this. Only Kant touches this – “touch without touching.”<sup>77</sup> We have to respect the distance of the unknown where there is *no satisfactory answer* to come from reason. The distance that is required for the law of obligation, that is, the law of the law, to operate must be accepted without question. Not only should we not tap this with a question, we shall not even touch it either. But if cannot touch it, how can we know it is true, since, for Kant, all knowledge starts with *aesthesis*, with some sort of sense?

Étienne Balibar<sup>78</sup> attempts to touch on this *how*; how can one *believe* such an idea of duty? Through Balibar's archaeology of the subject, we can appreciate the possibility of the Kantian belief of duty being formed politico-historically, that is, one comes to *believe* it through the political and historical conditions one is found living. Specifically, the Kantian belief of duty is a belief being formed out of the political circumstances of an era of transition from a citizen who is purely obedient to a rule external to them and derived by a king or a by framework of prescription of which they have nothing to say (e.g. religion), into a citizen, being subject to their (own formed) laws. “We see the final appearance of the “subject” in the old sense, that of obedience, but metamorphosed into *a subject of the law*, the strict correlative of the citizen who makes the law.”<sup>79</sup> If this is the case, two challenges emerge. On the one hand, how can freedom be free from historicity, and on the other hand, how can reason be disentangled from tradition, custom and habit?

But there is also another problem in Kant's analysis which he himself realises at the end of the Groundwork. The structural form of the categorical imperative that he proposes can be enacted only if one feels, or with Michel Henry's reading,<sup>80</sup> one is auto-

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<sup>76</sup> (Kant 1998, 55)

<sup>77</sup> (Derrida 2005, 66)

<sup>78</sup> (Balibar 1991)

<sup>79</sup> (Ibid, 48)

<sup>80</sup> (Henry 1973)



affected such that through abiding to the demands that reason posits to the will, can the will have access to its real (noumenal)<sup>81</sup> nature. Kant calls it *taking an interest*<sup>82</sup> in the pure formal aspect of reason by which we get a sense of the intelligible nature of our being. Through this interest we momentarily transcend to the real world, the world of understanding to which we as intellects belong, the in-itself of ourselves (homo noumenon). If we are moral, that is, aligned with the formal aspect of reason then we are so interested as autonomous beings in being aligned with our nature, which is the unqualified good will. But what could possibly motivate such a *taking an interest*? Kant admits:

Here an incentive must be quite lacking; for this idea of an intelligible world would itself have to be the incentive or that in which reason originally takes an interest; but to make this comprehensible is precisely the problem we cannot solve.<sup>83</sup>

Kant chooses to follow Hume here: He suspends judgment. Otherwise we would have to say that there is no reason to be moral – only that there is morality accustomed to be(come) reason.

Besides this formidable conclusion, deontology-teleology form a coin, each is the other of the same: Firstly, even in the Kantian (formal) analysis, what we identified earlier as a presupposed telos is at work. This interest to an intelligible noumenal world is the telos in one way or another – or in Ricoeur’s reading, the telos as the good life through an autonomous free will. The end for Kant is a movement from a natural being (homo phaenomenon) to “man as a moral being (homo noumenon).”<sup>84</sup> There is no way for a prescriptive proposition or a framework of prescription to work if a telos is not presupposed. Ethics and morality and their practical correlates, *are all conditioned* upon a certain end, a telos. The telos, in a formal way, *is the a priori*, holding universally and necessarily, and as such it becomes a principle, a beginning, the *ἀρχή* of all morality.

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<sup>81</sup> Human beings are classed as *homo noumenon* in Kant. The distinction appearance-reality applies to human beings as well. Human beings are characterised by their empirical side (*homo phaenomenon*) and their essential side, their intellectual side (*homo noumenon*) (Kant 1991, 65; 111; 144; 215; 219).

<sup>82</sup> (Kant 1998, 54)

<sup>83</sup> (Ibid., 65)

<sup>84</sup> (Kant 2006, 226)

Secondly, if we re-punctuate the horizon of the deontological experience, then the underlying teleological aspect of deontology can make the latter slide at any moment to custom and habit – with all the formidable consequences for what constitutes reason as ‘logic.’

What is also interesting while following Kant is the consequences of this following over time. If duty which reveals the moral worth of the unconditioned and unconditionally good will is per-se-vered, that is followed over time to the (Kantian) letter, then a psychological fatigue is inevitable. Duty becomes torturing oneself to feel obligation. Following this duty means to habituate oneself to feel obliged with a counterbalance of contentment which does not neutralise or console feeling obligation but, rather, has to be negated as well so that it does not contaminate pure reason as the absolutely good can only be manifested in feeling obligation! No rest for the wicked!

Finally, we always bump into this issue of motivation or interest in Kantian terms. Even if reason demands, I still have to be motivated towards it, or to move-act *with respect to it*, to live it, as ego, as I beli(e)ve in what it commands. But, for us and our altruistic quest it is impossible to find a motivation with *respect to* or to *the respect of* the otherness of the Other that altruism suggests – either in teleology or deontology.

***from arguing for altruism towards beli(e)ving in altruism***

What we have seen so far is that none of the existing epistemological and moral frameworks allow us to arrive at altruism in a motivated way, a way free from habit or from some sort of presupposed telos which supplants the very notion of unfettered motivation. We asked ourselves: “Is there, then, any prescriptive foundation that could be *believed* in such a way as to be ‘freely’ chosen to *be-lived*?” Maybe what we need to do is re-visit the phenomenon of believing or of how a belief is formed and then proceed to how one can believe in altruism which in turn will be manifested by be-living altruism.

We opt to start with the empiricist. We opt Hume as he started from everyday occurrences with which everyone can associate. Hume tried to describe the experience of believing as some sort of affectivity or feeling. Starting from the most common everyday occurrence of how it is that people believe in different things he writes:

'Tis confest, that in all cases, *wherein we dissent from any person*, we conceive both sides of the question; but as we can believe only one, it evidently follows, that the belief must make some *difference* betwixt that conception to which we assent, and that from which we dissent. We may mingle, and unite, and separate, and confound, and vary our ideas in a hundred different ways; but 'till there *appears* some *principle*, which fixes one of these different situations, we have in reality no opinion: And this *principle*, as it plainly makes *no addition* to our precedent ideas, can only change *the manner of our conceiving them*.<sup>85</sup>

Some principle, some ἀρχή, is what motivates us towards believing something and not something else while we *conceive both sides of the question*. In returning to Kant's discourse, we can conceive both what reason demands us to do and its opposite or its alternatives. Yet, the decision will be conditioned by something which for Kant *is precisely the problem we cannot solve*, yet, for Hume *appears*. In every issue, the essential difference between and among them is not in conceiving the object at hand differently, that is, referring to the same thing yet meaning something else or presenting the 'same' in a different way; rather, it is in differently conceiving the 'same' object after having understood the other ways of conceiving it. And, the most important is that we are somehow aware of some *difference betwixt that conception to which we assent, and that from which we dissent*.

Hume tried to describe this *difference* which 'motivates us towards' *as* some sort of being determined towards, some sort of being affected which necessitates our believing. From having a belief Hume changes the philosophical discourse into a manner of being, a *manner of our conceiving*. The latter, in Hume, is the manner in which the mind forms the ideas that it receives from the world as the world is impressing the senses.

'Tis a particular manner of *forming* an idea: And as the same idea can only be vary'd by a variation of its degrees of force and vivacity; it follows upon the whole, that belief is a lively idea produc'd by a relation to a *present* impression.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> (Hume 1896, 56; emphases added)

<sup>86</sup> (Ibid.)

For Hume, the association of ideas is a combination of *hows*. The first is the *how* which comes about from what impresses itself upon the mind, from what makes up the world and gives rise to its/their phenomenological counterparts, that is our ideas, *that particular manner of forming an idea*. “Our ideas are copy’d from our impressions, and represent them in all their parts.”<sup>87</sup> Another *how* comes from *how* these ideas are related in conjunction with the principles of the mind with which we can actively *mingle, and unite, and separate, and confound, and vary our ideas in a hundred different ways*. While such a complex of *hundred different ways*, is an active reflection of our ideas, to believe is the ultimate way the mind is affected by its principles in the way that it reflects what it receives from the ‘exterior’ world in not so active a manner.<sup>88</sup> Nothing in the world ‘causes’ me to believe something in a serial mechanical way.<sup>89</sup> I have ideas of things in the world which are associated in such a way as to believe in something or that something

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<sup>87</sup> This is what Hume refers to as the *copy principle*. In the *Abstract*, Hume underscores the importance of the copy principle: “we can never think of anything which we have not seen without us, or felt in our own minds” (Hume 1740, 7). It is not only Hume’s “fundamental principle” (Noonan 1999, 7), but something universal and with “unforgiving force” (ibid). Hume gave a “kind of phenomenological turn” with respect to ideas. There is also a stronger (idealistic) reading whereby it is impossible “of conceiving a specific difference between external objects and perceptions” (S. Blackburn 1990, 239; also in K. W. Winkler 2000, 78-79) which seems to imply an influence from the Port-Royal philosophers whereby a simple idea is a mirroring of what impresses itself from the outside. In this case, the identity of the thing in the world will be mirrored in the impression and correlatively to the identity of the idea that the impression gives rise to. Some other commentators, for instance Garciela De Pierris, argue that Hume is “neutral about the ontological aspect of inspected items” which fits with his overall skeptical standpoint. Whatever the turnout of such a debate, we read the copy principle as occurring adverbially, within a *how*; the impression is ultimately the *how* of what is from the world and is impressing itself “in all their parts” (2002, 56) in the mind to form an impression which in turn gives rise to a simple idea. The idea may very well mirror or reflect the impression but the impression may or may not mirror or reflect *an/one* object as a cause of the impression. The idea, as the relation to a *present* impression cannot not have a duration in what constitutes ‘present.’

<sup>88</sup> (Frasca-Spada and Kail 2005)

<sup>89</sup> That is what the thought experiment of the *Enquiry* is meant to prove. The alien person who first lands on earth and applies reason to understand it needs time to acquire these constantly conjoined occurrences, these habits, which will enable them to understand what is going on. Reason is helpless with just one ‘causal’ happening (Hume 2007).

is the case. This association is happening in the mind and the best manifestation of the interiority, what Hume calls “internal,”<sup>90</sup> the immanence of the association, is the creation of an ‘idea’ related to a present impression or sensation which constitutes “belief.” A person who sees a river ahead of them and stops their journey believing that they would sink should they pass through it cannot justify their belief out of what they perceive or what they could reason of it:

The idea of sinking is so closely connected with that of water, and the idea of suffocating with that of sinking, that the mind makes the transition without the assistance of the memory.<sup>91</sup>

The belief is not a new idea of what constitutes ‘river’ but a way of trans-forming a present impression into an idea, a way of perceiving the world. Belief “is nothing but a strong and lively idea *deriv’d* from a present impression *related* to it.”<sup>92</sup> The “it” relates to the impression which is not yet an object, a river, a *this*. The *this* comes with a lively idea which relates to the impression, or better, to the impressing. It is necessary for the object to rise up as such in relation with something that it is not present. It is a necessary connection to some past idea which in turn is related to some past impression.

Necessity is for Hume a customary association. In the famous example of the billiard ball, nothing in the idea of one ball presently moving towards the other carries with it any phenomenological feature betraying the necessity that, upon hitting the other ball, the latter will move. We are necessitated to believe that this *will* happen because of all those similar cases we have experienced in the past which we found to have been (causally) related. But the necessity with which I believe it *now* does not impress itself from what is (not) happening in the world *now* but from my mind. And even if I reflect on all similar past occurrences, then my “representations of the causally related [past] pairs themselves simply turn out to have no such further content.”<sup>93</sup> To believe something before it happens must, therefore, be some sort of feeling, an affectivity, a being affected by. And such affectivity is what leads us to believe that...; rather, such affectivity *is* to

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<sup>90</sup> (Hume 1896, 58)

<sup>91</sup> There is much to say here about the idea of water and river. The waters of the rivers and their associations will be touched upon in the *follow(ing)* chapters.

<sup>92</sup> (Hume 1896, 61; emphases added)

<sup>93</sup> (Garrett 1997, 106); also in K. W. Winkler (2000, 55-59).



for affectivity as re-flection as feeling. To believe is to feel. And this feeling is not coming from the senses but it arises out of re-flection; it is reflection.

When I am convinc'd of any principle, 'tis only an idea, which strikes more strongly upon me. When I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from my feeling concerning the superiority of their influence.<sup>97</sup>

Hume saw his account as “a violent paradox,” “extravagant and ridiculous,”<sup>98</sup> and “extraordinary,”<sup>99</sup> and, yet, the only one which could explain how we come to be motivated to believe. Believing that something is, was or will be, perceiving in its broadest sense with certainty that something is when such certainty does not come from the *present*. Yet, in another sense, to believe is never about the present but about a resembling past and a resembling past future which constitute the present.

There is an interesting oxymoron that arises in Hume's account. It seems that for Hume 'reflection' has two manifestations. The first as secret operation of the mind and the second as an operation which gives preference to possible associations of re-flection. In the first manifestation, although the customary association is done secretly, in the mind, the feeling is coming through a re-flection on the associations, a comparison of possible associations immediately.

The custom operates before we have time for reflexion. The objects seem so inseparable, that *we interpose not a moment's delay in passing from the one to the other*. But as this transition proceeds from experience, and *not from any primary connexion betwixt the ideas*, we must necessarily acknowledge, that experience may produce a belief and a judgment of causes and effects by *a secret operation*, and without being once thought of.<sup>100</sup>

In the second manifestation, *when I give the preference to one set of arguments above another, I do nothing but decide from my feeling concerning the superiority of their*

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<sup>97</sup> (Hume 1896, 59)

<sup>98</sup> (Ibid., 91)

<sup>99</sup> (Ibid., 53)

<sup>100</sup> (Ibid., 58; emphases added)

*influence*. But *when* I give preference it seems that various ontological domains open up at once. The first is the coming back to the associations, to reflect them. What conditions this coming back to reflect? It cannot be merely customary. At the same time, it cannot be a coincidence that the whole discussion of belief has opened by *supposing* an Other: “Suppose *a person present with me*, who advances propositions, to which I do not assent”<sup>101</sup> or cases *wherein we dissent from another person*. This coming back, in (re)turn to re-spect, raises in its turn ontic-ontological questions. Who/what comes back to reflect, and, is there a possibility of not giving preference? It may, as Hume says, *only an idea which strikes more strongly upon me*, but do I always fall prey to this blow which *the presence of an Other with me has initiated*? I may be able to reflect on my own associations of ideas, but can I just reflect without taking the position of an Other?

For most philosophers, experience is always experience of something, and is always somehow related to consciousness of or about something: consciousness is intentional. And intentionality has traditionally been associated with the concepts of presence, knowledge, and truth. In Hume, however, we saw that experience is more the ‘*experiencing as*’ rather than the ‘*experience of or about something*.’ As Husserl admits in his *Ideas* it is Hume’s proto-phenomenological analysis, an Other philosopher’s work, which triggered him to re-reflect and re-conceptualize ‘*intentionality*.’ We shall digress and examine whether the concept of intentionality enables us to arrive at altruism *as intended* or if we need to come back to this Humean affectivity supposing an Other.

### *skepsis on intentionality*

Intentionality is about knowledge, *episteme*. If we go back in time, we see that intentionality, the *aboutness* that marks the mental, is all about *σκέψις* (*skepsis*). If Liddell and Scott are right and *σκέπ-τομαι* is to examine and to look carefully, to spect,<sup>102</sup> then

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<sup>101</sup> (Hume 1896, 55; emphases added)

<sup>102</sup> (Lidell and Scott 1972, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/#eid=97451&context=lsj&action=from-search>). In *Cratylus*, Socrates invites Hermogenes to *skepsis*, to think together (391a) as in observe and look carefully, that is, inspect what Cratylus was talking *about* which confused Hermogenes (384e). As Derrida



this kind of *inspection* requires one's bodily stasis, one's stillness or standing, rather than moving. Knowledge begins with the end of bodily movement. As Plato describes in *Cratylus*, the end of the physical movement gives way to the movement of the mind, the *skepsis*, the mental inspection as directed(ness) to the things, targeting them like a bow's arrow. Intentionality as mental inspection is precisely this targeting; it is the directed(ness of the) arrow to something. For knowledge to occur, this *skepsis* must reach its end in the thing aimed; the arrow must find its target. As Plato underscores, if the arrow misses the target or falls down or it breaks, then there is no knowledge.

‘*epistē mē*’ (‘knowledge’) ...it stops (*histē si*) the movement of our soul towards (*epi*) things, rather than that it accompanies them in their movement.<sup>103</sup>

Knowledge is all about ends. The movement of our soul stops when knowledge is attained. It passes this movement onto the body, like the hand that releases the arrow. Just as *skepsis* as the movement of the soul, begins when the movement of the body ends, in standing, so knowledge has occurred only when the body begins to move again. As Félix Ravaisson put it, “in reflection and the will, the end proposed by intelligence is an object opposed to itself, as the more or less distant goal of movement.”<sup>104</sup> If *skepsis* or standing continues with no end, then it becomes *skepticism*, there is no moving or moving on; there is no end in the movement of thought. And if *skepsis* does not have a *single* end, an object, its moving is in random. This moving is skeptical, like doubting end-lessly – or, as Heidegger reads in Parmenides, a “bewildered” noesis, dull and “directionless to and fro.”<sup>105</sup>

In either case, *skepsis without end*, endless *skepsis* is like living in an *endless dream* as Socrates recounts:

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writes, with *skepsis*, “one is on the lookout, one reflects upon what one sees” and most importantly this means to keep something in suspense, “reflects what one sees by delaying the moment of conclusion” (1993a, 1).

<sup>103</sup> (Πλάτων 2012, 437a / 183). Socrates juxtaposes these movements in *Theaetetus* (Πλάτων 1980, 153-155/ 93-95).

<sup>104</sup> (Ravaisson 2008, 55)

<sup>105</sup> (Heidegger 2012, 96)

What I think you heard so many times from those who ask for [is] this, that is, what kind of proof do we have at our disposal to provide when one wants to ask us if this very moment we are sleeping and all our thoughts are *dreams*, or we are indeed awake and we do indeed speak to each other.<sup>106</sup>

Or, what kind of proof would one need for knowing about the essence of things which would make the dream of the reality of the essence of things become real, that is, to take it out of the dream?

Consider, Cratylus, a question that I for my part often *dream* about: Are we or aren't we to say that there is a beautiful itself, and a good itself, and the same for each one of the things that are?<sup>107</sup>

Knowledge, *episteme*, is about whether one can move out from such a dream. To arrive to knowledge is to have an itinerary, a passage out of dreaming, to adaw, to be a-wake (*délit*). This waking up is what René Descartes was aiming at as the passage to absolute knowledge:

I will regard the heavens, the air, the earth, colours, shapes, sounds, and all external things as nothing but the bedeviling hoaxes of my dreams... *But this undertaking is arduous, and a certain laziness brings me back to my customary way of living.* I am not unlike a prisoner who enjoyed an imaginary freedom during his sleep, but, when he later begins to suspect that he is dreaming, fears being awakened and nonchalantly conspires with these pleasant illusions. In just the same way, I fall back of my own accord into my old opinions, and dread being awakened.<sup>108</sup>

While Descartes needed God's aid to get out of the dream, to move out from skepticism, he arrived at a thinking thing. He concluded that he was a thinking thing. He had, in Brentano's later elaboration, an immediate insight of/about thinking. The movement here takes place and time not in what can be perceived through the modalities of perception mediated by biological/material organ(s) but in thought itself immediately, the immediate

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<sup>106</sup> (Πλάτων 1980, 158c)

<sup>107</sup> (Plato 1997, 439d; 155)

<sup>108</sup> (R. Descartes 2006, 12)

perception of thought. The movement here takes a different direction. Perception perceives itself *as* a mental phenomenon or a mental state with a mental object.

Consequently, no one can really doubt that a mental state which he perceives in himself exists, and that it exists just as he perceives it. Anyone who could push his doubt this far would reach a state of absolute doubt, a skepticism which would certainly destroy itself, because it would have destroyed any *firm basis* upon which it could endeavor to attack knowledge.<sup>109</sup>

What Brentano suggests is that there is no stasis, no *firm basis*, no absolute standing, even in *skepsis*. There is always movement even in thought, in perception. We just have to trace the *direction* of the movement, of the thought, of the perception.

Every mental phenomenon is characterised by ... the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, ... *reference to a content, direction toward* an object ... or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something *as object within itself*, ... In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved...

This intentional *in-existence* is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena. ... We can, therefore, define mental phenomena ... those phenomena which contain an object intentionally within themselves.<sup>110</sup>

*Skepsis*, or the mental, is never standing, it is moving toward an object. *Skepsis* is like the movement of the arrow of a bow as Socrates recounts in *Cratylus*. The movement towards a target, toward something. There is never skepticism insofar as we can reveal the object toward which *skepsis* moves, what it intends, its intentionality. *Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself*. But this object is not necessarily a physical object. And that is why the mental is marked by in-existence. The *direction toward* of *skepsis*, is reference to an object, which exists as its content but need not exist in the world as a physical object. This movement, this intentionality is in existence for the person, yet we know that it could be an inexistence with respect to the object. If the object of the mental act corresponds adequately to a physical thing; if the mental can be identified with

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<sup>109</sup> (Brentano 2009, 7)

<sup>110</sup> (Ibid, 68; emphases added)

a physical phenomenon; if the mental object is an adequate representation of a physical thing, the perception can be interpreted as an exhaustive description of what is physically presented to the person. But that need not be the case. With mental reference, in Brentano's words, "if someone thinks of something, the one who is thinking must certainly exist, but the object of his thinking need not exist at all."<sup>111</sup> Hence, *intentional in-existence is characteristic exclusively of mental phenomena*.

On the one hand, intentionality neutralises skepticism by revealing the existence of the one who intends, by describing a movement from the subject to its subjective object, but on the other hand, this movement is always internal; it is a relation of oneself to oneself without the possibility of moving (back) to the external physical world. We cannot know whether the subjective object (the mental phenomenon) refers to an objective object (the physical phenomenon). Husserl, however, revisiting intentionality, could not really acquiesce to such a Cartesian and Kantian inspired internal and external distinction, and wanted to "draw more precise distinctions between the world of the individual, the world of the empirical, social community, and perhaps the world of an ideally community of knowers, the world of (ideally perfected) science, the world in itself."<sup>112</sup>

Husserl finds the distinction between mental and physical phenomena suspicious. Phenomena or "the appearing of things"<sup>113</sup> do not enter into consciousness, but we live through them. We are always conscious of some thing. Consciousness moves towards some thing other than itself, that is, it transcends itself. This movement, this transcendence is intentionality. There is never skepticism as there is always movement. Consciousness is always moving, it is a unified stream of consciousness. As Sartre says of Husserl's fundamental concept of intentionality, there is nothing in consciousness but "a movement of fleeing itself, a sliding beyond itself."<sup>114</sup> Instead of putting things into consciousness, as with Brentano, devouring and dissolving them, consciousness found(s) things while streaming. With Sartre,

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<sup>111</sup> (Ibid., 212)

<sup>112</sup> (Ibid, 89)

<sup>113</sup> (Husserl 1970, 83)

<sup>114</sup> (Sartre 1970, 5)

You see this tree, to be sure. But you see it just where it is: at the side of the road, in the midst of the dust, alone and writhing in the heat, eight miles from the Mediterranean coast. It could not enter in your consciousness, for it is not of the same nature as consciousness.<sup>115</sup>

Consciousness is this interplay between finding and founding. We found things as wooden, hard, interesting, lovable, and repulsive. There is never a pure representation of things-in-themselves. In the stream of consciousness, things are found based on how they have been previously found(ed) and, in turn, they are founded anew as they are presently found. It is not a matter of what object appears but what appears as an object. The intentional object then is not what appears in consciousness but some-thing in “its *modes* or *ways* of givenness”<sup>116</sup> as a constituted unity.

This constituted unity, the intentional object, Husserl calls ‘noema’ or ‘sense’ constituted out of various noetic acts (perceiving, thinking, judging, wishing, loving etc.). Consciousness as sense giving, is noesis. If we go back to Brentano, even if there is a direction towards an object when *in presentation something is presented*, the primary direction to what is presented can itself become a new object of another presentation in the sense that ‘*in presentation something is presented*’ is now a new intentional object, a new presentation. If what comes out of the noetic is the noematic, the noetic can in turn be intended in the stream of consciousness and can turn into a noematic. This is what Husserl called a change of attitude which is “a thematic transition from one direction of apprehension to another to which correspond correlatively different objectivities.”<sup>117</sup> And by this thematic transition it can posit itself as an object. Consciousness is, ergo, a positional consciousness. It posits its object, as Sartre says, “in order to reach an object and it exhausts itself in the same positing.”<sup>118</sup> For example, I see in front of me the Parthenon. The intentional object of the experience is not just the physical thing but also the way the physical thing is lived through, I see it. The noetic here may be the perceiving. But to be as much faithful to the originally Husserlian thought as possible, this perceiving

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<sup>115</sup> (Ibid., 4)

<sup>116</sup> (Steinbock 1999, 180)

<sup>117</sup> (Husserl 1996, 221)

<sup>118</sup> (Sartre 1993, li)

of the physical thing stands in relation with how it has been lived through in the past and constituted as the ‘Parthenon’ and in relation with all these previous intentional experiences which lead to the moment of the expression of the proposition.<sup>119</sup> To see the Parthenon is an experience, an intentional act founded on many other intentions retained in consciousness. “Most if not all, acts are complex experiences very often involving intentions which are themselves multiple.”<sup>120</sup> As Steinbock put it, intentionality is saturated. In turn, ‘I wish to see the Parthenon’ is an intentional act equally saturated by the noetic act of wishing and of the physical thing which is wished to be seen. In turn, the physical thing is itself another constituted unity which has been sedimented over the course of the stream of prior intentional experiences (mental acts or consciousnesses) as Husserl usually characterises the aboutness of the physical things. Equally as well, the wishing is another constitution which ‘adds’ something new to the unity. ‘Wishing’ here is another way that something can be given to consciousness, a “newly”<sup>121</sup> objectivating process, an additional constitution to prior intended strata of constitution with respect to the thing.

This broadening of the concept of intentionality allows Husserl to conceive intentionality *as* existence rather than tracing it with Brentano *to in-existence* in its myriad senses. If something can be intended an intentional object, then it exists. The object exists as it is constituted. The constitution of this unity is the phenomenon, the noema, how the world appears. As Stephen Strasser underscores, Husserl’s objection to Brentano relies on not accepting a distinction between *cogito* and *cogitatum*, *noesis* and *noema*, “experience and that to which experience refers” as they are “inseparably linked.” Both of them can be intended in the same manner, that is, they can be given to consciousness as “pure phenomena; they are immanent manifestations which phenomenological psychology must describe.”<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> It “makes no essential difference”, as Husserl demonstrates, “to an object presented and given to consciousness whether it exists, or is fictitious, or is perhaps completely absurd. I think of Jupiter as I think of Bismarck, of the tower of Babel as I think of Cologne Cathedral, of a regular thousand-sided polygon as of a regular thousand-faced solid” (Husserl 1970, 99).

<sup>120</sup> (Ibid., 96)

<sup>121</sup> (Husserl 1996, 18)

<sup>122</sup> (Strasser 1967, 335)

There are many implications of this broadening of the concept of intentionality for how to come to an unfettered believing in altruism. Firstly, Husserl *disentangled* truth from the scholastic conception of truth *as* a relation of correspondence between a proposition and an object existing independently of a consciousness which proposes, that is, which intends the world. Re-visiting Descartes, Husserl underscored that “I may doubt whether an outer object exists, and so whether a percept relating to such objects is correct, but I cannot doubt the now experienced sensuous content whenever that is I reflect on the latter, and simply *intuit it as being what it is*.”<sup>123</sup> The same line of thought permeates the first part of the *Cartesian Meditations* where Husserl accepts that we can, with Descartes, doubt being *as* a datum of experience and puts in its place the phenomenon of being “as mine ... [which] has for me sense and validity *as* “true.””<sup>124</sup> The object of experience, as a phenomenon, whatever that may be, it exists by the fact that it is for me *as being what it is*. *The fact that it is, is the fact*. And this facticity

is not one of countless theoretical possibilities within a certain factually delimited sphere. It is the single, sole truth which excludes all other possibilities and which, being established by *insight*, is kept pure from fact in its content and mode of proof.<sup>125</sup>

This mineness *is kept pure from fact in its content and mode of proof* depending as it does solely on its feeling of being mine. The object insofar as I adequately perceive it *by excluding all other possibilities*, is lived for me, as it is for me and in its mineness I come to be-live it, I believe it. Believing is always true as believing is intentionally related to the actual process of the constitution of the object, and since the object cannot be separated from the way it has been constituted, there is no way to believe something which is false. The constitution is always subjective, always mine hence the *sole truth*. ‘False’ is another constitution, be it mine in another moment of the stream of consciousness or a moment of another stream of consciousness intending – i.e. when I express what the fact is for me.

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<sup>123</sup> (Husserl 1970, 345)

<sup>124</sup> (Husserl 1960, 19)

<sup>125</sup> (Husserl 1970, 53)

Husserl's intentionality leads us to 'mineness.' The constitution of an object through consciousness, leads us to 'mineness.' The latter is not to be construed as an object of a subject or an ego. It is an impersonal feeling. In the stream of consciousness, in living through something, when we "become absorbed, e.g., in the perceptual 'taking in' in the act of some event happening before us,"<sup>126</sup> like in the case of seeing the Parthenon above, there is no ego to be found in the act-experience. When act-experience is naturalised or put into relief from the stream of consciousness, that is, the act-experience is interrupted and attention is turned towards it, it is then that the ego is found as another constitution, another transcendent object. The ego is intended, is posited, is constituted just like any other object, it is a transcendent object. The question now is whether the repetitive ego-constitutions that are found in the various reflected acts reveal or point to a transcendental 'I,' a core sense, a transcendental schema, which phenomenally itself as 'mineness' and unifies the stream of consciousness as mine, and of which the empirical ego is just another intention, another sketch, another adumbration. There is a bit of oscillation in Husserl as to whether this mineness is to be referred to as 'adequate perception' or 'something lived' (*erlebnis*) or some sort of 'presence' or 'pure consciousness' or in what is referred to as 'pure (transcendental) ego.'

Many philosophers have noticed that there is a certain tension in Husserl's writing with respect to this pure ego. This tension is revealed as an oscillation in the possibility of objectivating, directing attention, intending to a pure ego even in the sense of a filmy demarcated horizon. In the *Logical Investigations* Husserl writes in a note exploring intentionality:

the empirical ego is as much a case of transcendence as the physical thing. If the elimination of such transcendence and the reduction to pure phenomenological data, leaves us with no residual pure ego, there can be no real (adequate) self-evidence attaching to the 'I am'. But if there is really such an adequate self-evidence – who could indeed deny it? – how could we avoid assuming a pure ego?<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> (Husserl 1970, 100)

<sup>127</sup> (Ibid., 352)



Then again, Husserl criticizes Hume and Berkeley who reduce “phenomenal bodies to bundles of ideas” because they fail to notice how in the case of the physical thing “the bundle itself, the intended complexes of elements, are never present in real fashion in any human consciousness and never will be.”<sup>128</sup> This is because there will never be a perception “adequately intuited in any consciousness.”<sup>129</sup> And since “adequate intuition is the same as internal perception” one cannot not analogise the bundle of the constituted physical thing with the transcendental pure ego and wonder whether such an adequate perception could ever be accomplished, whether either could be intended. It all comes down to whether the reduction can yield an adequate perception of “the living intention which cannot be adequately imparted in words.”<sup>130</sup> But now this adequate perception, as all adequate perception, is unrelated with the actual existence of a thing but with its ideal presentification since the most immediate perception is noematic, unreal – *I can think of Bismarck* as I think of my alien friend Toby. Intentionality cannot play the role of ‘adequate’ in the adequate perception. So, the *real (adequate) self-evidence attaching to the ‘I am’* is not intentional yet still within the realm of (the intentional) consciousness.

To be sure, consciousness as a stream made up of intentionalities, must be somehow unified if it is to be a stream. There is a transcendental field of unification at play. Whether this field is a transcendental ‘I’ or an ‘eye’ which actively directs its ray of attention from here to there – a favourite analogy for Husserl – or whether it (the field) is empty, impacts our investigation. What we are looking for is how we can come to believe in altruism. For the person who does not believe in altruism this translates as coming to be motivated to believe in altruism and for the person who already believes in altruism, that they are freely motivated to believe even if that believing is put into relief, by, for example, judging. In either case, believing in altruism must be actively motivated by the person be-having the belief. Intentionality can help us think of how we come to be motivated to believe, but can it help us believe and be-live altruism? Simply, can intentionality intend itself? “How is the intentionality that makes all things visible be

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<sup>128</sup> (Ibid., 89)

<sup>129</sup> (Ibid., 90)

<sup>130</sup> (Ibid., 88)

revealed – to itself?”<sup>131</sup> What does it mean for constitutive intentionality or consciousness to be self-conscious?

One of the reasons that Sartre denied the existence of a transcendental ‘I’ was that consciousness as a stream would be destroyed. If the transcendental field was an ‘I’

it would violently separate consciousness from itself, it would divide it, slicing through each consciousness like an opaque blade. The transcendental I is the death of consciousness. The existence of consciousness, indeed, is an absolute, because consciousness is conscious of itself; in other words, the type of existence that consciousness has is that it is consciousness of itself. And it becomes conscious of itself *insofar as it is consciousness of a transcendent object*.<sup>132</sup>

As mentioned earlier, consciousness becomes conscious of itself in the process of the constitution of the object, through noesis. The fact that something is (constituted), is the fact. Admitting the condition of intentional consciousness to an anterior transcendental unity marked by an opaque pole, an ‘I,’ even if that ‘I’ is intentional, would cut off the absoluteness of intentionality. It would always be an ‘I’ which passes into consciousness and into consciousness of something. A unity before a unity would make the noema of constitution redundant. Intentionality would be sliced by *an opaque blade*.<sup>133</sup>

For consciousness to be intentional it has to be absolute consciousness, an impersonal transcendental field. Following the Husserl of the *Investigations* and not of the *Ideas*, Sartre elaborated on the two ways of consciousness, the reflected and the unreflected. The unreflected is a non-positional consciousness in the sense that consciousness does not become an object but it reveals itself through the constitution of an object which is other than itself.<sup>134</sup> If this unreflected consciousness is intended, it

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<sup>131</sup> (Henry 2015, 47)

<sup>132</sup> (Sartre 1988b, 4)

<sup>133</sup> Or, “a knife blade” that “cuts a piece of fruit in two” (Sartre 1993, 28).

<sup>134</sup> Later, Sartre will reformulate this thesis where consciousness as the for-itself is its own past which is never its object but revealed through the negation of the thing in the world which it constitutes. The past is “posited opposite” the for-itself and assumed as that which the for-itself has to be without being able either to affirm or deny or thematise or absorb it” (1993, 140).

becomes the intentional object of another consciousness, it is then posited as an object by a reflective consciousness; it is constituted as consciousness reflected-on. This is not just reflective consciousness but consciousness itself reflected-on. But as Sartre underscored in his later writings, this is always the very same consciousness through and through. There is not another consciousness external to itself to be added to transform the unreflected to a reflected-on through reflection of itself. There is only a movement from a pre-reflective consciousness to a reflective, if intentional consciousness is to have any meaning at all. For instance, in the consciousness of a pleasurable object, “pleasure can not be distinguished – even logically – from consciousness of pleasure.”<sup>135</sup> There is a pre-reflective consciousness which conditions the reflection of consciousness. And because this “fleeting”<sup>136</sup> consciousness is not positional yet conditions positionality itself, it is put in brackets: “Consciousness (of) pleasure is constitutive of the pleasure as the very mode of its own existence, as the material of which it is made, and not as a form which is imposed by a blow upon hedonistic material.”<sup>137</sup> This bracketing suggests that consciousness reflects itself as in a mirror in every intentional moment. Pleasure is always consciousness (of) pleasure. Similarly, if this reflection is intended, that is, if it becomes reflective to be the reflected-on, to be consciousness of consciousness, intentional consciousness would be transcending to itself, yet revealing itself through this positionality. It would be consciousness (of) consciousness. But since this is a constitution of the transcending consciousness, there will always be something ‘missing.’ This consciousness is a “slope on which I cannot stay.”<sup>138</sup>

To say that consciousness is consciousness of something means that for consciousness there is no being outside of that precise obligation to be a revealing intuition of something-i.e., of a transcendent being. Not only does pure subjectivity, if initially given, fail to transcend itself to posit the objective; a “pure” subjectivity disappears. What can properly be called subjectivity is consciousness (of) consciousness. But this

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<sup>135</sup> (Ibid., liv)

<sup>136</sup> (Ibid., liii)

<sup>137</sup> (Ibid., liv)

<sup>138</sup> (Murdoch 1953, 118)

consciousness (of being) consciousness must be qualified in some way,  
and it can be qualified only as revealing intuition or it is nothing.<sup>139</sup>

Consciousness is always in-itself and transcends itself. As a phenomenon of being it is in-itself and for-itself and “*no-thing*” in between<sup>140</sup> – “nothing has just slipped *in between* that state and the present state.”<sup>141</sup> It is just like the line of the horizon. That no thing which comes to be by the sky touching the sea or the sea touching the sky. This horizon is “all the mystery in the world;” yet it is beyond this horizon where everything happens.<sup>142</sup>

On the one hand, the ego as a transcendent object always refers to the past as consciousness intends itself. In uncovering the different layers of its constitution it can never find an ‘*I*’ as a beginning, as an arche. It is found when it finds itself in re-flection, in constitution. On the other hand, as it projects itself into what it could possibly be with adumbrated intentions based on a schema of how it has been so far, or as an analogised schema based on other egos, other transcendent objects, these infinite intended adumbrations fail to reveal a totality, they face a wall, the wall of death, or nothingness. The transcendental field of consciousness is anxiety. The movement (of constitution) ends (itself) in death, nothingness. If consciousness as constitutive intentionality is not skeptical, as we said in the beginning, it is because it has an end, or better, the ultimate end. Consciousness of consciousness is absolute knowledge: death. Consciousness is a conscious movement toward death. To know means to be aware of death.

There are two questions here revealed and left suspended, and these questions have motivated the critique of the classical phenomenological programme of intentionality. The first question, posed by Jean Nabert to Sartre,<sup>143</sup> is how we account

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<sup>139</sup> (Sartre 1993, lxi). “This means that the being of consciousness does not coincide with itself in a full equivalence” (74). This Sartrean *skepsis* permeates *Being and Nothingness* when he says that “if we attempt to grasp it [reflection] as reflecting, it vanishes and we fall back on the reflection” (76). Sartre may call this *facticity* but “it is impossible to grasp this facticity in its brute nudity” (83).

<sup>140</sup> (Ibid., 77; emphasis added)

<sup>141</sup> (Ibid., 28; emphasis added)

<sup>142</sup> (O'Neill 1960, 25)

<sup>143</sup> (Sartre 1967b)

for the being of the transition between the pre-reflective and the reflective. And we could add what accounts for the eternal recurrence of such transition, a transition which is rarely if ever likely to be the same in a stream of consciousness. The second question, closely related to the first is that the transition can never be intentional. To be clear, consciousness as consciousness of something, intentional consciousness, “must produce itself as a revealed-revelation of a being which is not it and which gives itself as already existing when consciousness reveals it”<sup>144</sup> and in consciousness’s attempt to recover itself this being which is not it, it becomes a being-for-itself. But re-covering is an affectivity which evades intentionality. The ‘re’ of the recovering or the ‘re’ of the reflecting cannot be constituted as such-and-such; the ‘re’ is an affectivity, something non intentional.

Sartre’s reworking of the classical Hegelian concepts of ‘in-itself’ and ‘for-itself’ with Husserl’s exploded/saturated intentionality brings about a brilliant concept. Consciousness is always something that it is not, and it is not what it is. Self-consciousness must be expressed in brackets, or in Derrida’s terms *sous rature*; as *conscience (de) soi*, since it can never intend itself, that is, reflect itself fully. If, as we saw with Brentano, *in presentation something is presented*, in the case of consciousness *that something* is never what it is, consciousness can never be presented in its fullness. It is presenc-ing rather than presenting itself, never constituting itself to itself – even though it does try to do that, yet in any attempt it has always already failed. When Sartre says that “the For-itself is the thetic consciousness of the world in the form of presence and non-thetic self-consciousness [*conscience (de) soi*],”<sup>145</sup> there is always already something that cannot be presence, as constitution, or full intention.

At the same time, however, paradoxically one could say, it is through these breaks and fragments of constitution that consciousness is presented *as such*, as what it is, *a consciousness-of*. In the attempts to reflect on itself it reveals itself in being aware of itself while being conscious of something which is not the constitution of itself. Consciousness sees itself not with full eyes but with a wink. Even in introspection, Sartre says, “I try to determine exactly what I am, to make up my mind to be my true self *without delay* – even

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<sup>144</sup> (Sartre 1993, lxii)

<sup>145</sup> (Ibid., 127)

though it means consequently to set about searching for ways to change myself.”<sup>146</sup> But there is always this delay since reflection apprehends the reflecting “as Not-yet,”<sup>147</sup> as a deferral, which is never thought, never intended in all senses of the term. Each term, each reflection, as the object of reflecting “while positing itself for the other, became the other.”<sup>148</sup> There is something always missing, deferred, unthought in the enduring game of reflection-reflecting/reflective-reflected on, it is always something for-itself. As Michel Foucault put it, consciousness seems as the inexhaustible unthought which “whatever it touches it immediately causes to move: it cannot discover the unthought, or at least move towards it, without immediately bringing the unthought nearer to itself.”<sup>149</sup>

Spiraling back to our discussion on habit, a habit is a habit when it is not reflected, when it lives in itself, when it is what it is not. Reflecting on a habit, a break has already taken place. The habit has been cracked. Ultimately, a pre-reflective consciousness cannot be reflected upon without such a break, such a crack which will allow the pre-reflective to become intentional consciousness. But that break, that fissure, that dehiscence is never intended, it is felt – affectivity. To come back to Hume and universalise his observation, it is the *difference betwixt that conception to which we assent, and that from which we dissent* we are conscious of, and this difference cannot be accounted through intentionality. How then does this crack, this opening come to be?

Let us provide an extraordinary example. The phenomenological reduction either in Cartesian or Husserlian way is the foundational road to knowledge. And this is precisely because the reflection is what allows the broaching, the puncture of the universality of custom and habit. We can accept that everything is connected by some sort of customary association, but the very fact that we can stop and reflect on these associations, putting intentional experience into relief, when we stand and try to understand how the associations are associated, all of which means to question, then we breach the custom and we break the habit. We can accept that “we get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking;”<sup>150</sup> that we are constituted out of a bundle of

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<sup>146</sup> (Sartre 1993, 63; our emphasis)

<sup>147</sup> (Ibid., 126)

<sup>148</sup> (Ibid, 152)

<sup>149</sup> (Foucault 1989, 357)

<sup>150</sup> (Camus 1975, 15)

perceptions, caught in a matrix of habits, (physical) associations and (bio-chemical) causalities. Yet, the possibility of leaping out of this ocean of determinism, even for seconds, as if taking a breath, like dolphins, and then necessarily back in, allows the opening of a place, an in-between, which feels like this *difference betwixt that conception to which we assent, and that from which we dissent*. If everything is determined, the possibility of arriving at the consciousness of this determinism is, if not to destroy it, at least to breach its essence. The *determinism of consciousness* is cracked by this movement of reversal whereby we can talk about the ‘*consciousness of determinism*.’ And even if the latter is part of the determinism itself, such re-flection is a break. To extend the naturalistic analogy, there is the difference *betwixt that conception to which we ascend, and that from which we descend*. The affectivity, that Humean lively feeling felt during a movement comes out of folding, from in-flecting an uninterrupted movement, a stream of consciousness.

This affectivity is feeling. It is affectivity which I experience as mine. It is this mineness again that we come back to. But that feeling of mineness cannot be thematised or localised, it is lived through what is intended, like an extra something, a *partes extra partes*, of the intentionality which it makes possible. It is not a property of the experience nor the experience of. It is what underlies one (experience) into the other, that which allows to find and found every intentional experience. That which even in dreams, daydreams or night dreams, or thought experiments, is always felt through something intended which is other than itself:

So, when I dream, it might be the case that the room that I think I see and the persons to whom I believe I am speaking do not exist. But, if in the course of this dream, I experience a fright, this is what it is. It is absolutely, untouched and unaltered in its being by the fact that it is a dream and that there is no room or person or world. Its being remains untouched and unaltered by the alteration of seeing, by the disturbance of the ek-static site of visibility in which everything that is given for me to see becomes visible.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> (Henry 2012, 14)

What Henry means here with *this is what it is*, this facticity, is not the affectivity, the feeling that we are trying to describe. This relates to the intentional experience, to the facticity of the experience, the in-itself. Even if we take facticity with Husserl as *erlebnis*, something lived, or with Heidegger as the ““that-it-is” of facticity [which] never becomes something that we can come across by beholding it,”<sup>152</sup> we will not be able to capture affectivity, as a mineness as ‘it’, or ‘this’, as something intended. As Henry elaborates, the phenomenological reduction, or any kind of reflection in the colloquial sense, is a thematisation of being, an attempt to objectify experience, an attempt which even if unsuccessful, is still “responsible for the disappearance or vanishing of feeling.”<sup>153</sup> Feeling cannot be reflected in or as feeling. Yet, even during reflection there is feeling which is not captured by it. Feeling is only lived as feeling. As Derrida put it, “living is thus what precedes the reduction and finally escapes all the divisions which the latter gives rise to.”<sup>154</sup>

Along similar lines, and somewhere along the lines of his investigations, Wittgenstein tries to capture this feeling as something that cannot be reflected, as “imponderable.”<sup>155</sup> It is those “subtleties” between the tone of voice and the gestures. The subtleties are disclosed somewhere, somehow in-between how a child is formed to live, the forms of its life, how it is in(-)formed, and the time the child starts to doubt. Somewhere in-between the certainty and the doubt is the imponderable feeling. In-between the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* who is positively informed and the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* who is doubtful, there is the essential break of philosophical habit; “the essential thing was that the thoughts should proceed from one subject to another in a natural order and without breaks.”<sup>156</sup> Yet, such habit broke down. “The best that I could write would never be more than philosophical remarks; my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single direction

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<sup>152</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 174)

<sup>153</sup> (Henry 1973, 544)

<sup>154</sup> (Derrida 1973, 13)

<sup>155</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 228). This characterisation, ‘imponderable,’ appears in dim light in Sartre as well when he writes that it is the “imponderable difference separating being from non-being in the mode of being of human reality” (1993, 66)

<sup>156</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, vii)



against their natural inclination.”<sup>157</sup> In-between two ways of philosophising, the “old way of thinking” and the new “remarks,” there are breaks, “sketches of landscapes” from “journey ings,” “criss-cross” in every direction and “grave mistakes”<sup>158</sup> as another manifestation of the Humean phenomenon of difference: *difference betwixt that ~~conception~~ to which ~~we~~ assent, and that from which ~~we~~ dissent*. Outside of this movement comes Wittgenstein’s new philosophy, Wittgenstein. Borrowing from Derrida, again, we could say that

What exceeds this closure is nothing: neither the presence of being, nor meaning, neither history nor philosophy; but another thing which has no name, which *announces itself within the thought of this closure* and guides our/[his] writing [t]here. A writing within which philosophy is inscribed as a place within a text which it does not command.<sup>159</sup>

What is it that *which announces itself within the thought of his/Wittgenstein’s/t-his closure* and guides his writing *there*, from marking a whole, to re-marking it, to breaking it into pieces and reflecting on it? Can it be intentionally present? What is happening in-between the “beginning to occupy myself with philosophy again, sixteen years ago, [and now that] I have been forced to recognize grave mistakes”?<sup>160</sup> What is the difference? What affectivity is writing itself in these years in-between the philosophical (re)marks other than life itself, *biosis*?

From the philosophy of intentionality, be it in the phenomenological tradition or the scientific tradition, we move to a philosophy of life which can encompass both. Borrowing from Derrida, we might name this *biosis* an “ultratrascendental concept of life” which will “enable us to conceive life (in the ordinary or biological sense),”<sup>161</sup> and, in our case, altruistic life through which we propose to be altruistic and resuscitate life as *biosis*. If altruism is to be lived, in an unfettered way, to be lived as believed, the motivation to live for Others must condition life in all its breaks and movements. Either for the one who does not live for Others to break the old ways, or for the altruist to

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<sup>157</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>158</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>159</sup> (Derrida 1998, 286; emphasis added)

<sup>160</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, viii)

<sup>161</sup> (Derrida 1973, 15)

continue it in a way that does not end up in a habit unconscious of itself or, still worse, an altruism which has resulted from an in-formed habituated life. To come back where we started, altruism or to live for others has to be lived as believed, it has to be *biosis*.

Henry's radical opposition to this term, or Derrida's appreciation of it as life *in the biological sense* will allow us here to make another altruistic attempt in the philosophical plane. Henry is opposed to equating the condition of affectivity to *biosis* for, as he explores in *Incarnation*, the condition of affectivity as auto-affectivity is best manifested as "transcendental phenomenological life, the pathos-filled self-revelation from which the flesh draws its pathos, its reality qua pure phenomenological reality, as pathos-filled reality."<sup>162</sup> It is the transcendental condition of life itself, life experiencing itself by affecting itself, "the being given to itself of existence in its reality, its original revelation"<sup>163</sup> which not only (1) falsifies any kind of intentionality, but, also (2) disposes of a concept of a body "from the ordinary experience that underlies Greek thought as well as our own,"<sup>164</sup> and "...is no longer the one known to the Greeks, the *bios* of their biology."<sup>165</sup> Henry is referring to a body as a material ensemble which is governed by laws and whose laws are those that a logos – episteme – of the life of this body can describe, hence biology. However, life is revealed in a flesh that feels and it is not just a body that senses based on the logos of its functionality.

While we agree with Henry, there is one very important epistemological point that needs to be made for the second objection. Indeed, Henry is right about the concept of the scientific biological construal of the body having been related to this type of concept of *bios*. But to what extent is this 'Greek thought'? What is inscribed in this metonymy? Would it extend to the logos of the so-called pre-Socratics? What does this classification 'Greek' refer to? What does it *intend*? And what is the responsibility in perpetuating that particular 'Greek thought' and not questioning it? This metonymy usually be-lies Western Metaphysics as founded by Socrates-Plato-Aristotle that particular western philosophers, scholastics among others, loved to reprise and remix for the epistemic pursuit of their

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<sup>162</sup> (Henry 2015, 132)

<sup>163</sup> (Henry 1973, 645)

<sup>164</sup> (Henry 2015, 131)

<sup>165</sup> (Ibid., 132)

good life/zoe (eu zein). There is much to be said about the workings of metonymic use and the use of the metonymy ‘Greek’ versus ‘Hellenic’ in describing Greek thought.<sup>166</sup>

There is an other Greek thought, another logos, a Hellenic logos, where *bios* is not related to a particular kind of knowledge or a knowledge of the particular but a philosophy of life. Ricoeur, for instance, while going through Aristotle’s appropriation of the term does not fall into the same trap. *Bios*, or *Vios* or *Vie* before its philosophical transvaluations was *Life* as we mean it here. Ricoeur is very careful and says “this notion of life merits reflection.” “It is not taken in a strictly biological sense but in the ethnocultural sense ... the word “life” [*bios*] designates the person as a whole, in opposition to fragmented practices.”<sup>167</sup> And this life also includes the concept of elan (βίωσις) which in turn relates much better to the phenomenological principle as Henry describes it, the principle of human reality as “undergoing experiencing itself” when life is not truncated into particular episodes or seen in *fragmented practices*. We can agree with Henry insofar as *bios* has been supplanted by ζωή (*zoe*) constituted in an embodied consciousness which relates directly to a supposed animalistic nature of human reality as if a product of some kind of evolution – the rational animal or the social animal, or the animal which erects itself or has an erection and becomes rational and social – and it is not to be found outside of a particularly intended use of the metonymy “Greek thought.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> With very few exceptions, western literature on Nietzsche neglects the difference between the Greek and the Hellenic. These are not some biological properties as in some sort of biological structure that makes one ethnic group be what it is. The difference is a difference in life force, in will to power – Both in the *Untimely Meditations* and in *The Genealogy of Morals*, and later in all his works, Nietzsche phenomenalisises a difference in the will to life as epistemic logos – reactive, negative activity – and logos as *logicis* – activity and creativity. One could say that the most enduring appropriation in history has been ‘logos’ – we shall quest(ion) this path later.

<sup>167</sup> (Ricoeur 1992, 177; emphasis added)

<sup>168</sup> We are also guarded towards Giorgio Agamben’s and Rosi Braidotti’s use of these terms. For Agamben, the appreciation between *zoe* and *bios* is the main topic of the profound *Homo Sacer*. Agamben appreciates a difference between *zoe* as bare life, animalistic life voicing itself, and *bios* as living being with logos as politicised language, a qualified life or political existence. But this conceptual difference comes from a decision to start the genealogical analysis from Plato and Aristotle. The “inclusion of *zoe* in the *polis*” is thus not “in-itself, absolutely ancient” (1998, 9). There is no justification for starting/ending the genealogy

Equally, if ultra-transcendental life as *différance* or trace or supplement “is to be conceived prior to the separation between deferring as delay as the active work of difference”<sup>169</sup> then, again, historicity not in *fragmented practices* must be accounted for if this movement is to be revealed as movement which is the same movement which is not identical.<sup>170</sup> And *biosis* is all about this (w)hole movement. And, indeed, it is the holes of the whole, the breaks, the differences, and the spacings that we need to trace in being altruistic; that which is missed in transcending, in intending, in projecting altruistically. What is missing in the process of projecting, is, as Nietzsche described, the *biosis* of promising.

### *biosis of promise*

Our analysis leads us to another phenomenon which has been widely philosophised and is akin to the phenomenon of prescription: the phenomenon of promise. In promising, as Marcel underscores, we are committing to an objective based on past

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in Plato and Aristotle who play the representatives of what is inscribed in the metonymy ‘Greek thought’ as a supposed authoritative beginning. This decision implies that there is a natural pre-giveness of this distinction as authoritative hence tacitly accepting its ontological status as inscribed by these figures of ‘Greek thought.’ This distinction which Agamben takes on from Michel Foucault is a distinction which, as Judith Butler observes, is a “distinction itself precluded in the task of genealogical investigation” (1989, 607). For Aristotle the natural state precedes the political chronologically, so if “the state of nature is not a real epoch chronologically prior to the foundation of the City but a principle internal to the City, which appears at the moment the City is considered *tanquam dissoluta*, “as if it were dissolved” (in this sense, therefore, the state of nature is something like a state of exception),” then one must question the kind of distinction implied by accepting the ontological necessity of the rational animal and ascribe this particular distinction to a *tanquam dissoluta* itself. Braidotti’s use of *zoe* is different. Taking for granted that *bios* is anthropocentric relating to logic as reason or discursive practices, she proposes the use of the term *zoe* to signify the life force which subtends all life – living beings – not the bestialization of life as in Agamben. “*Zoe* as the dynamic self-organising structure of life itself,” (2013, 60) is non-human and transversal force. We shall come back to this displacement in our fifth pathway. However, there is one point that needs to be made here. This *zoe* as a transversal force which entails “the recognition of trans species solidarity,” has an intriguing peculiarity: a basis on “our being environmentally based, that is to say, embodied, embedded, and in *symbiosis* with other species” (67; our emphasis).

<sup>169</sup> (Derrida 1973, 87)

<sup>170</sup> (Ibid, 129)

and present circumstances without having an ability to assure the unfolding of events that will secure the same ontological standing which presently gives genesis to the promise. When I make a promise *now* it is a promise about the future; if I were to be doing it *now* it would be an act that I would be acting not promising it. In this future, whether close or distant, I cannot logically, reasonably or otherwise secure that how I am *now* that I make my promise (how I feel, my capabilities and so on) I will also be in the future when the promise is to be fulfilled; when action will need to realise the words. The promise contains the dynamic synthesis that we mentioned earlier in prescription, yet here, it takes the form of committing. But this dynamic synthesis in the case of promise is the reverse of that of prescription. In prescription I pause, suspending the current action, and in virtue of my pre-sup-posed telos, I affirm a new course of action, the proposed. Taking this back to our previous example of getting somewhere on time, I suspend the action of waiting for a bus, and affirm a new course of action, getting a taxi to reach my telos, that is, my presupposed end as the arriving on time.

Describing it slowly, in prescription I negate the present course of action (*pause*) in virtue of the telos prescribed (*pro-posed*) which affirms and conditions this negation for not fulfilling it ie the ultime telos (*pre-sup-posed*). Conversely, in the promise, I affirm the negation of any possible futures which does not secure the future as represented by the promise, by the present as represented. I commit to a present promised, I present one possibility among the myriad of possibilities that could make up the future. I present one possibility, excluding all the rest that could happen and by omitting them, I commit to one. I present a willed future and I commit to realising it. In so doing, in committing, I affirm not only the possibility out of a whole, but also the possibility of making one possibility a whole, viz., a future. So when I promise, I pause-(and)-pose the present and pro-pose it as future – I create. To promise, then, is *to future*, and this is conditioned by a look to “a ‘beyond’ which is inaccessible to verification.”<sup>171</sup> This dark beyond is the distinctive mark both of the promise and the prescription. The act of promising and the act of prescription suggest a leap to the future. To overflow the future with the present. To leap the present and spell or lip the future. And as all leaps and lips can be sealed with failure and falsity, so do these acts. Yet, still, we perform them.

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<sup>171</sup> (Nietzsche 2005b, 48)

We need to digress a bit and focus more on the promising phenomenon of promising; promising both for what we called ‘punctuation’ and for altruism, perhaps. Our analysis of promising suggests looking at the promise in its occurrence and focusing on its conditions just before-and-after the promise has been made, just before-and-after the words have been lipped, and not spreading the horizon of promising up to the point of its possible (non)realisation. In the promise “I will come to see you tomorrow” we proposed to look at the context of the time and space of the uttering/utterance, when it is lipped. If one extends the horizon of the promise and leaps to the point that the utterance refers (i.e. tomorrow), that is, if one *punctuates* promising to the point in (ontic) time, which is literally proposed by the statement as promise, then one will miss the leap of the act of promising and the act will be characterised differently. To analyse what constitutes a promise such punctuation will have to take into account whether the promise was fulfilled or not – whereas in our case the outcome of the promise is not related to the undertaking of realising the act of promising. The setting up of the horizon, the punctuation, has profound philosophical implications.

For instance, J. L. Austin, in fear of sliding to moralism as the “one who says ‘promising is not merely a matter of words! It is an inward and spiritual act!’,”<sup>172</sup> analyses all the elements involved in promising (utterances, statements, propositions, intentions, chain of events) and evaluates what kind of relation among these parts needs to obtain so that a promise could be said to be a ‘real’ promise.<sup>173</sup> What makes a promise, a ‘real’ promise? This question leads to a distinction between act and event; the act of promising and the event of promising. The act of promising involves the utterance at its contextual birthplace as intended by the speaker who acts, who intends with their words to mark their intention to act; in this they future. The event of promising includes the outcome of the act of promising. This distinction enables Austin to identify any act of speech as a promise insofar as it meets certain criteria. One of the criteria in the case of a promise will be for the outcome of the promise to be realised. With such a distinction, we have in Austin’s words, a distinction between a fulfilled promise and one that “was void, or given in bad faith.”<sup>174</sup> Thus, in the locutionary form – the simple predicative statement or

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<sup>172</sup> (Austin 1962, 10)

<sup>173</sup> (Ibid., 28)

<sup>174</sup> (Austin 1962, 11)

constative – “I will come to see you tomorrow” we can discern the illocutionary form as force (the implied intended action) of a promise which can be re-formed as a (new constative) statement “I promise that I will come to see you tomorrow;” in which case what will make the promise a ‘real’ or felicitous promise is whether the (new) constative obtains, that is, it (be)comes true – based on a correspondence theory of truth; words mirroring the world. And in order to avoid the contingency of the constative obtaining without the intention of the person who promises it, since it is always the speaker who performs, “the speaker *does in speaking*”<sup>175</sup> – otherwise the illocutionary force would become a moot point – the speaker *must* be engaged in the becoming true of the proposition. That is, they *have to* make it happen; it is not surprising to see John Searle underscore that “the essential feature of a promise is that it is the undertaking of an obligation to perform a certain act.”<sup>176</sup> It seems then that Austin’s promise to avoid moralising and psychologising the analysis of discourse *was void, or given in bad faith* as the promising speech act collapses into deontological morality.

Austin offers no justification for why a real promise is one that is, or better, that has to be fulfilled. There is an implied justification in Austin’s and Searle’s analyses which is methodological or epistemological. By including the fulfillment of the promise within the definition of promising – that is to say, to make the outcome of the promise ‘internal,’ constitutive of the act of promising – the event of promising, which can at the same time be unique with respect to all other types of speech acts, can be depicted *no matter who and how one promises*. While such an approach may seem to avoid the danger of introducing psychologism into epistemology, it comes at a cost, and Ricoeur’s analysis becomes relevant here.

On the one hand, talking about promises as identifiable events marks off the person *who* does the promising by silently introducing a third-person perspective. The definition of promising as an event presupposes a third-person perspective which opens up Pandora’s box, which must, ironically, include all possible and impossible paradoxes. First, it neutralises the participants involved in the event of the speech act of promising. Since, with speech acts, the sayer is also the doer, the definition of promising as an event neutralises the sovereignty of the sayer/doer. Concomitantly, if a promise is just an event

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<sup>175</sup> (Ricoeur 1992, 43)

<sup>176</sup> (Searle 1975, 13)

no matter who promises, then we cannot assign responsibility for such an act. If a promise falls through, then we need some-one, some-thing to attribute the failure of doing one's duty – since Austin and Searle make it a matter of duty. Talking about promising as an event akin to 'raining,' 'falling off the stairs,' or 'the combustion of a motor engine,' does not allow room to talk about responsibility.

On the other hand, Ricoeur makes a more sophisticated remark. The utterance 'I promise you' is one coming from a first-person perspective. This can also be the case when one utters reflectively the proposition 'He promises you.' Both these utterances could be registered as descriptive or representative. Yet, between them, there is a vast difference in *reflexive* reference, so vast that it almost goes unnoticed.<sup>177</sup> Simply, there is a difference in doing which relates to the first point raised as to *who* is doing and *what* is done in each case. When I say 'He promises you' I may not make any ontological commitment about the 'he' or the 'you' or the 'I' that describes the world. In both cases, I narrate an event of promising and I am identifying the characters of these events without, however, making any commitments on these narrated identifications.

But when I say 'I promise you,' I am not just narrating an event or signifying the world, but I make an attestation of my commitment to act, not generally but especially for you, the other to whom I especially refer through a reflexive reference to our rich history together; a reflexive reference which is complicit in the promising as will to act. Through the Other, I am able to spread my self temporally into the past and the future. When I promise, I narrate by organising, re-citing the future. I am about to become both "lecteur et scripteur," speaker and writer, an authentic author of the future.<sup>178</sup> Taking promising as a particular class of events not only omits talk about responsibility but lies on a more profound reduction, or we could say on an epistemological irresponsibility of avoiding "an entire problematic, namely that of *personal identity*, which can be articulated only in the temporal dimension of human existence."<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> "The expression "I promise" (or, more precisely, "I promise you") has the specific sense of promising which the expression "he promises" does not have, for the latter retains the sense of a constative (or, if one prefers, of a description)" (Ricoeur 1992, 42)

<sup>178</sup> (Arrien 2008, 99)

<sup>179</sup> (ibid., 114; emphasis in original)



And it is precisely through the question of this temporal dimension that we have been analysing the act of promising. Let us rephrase our question. Our question is about the boundaries of promising, its horizon, either from first-, second-, or third-person perspectives: when does the horizon of the promise begin and end? Who decides those boundaries? One could say that Austin's and Searle's extended horizon is the only way to differentiate the class of 'promise' out of the entirety of speech acts in such a way that 'promise' becomes identifiable and re-identifiable in every situation no matter who promises and how. But still, can this epistemological demand not be fulfilled by a horizon of promise marked only by the context of the uttering, or the issuing of the words?

Let us look again at Austin's approach to speech acts. Austin emphasises that "the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action – it is not normally thought of as just saying something." Given this stipulation, why is the *issuing* of the utterance not evaluated in the very act of "issuing?" With respect to promising, why is there a metaphysical leap taken to the point in time of its (non)fulfillment for the promise to be (re)defined as promise only if the statement of the proposition turns out to be true – and particularly by presupposing a very particular definition of truth? Punctuating the promise at such end point takes away the ontological importance of the intention of the promise at the moment of its manifestation, in the *issuing* of the utterance that it conditions, and, forcibly, ends up moralising the act of promise as something "I *must* certainly intend: but I *must* also think what I promise feasible;"<sup>180</sup> or as with Searle, as a duty I must fulfil and suffer its undertaking.<sup>181</sup> To make matters worse, even if one allows this horizon to spread, Austin and Searle do not allow a possible change of intention in fulfilling the promise after its occurrence. The intention, as some kind of inner phenomenon, can only phenomenalise itself in the action. A promise is not a promise without at least the intention to realise. Concomitantly, we lose the opportunity for an explanation when the speaker has a change of heart and no longer intends to fulfil the promise. Austin's and Searle's leap from the lips of the promise to the future seals the difference between promising and the intention of fulfilling the promise. While issuing the utterance, in the uttering, these may be the 'same,' yet time allows for their difference

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<sup>180</sup> (Austin 1962, 47)

<sup>181</sup> (Searle 1975)

to be revealed. Such a difference, takes place within this extended horizon of promising and is covered up by Searle and Austin; in their covering up they recognize the difference but supplement it with a feeling of obligation and duty. But paradoxically, such a feeling could never have motivated the act of promising itself.<sup>182</sup>

If we allow ourselves a bit of a wordplay with Austin's title, we are not offered an analysis of *what* doing things with words could be in each case of promising. Rather, as the title suggests, we are told *how* to do things with words, how to arrive at 'promising' which is implicitly presupposed as fulfilled. Austin provides a manual for how to arrive at a 'promise' in all possible senses. We see here what we said earlier about the medium and the message. Austin and others impose a particular schema through which utterances can be universally determined as promises. Yet, this schema does not derive its justification from promising itself as if there is a distinct horizon of promising revealing itself in-itself; it is punctuated epistemologically by a method of possible identification. The method makes the promising; the medium makes the message; fine-tuning the horizon of promise such that it includes its outcome, punctuating it at a particular space and time, is not coming from an ontological necessity of the phenomenon of promising but from a metaphysical presupposition of accepting an epistemological necessity of identification. But this epistemological necessity, is, as a necessity, a must, that is, a prescription: we have to promise like this – otherwise we do not promise.

Finally, if methodologically the schema of having a real promise, dependent on whether what the promise promises is realised, allows for a consistent way to classify *ex post facto* whether something is a promise, then, at the same time, it allows for one to have a manual of promising, a "how to do with words" when promising. This way, such

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<sup>182</sup> This thought can also be demonstrated without the epistemic terms true/false but with the axiological/moral terms right/wrong. Oswald Hanfling is explaining that promise is not a rule-following activity and if one is sensing an obligation to fulfil one's promise is not derived by a phantasmagorical rule: "It has been thought, for example, that it is in virtue of a rule that one ought to keep one's promises. But is this correct? Suppose I have promised you to do X. Why, in that case, would it be right for me to do X and wrong not to do it? The answer is obvious: because I promised. It is not, however, because of a *rule* that I am obliged to do X, and it is not because of a rule that the reason 'Because I promised' is effective. That reason is perfect as it stands and the introduction of a rule would contribute nothing (52). However, Hanfling goes to the extreme of equating agreement to do something with promising which is obviously not a path we are following here.

a schema not only ends up as a duty, but also a duty in bad faith. Opening up the lips of the promise with duty, opens up the question of the direction to which this duty refers. Duty for/towards whom? In the promise of the *I will always love you* Nietzsche wrote:

One can promise actions but not feelings; for the latter are involuntary. He who promises someone he will always love him or always hate him or always be faithful to him, promises something that does not reside in his power...To promise always to love someone therefore means: for as long as I love you I shall render to you the actions of love; if I cease to love you, you will continue to receive the same actions from me, though from other motives: so that in the heads of our fellow men *the appearance* will remain that love is still the same and unchanged. - One therefore promises the continuation of the appearance of love when one swears to someone ever-enduring love without self-deception.<sup>183</sup>

Adding a temporal spread exterior to the lips of promising in order to make the act of promising an event for lips so that it can be evaluated on the basis of a correspondence of *adaequatio intellectus et rei*, requires as a counter-balance, adding an interior temporal leap, which works as an effacement of the feeling of promising supplanted by a sense of duty to make the words happen, to real-ise them. Marking, stabbing, let us say, the horizon of promise from the outside comes as a backstabbing of the intention on the inside. A sealed promise from the outside lips, pro-missed suffering from the inside. Yet, since this is also possible, let us retort to the ancient distinction of promising as giving one's word (logos) and promising as the undertaking of realising that word.<sup>184</sup>

When *we give our word*, our promise may not be related only to the content of the promise, nor might it be viewed psychologically as to what kind of feelings precede, *before* or will emerge *after* the promising. When I promise, I "dispose of the future as if it were the present" as Hannah Arendt put it.<sup>185</sup> This acting, this "*dis-posing*" is an act of

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<sup>183</sup> (Nietzsche 1996, 42)

<sup>184</sup> As Ricoeur says, promising is one thing, feeling duty or being obliged to keep one's word is another. Instead of taking duty as part of our nature as Ricoeur does following Kant, we could say that duty is brought to the world, it is opened up, through the promise. Again with Sartre, we bring duty to the world.

<sup>185</sup> (Arendt 1958)

where I pause-and-pose, just as we saw in prescription. The act of promising is expressed in a dialectical way at the boundaries of affirming and committing, where I act a pause of the present and pose a present *as a* future. As Ricoeur underscores, the ‘I’ here is not just a place holder but a limiting point where the world is anchored. The disposal can only take place through such anchoring, “the privileged point of perspective on to the world which its speaking subject is.”<sup>186</sup>

The boundaries of affirming and committing, where I act a pause of the present and pose a present *as a* future means that I can *impose myself* on the course of things, I de-limit them, I stamp them.<sup>187</sup> As Marcel suggests, there is “a supremely important distinction to be made between the committal in itself and an affirmation not implied by it which is concerned with the future.”<sup>188</sup> I am affirming the possibility of one possibility not to be missed in the monstrosity of the infinite possibilities to come, that is, by omitting all possibilities but the one willed and (re)presented in the promise. This affirmation reveals a power with two sides

on the one side, a *ἡγεμονικόν* which asserts its identity across time and plays the role of the guaranteeing power; on the other side, a conglomerate of elements of myself which the *ἡγεμονικόν* with which I identify myself, makes it its business to control.<sup>189</sup>

A promise reveals a leading power (*ἡγεμονικόν*)<sup>190</sup> which comes to be seen out of its willed becoming. But this becoming is not haphazard, it is not just a becoming out of the many that could be. It is a directed becoming to the being that it wants to be, the one that it wills. Not a power that wills a future, but the will *to future*, a will to power. This will to future is an active force, one that wants to “impose forms.”<sup>191</sup> The words do not reflect

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<sup>186</sup> (Ricoeur 1992 51)

<sup>187</sup> (Samana 2005, 63)

<sup>188</sup> (Marcel 1949, 41)

<sup>189</sup> (Ibid, 42)

<sup>190</sup> In Ricoeur’s analysis, which is heavily inspired by Marcel, the promise reveals the constancy of self (1992, 124) which is not just the passive immutability of character. It is “the highest expression of identity of *ipse* in contrast to that of *idem* (ibid., 267).

<sup>191</sup> (Deleuze 1983, 42)

it, they belie it. This will is not revealed in the words that are formed by the lips, but by that which empowers the lips to vibrate the world, to make it mean. “When a promise is made, it is not the words that are said which constitute the promise but what remains unspoken behind the words that are said.”<sup>192</sup> A power revealed in the silence, forces itself in-between the words, in-between the pause ~~and the~~ pose. Fewer words reveal more silence, and more silence is more power as “the words even weaken the promise, in as much as they discharge and use up strength which is a part of the strength which makes the promise.”<sup>193</sup>

But this ‘power’ that is revealed through the promise is a power revealed through the Other to which the promise is directed. In the promise we have the first opening to the Other by a movement which is posed without being presupposed: *I promise to you*. The promise punctuates the Other as the telos of its movement. The promise is the ultimate paradox: I am commanding myself for you. This is not a duty “but an active desire not to rid oneself, a desire for the continuance of something desired once, a real memory of the will.”<sup>194</sup> And this desire is motivated by the Other. As Ricoeur explains it, the Other allows me not only to spread myself in time but also to *maintain* myself over time.<sup>195</sup> And this maintenance is authentic without support from habits and dispositions according to which I or another could use to characterise myself. As Samana elaborates Ricoeur’s reflexion on promising, this maintaining is not only about the self but about another affirmation of the self-other relation which, through the act of promising, re-affirms its memory over time. Keeping one’s word is the act through which the self and other are revealed either as sovereignty or as ipseity.<sup>196</sup>

Viewed within a historical horizon, this movement becomes foundational. Arendt traces the condition of history and development of western civilization to the phenomenon of promising (and forgiveness) as subtending the contractual form of law-full western

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<sup>192</sup> (Nietzsche 2005a, 165)

<sup>193</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>194</sup> (Nietzsche 1989, 57)

<sup>195</sup> (Ricoeur 1992 341).

<sup>196</sup> (Arrien 2008, 99). “Promettre, c’est affirmer une survivance des souvenirs attachés à une personne au delà des conditions objectives ayant rendu passible l’acte de langage” (Samana 2005, 64).

societies. In this case, promising can be seen from a pragmatic point of view as a tool used to control the precariousness of human affairs arising out of the unpredictability of individual human action. The act of promising is the way to remedy “the basic unreliability of men who never can guarantee today who they will be tomorrow” and equally of neutralising “the impossibility of foretelling the consequences of an act within a community of equals where everybody has the same capacity to act.”<sup>197</sup> If history starts with the formula *I promise you*, to whom do we promise? Who is the Other to whom we offer a future?

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<sup>197</sup> (Nietzsche 2005a, 244)



# 5 PATHWAY TWO: THE OTHER

## *tracing the other*

Our initial exploration of *what is altruism* led us to trace a path of how altruism could be possible. Our exploration *felt* promising because we cannot argue for altruism. Altruism comes through be-li(e)ving *in* altruism. Coming to believe in altruism, the *bios* of altruism, is manifested in the promise. The *biosis* of altruism, (be)living in altruism could be manifested descriptively in the formula *I promise you*. In *promising to the Other* we find the altruistic move. We now need to explore the “Other.” We shall start again with Edmund Husserl and classical phenomenology precisely because Husserl tried to answer the question of the Other in both ways that the Other can appear: in our everyday world, which Husserl calls *lifeworld*, and in the *surrounding world* which is the world of the theoretical attitude, the attitude of *skepsis*, that is, the attitude of (yielding) knowledge.

Immediately, however, we are in a predicament. The split between lifeworld and surrounding world opens up the question of the beginning, the *ἀρχή*, or punctuation. Is the *ἀρχή* in the everyday world, the *vita activa*, the world where the Other is to be examined first, or, is it in the theoretical world, *the vita contemplativa*? And what about the world between the two? Is that world accessible? Is the *Other* to be found there? Maybe these questions could be answered if we followed Husserl closely and performed the phenomenological reduction properly, rather than rely, as we have done so far, on what many of his commentators – how *they* – have interpreted it. “And so we make a new beginning, each for himself and in himself, with the decision of philosophers who begin radically.”<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> (Husserl 1960, 7)



*Husserl's Other in me*

Phenomenological reduction is doubting everything. We refuse to “accept anything as existent unless it is secured against every conceivable possibility of becoming doubtful.”<sup>199</sup> We will accept something as existing only if it is furnished with absolute apodictic certainty which is “a mental seeing of something itself.”<sup>200</sup> Apodicticity relies on how things themselves affect us in the how of their appearing to us. Yet, the givenness of things themselves, for Husserl, should not be conflated with the empiricist theory of “feeling of evidence” as he tells in the *Ideas I*.<sup>201</sup> However, according to Husserl in *Ideas II*,<sup>202</sup> each mental seeing, each cogito is a sort of affection, a coming into contact with. This apodicticity, this mental seeing, is the principle of principles for the possibility of knowledge. It feels like intuitive touching. Such touching is an affection which runs two ways at the same time. It is like putting one’s hand on a physical thing where the hand is touching-touched. This affection, this a-logical touching is integral to mental seeing because Husserl asks us to doubt even logic since “like every other already given science, logic is deprived of acceptance by the universal overthrow”<sup>203</sup> – deprived by the thorough-going doubt. If by logic Husserl means what was put forth by Socrates and Aristotle, then its doubt is perfectly intelligible. However, if logic is to be understood as *λόγος/logos* or the way the latter is appearing, then we are in a further predicament. In our culture, *λόγος* is language, speech, reason, logician’s logic, grammar, mentality, discourse, expression and so on. *To deprive acceptance of all this*, that is, this (without) *logos*, is for us, perfectly unintelligible – to borrow a phrase from George Berkeley. And if *per impossibile* this could happen, the whole world would become unintelligible. It would be a silent spectacle as Emmanuel Lévinas said.<sup>204</sup> But since we have promised to follow Husserl into this abyss, let us unravel our masts in this quest and set out.

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<sup>199</sup> (Husserl 1960, 3)

<sup>200</sup> (Ibid, 12)

<sup>201</sup> (Husserl 1983, 40); (Husserl 1999, 66)

<sup>202</sup> (Husserl 1996, 370). A “a pure act of seeing” as givenness “insofar as I reflect on them” (Husserl 1999, 24).

<sup>203</sup> (Husserl 1960, 13)

<sup>204</sup> (Levinas 1961, 136)

“In short, not just corporeal nature but the whole concrete surrounding life-world is for me, from now on, only a phenomenon of being, instead of something that is.”<sup>205</sup> With the phenomenological reduction then, everything is reduced with respect to its being. That does not mean that nothingness emerges. Quite the contrary, everything that was given before, in its particularity or generality, is now given as *a phenomenon of being which claims being*. The self doubts; the self reduces everything, including itself, to a phenomenon. This allows everything to be received anew. But, according to Husserl, during this reduction, while the being of things is doubted, their givenness is phenomenally the same. Even if I doubt that this cup exists and it is just an illusion, it is still the same phenomenal thing that I used to call a cup. With the doubting, I call into question its being by accepting its phenomenal givenness and bracketing, the process of phenomenological *ἐποχή*, all its “existential positions.”<sup>206</sup> By doubting all existential positions, all previous ontological predications are forcibly suspended, they are concomitantly bracketed. Things silently appear themselves, ontically, in their being themselves.

This process reveals an interesting phenomenon in the case of the one who performs the reduction. The self, the ego as Husserl likes to call it, is a part of a world which the ego itself reduces and is itself being reduced as part of the world, thus, the ego is the one that initiates this process of reduction and is itself also reduced. Yet, as is the case with everything being reduced, the givenness of the ego to itself will be phenomenally the ‘same.’ But since I, as the ego that reduces, bracket my existential position, that which will receive the reduced self, the phenomenal ego, cannot be the ego that initiates the reduction and which will now appear in its pure phenomenality. By the phenomenological reduction the ego is given to that, to *\_(something)\_*, which has its ontology suspended, which cannot be itself in its previous empirical being as the former is now bracketed as part of the world. That means that the self “transcends”<sup>207</sup> itself to be

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<sup>205</sup> (Husserl 1960, 19)

<sup>206</sup> (Ibid., 20)

<sup>207</sup> We should make a note here that the use of the term transcendence is still in a sense constitution by a detour of an overcoming, a surpassing of the ego. Conscious ego surpasses the ego to be given as consciousness.

given to itself in its pure givenness. *That which*<sup>208</sup> conditions this transcendence, the coming back to the ego which conditions the bracketing, can only be a transcendental ego.

If this “transcendence,” which consists in being non-really included, is part of the intrinsic sense of the world, then, by way of contrast, the Ego himself, who bears within him the world as an accepted sense and who, in turn, is necessarily presupposed by this sense, is legitimately called transcendental, in the phenomenological sense.<sup>209</sup>

Let us look more deeply into this process. Through the phenomenological reduction, which is a form of a reflection as we crudely adumbrated earlier, I transcend myself to be given to myself anew as a phenomenon – part of an equally phenomenally world. This process reveals an ego which is part of the world and its transcendental *onlooker*<sup>210</sup> who receives the reduced ego as a phenomenon, as part of a phenomenally world. This is an “alter ego,” an ego “not as “I myself,” but as mirrored in my own ego.”<sup>211</sup> This Other, this alter-ego, this onlooker receives the ego as part of the world which is also given phenomenologically. This alter-ego is the condition based on which everything can be reduced. But this reduction does not mean being at an Archimedean point outside of the ego. It is the very ego that transcends itself to be given transcendently to itself and not transcendentally. Let us explore this with an example. This cup that I perceive becomes a something, something that affects me in a particular way through the ways that I can be (so) affected by it. But in terms of my ego and the cup, after the reduction, I do not

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<sup>208</sup> The ‘that which’ will be later discussed as a witch casting its spells, logos.

<sup>209</sup> (Husserl 1960, 26)

<sup>210</sup> In the Second Meditation of the *Cartesian Meditations* Husserl refers to this onlooker as “disinterested” (35), or “non-participant” (37), or the primordial self in order to make explicit the purity of the givenness of the experience in the transcendental level. Whilst acknowledging reception of Derrida’s reading of the phenomenological reduction revealing the Other in Me, that is, that I am always already intersubjective, we cannot at this point follow this path. *Stricto sensu*, Husserl is first motivated toward the possibility of revealing the Other as an embodied consciousness with epistemic certainty. Derrida’s reading does not show how what is affecting me is the Other as Other and not just an other version of me.

<sup>211</sup> (Husserl 1960, 94)

perceive an additional thing, myself as from afar and a thing that I called a cup before the *ἐποχή*. The splitting of the ego that Husserl refers to is taking place in immanence and not in exteriority as if I were a new metaphysical ego looking back at my empirical ego from a *physical* distance. It is an immanent transcendence and this is justified by the fact that Husserl insists on the sameness of the “phenomenally experiential result” before and after the *ἐποχή*. However, this alter-ego as onlooker, cannot be found as a phenomenon in the reduced world precisely because it is the condition of the phenomenological reduction. It is revealed as the condition of the everyday ego which performs the reduction. Only if there is such an unworldly transcendental ego can the ego perform such a *cogitatum*, a transcendence of the world and its parts, of which one is the empirical everyday self. And since such an ego is immanent it amounts to acquiring “myself as the pure ego with the pure stream of my *cogitationes*.”<sup>212</sup>

Because of the *ἐποχή*, where I have abstracted everything even the everyday intersubjective predications which I used before the reduction to convey my experience in the world, what I find is an ego “the only Object “in” which I “rule and govern” immediately.... As perceptively active, I experience (or can experience) all of Nature, including my own animate organism, which therefore in the process is reflexively related to itself.”<sup>213</sup> Simply, I am given myself to myself objectively in its purest form. I am an-Other to myself. I come into contact with (my) transcendental *subjectivity* – I am self-given to myself.

In this exercise, Husserl is absolutely right to point out that were I to abstract everything from what is given to me in the stream of consciousness and, all the more so, if I abstain from all the use of language which is the manifestation of an intersubjective yet empirical enterprise in the world of experience prior to the *ἐποχή*, then I am left with ““*my animate organism*” and “*my psyche*,” or myself as a psychophysical unity.”<sup>214</sup> Indeed, I am given to myself as an-Other, but not as another subject because that would mean another version of the empirically intentional subject. If the reduction is properly undertaken, and this is the point where Husserl parts with the Cartesian reduction which

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<sup>212</sup> (Husserl 1960, 21; original emphasis)

<sup>213</sup> (Ibid, 97)

<sup>214</sup> (Ibid.)

he considers incomplete, then the transcendental ego is pure subjectivity which conditions the experience in the world. And the world is given to subjectivity in its pure form. But as a condition, transcendental subjectivity not only receives a phenomenological plenum but also projects this plenum into being a world; it gives it being, it constitutes it by “means of acts of perception, imagination, and categorical observation.”<sup>215</sup> It is itself intentional in its pure form and, hence, Husserl arrives at the conclusion that the task of transcendental phenomenology is the “systematic disclosure of constituting intentionality.”<sup>216</sup>

So far the reduction has revealed to us a transcendental subjectivity, which Husserl seems to be identifying with constituting intentionality, and an ego given to the latter as a psychophysical unity.<sup>217</sup> For the moment, we will follow Husserl’s syllogisms to understand how Husserl finds the Other that we are looking for. The ego which is received by the primordial self is a phenomenon and, as part of the world, it is a phenomenon among all other phenomena. To be precise, however, after the reduction there should only be phenomenals rather than phenomena. Phenomena come after the phenomenals is being itself thematised. For Husserl, however, we have the phenomenon of the ‘cup,’ and, most importantly, other entities which before the reduction and the *ἐποχή* I called other persons. That is to say, it is as if the revelation of my primordial self as transcendental “makes constitutionally possible a new infinite domain

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<sup>215</sup> (Strasser 1967, 338)

<sup>216</sup> (Husserl 1960, 86)

<sup>217</sup> Reading Husserl, Donn Welton (1999) claims that Husserl moves us from a mind-body dualism to a body-body dualism, the conscious body as the psychophysical body. The lived body is the conscious body without consciousness being localised in a particular area of the body, for example the brain. While this is true, phenomenologically speaking, there is never a dualism as Husserl talks about two poles and a connecting dash. The phenomenological reduction as “first reduction” (*Ideas I*, 138-141) reveals the psychophysical unity and a transcendental something; but, then, Husserl advances a *transcendental reduction* to penetrate descriptively deeper into what constitutes the ‘transcendental.’ Here a “genuine *μετάβασις*” [transition] (139) is required. Yet, the phenomenological/eidetic or epistemological reduction is itself a “*μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*” (1999, 30). Different reductions correspond to the difference between *epoche* and *ἐποχή* and also the *ἀποχή* which is required in the transitions. Rather than a dualism, we read in Husserl consciousness as triadism where the connecting dash, the passing into, “a surplus” (1999, 39) is as essential as the poles.

of what is “other:” *an Objective Nature* and a whole Objective world, to which all other Egos and I myself belong.”<sup>218</sup> Following this line of thought, as I am given to myself, all others whom I used to experience as egos before the *ἐποχή* are now also given to me as phenomena, since all egos are part(s) of the world. Once again, these are all given to me in the same objective way as I have been given to myself. Thus, if all other persons are like me before the reduction, then, *simpliciter*, these other egos must also be given to me and to themselves in the same manner as I am given to myself after the reduction.<sup>219</sup> The apodictic revelation of the Other then, if there is one, must be revealed as an other subjectivity – which has been revealed in my reduction. What we are looking for, then, is what Husserl calls transcendental intersubjectivity, that is, how transcendental egos or pure subjectivities relate. We are looking for an affection of blending, where our “*perspectives blend*,”<sup>220</sup> to use Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s expression. It is this “blending” or this “communication,” while being “immediately in touch with the world”<sup>221</sup> in which we will find the Other.

We have to remember that Husserl’s starting point is not to answer the question of the existential basis of the Other; his aim is to discover the methodological principles which will always allow us to arrive at an Objective view of the world, the ultimate foundation for a philosophy as science, for absolute true knowledge. The quest to find the other as Other becomes shortlisted in his philosophical agenda due to the criticisms of phenomenology resulting in solipsism; solipsism will never allow an objective world to be revealed when objective means being given to me as to all other fellow human beings. The quest to find the Other becomes a need to find where we converge; an objective world in an other sense of objective – the world as an object to all.

We need to elaborate on this convergence – sometimes also called a transcendental principle of justification.<sup>222</sup> The constitution of an object has as its ultimate

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<sup>218</sup> (Husserl 1960, 107)

<sup>219</sup> “The phenomenological-eidetic reduction places me on the footing of a possible monad in general” (Husserl 1998, 146)

<sup>220</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, xii)

<sup>221</sup> (Ibid, xiii)

<sup>222</sup> (Zahavi 2005; 2011; 2014)

condition (a point of) unity. This unity is what remains identical throughout all the possible ways of its appearing to an ego. This objective sense as “that which remains identical throughout the variations of sense”<sup>223</sup> is the new Husserlian conceptualisation of the Kantian schema, “a rule-governing schema.”<sup>224</sup> Something repeats itself in its various appearings and Husserl admits that the Other, who can also receive the schema of the world or the world as schema is important for saving me from a possible solipsistic pathology. If I constitute the world myself and “everything is in harmony,”<sup>225</sup> then it could be the case that “I become for them an interesting *pathological* Object, and they call my actuality, so beautifully manifest to me, the hallucination of someone who up to this point has been mentally ill.”<sup>226</sup> My verification principle *is* the Other. This convergence, this blending, or the recognition of what is common to all, a “mutual understanding”<sup>227</sup> is a fundamental condition for knowledge and sanity. This convergence, sometimes also referred to as co-constitution, is fundamental precisely because it neutralises the possibility of illusory or abnormal uncovering of the world at the same time of uncovering *the* world itself.<sup>228</sup> ““The true thing” is then the object that maintains its identity within the manifolds of appearances belonging to a multiplicity of subjects,” it is an intuited object for all “related to a community of normal subjects.”<sup>229</sup> Therefore, if a transcendental subjectivity refers to the way the appearing world appears, that is, the phenomenising is constituted into phenomena, then, a transcendental intersubjectivity is the condition for the objectivity of the object, “the appearing of the

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<sup>223</sup> (Steinbock 1999, 189)

<sup>224</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>225</sup> (Husserl 1996, 84)

<sup>226</sup> (Ibid., 85)

<sup>227</sup> (Ibid., 87)

<sup>228</sup> We see here another instance of how sanity and knowledge, as the two ends of one line, one structure, are held in check by the Other. There is never sovereignty in the constitution of the true thing. The knower is never a king in the world. “[B]elieving oneself to be a king” is the true secret of madness” (Foucault 2006, 27). But this madness is not for the king but for the Other.

<sup>229</sup> (Husserl 1996, 87)

true thing.”<sup>230</sup> But apart from the true thing, what the Other also secures, at the same time, is my normality, the negation of my being an *interesting pathological Object*.

Husserl attempts to prove the Other as an Other with the following transcendental schematic analysis. The Other in their being, if they are to be like me, which in this case is another consciousness, must experience the same phenomenon of Other-ness of self – if they were to perform the reduction. But this, as mentioned, cannot be accessible to me from here as an objectivating ego or to the ego that is given to me in that process. And this is only logical since, “if what belongs to the other’s own essence were directly accessible, it would be merely a moment of my own essence, and ultimately he himself and I myself would be the same.”<sup>231</sup> So, the only way remaining to uncover other empirical persons as transcendental subjectivities in the reduced world, is by, what Husserl calls, analogising apperception through appresentation.

‘Appresentation’ is a thought of Husserl’s which we first find in the *Logical Investigations*. To use his example, suppose we experience a box. We perceive the box from a particular perceptual angle but never as a whole. To perceive all of it we need to turn it over or change our angle, but we will then be ‘losing’ the perceptual content we had before. What we ‘lose’ we appresent. What we call a box is an apperception,<sup>232</sup> an object as “a web of partial intentions fused together in the unity of a single total intention.”<sup>233</sup> Appresenting reveals how consciousness, as an intentional act, transcends itself becoming something that it is not. And by this transcendence, the intentional act is constituting consciousness. For instance, when I see the front side of a box and I am appresenting the rest so as to talk of an experience of a ‘box,’ the latter becomes something that I reach as a consciousness beyond that which I am actually experiencing. But to appresent something I must have had a prior experience of it (or something similar)

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<sup>230</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>231</sup> (Ibid., 109)

<sup>232</sup> “Apperception: a consciousness that is conscious of something individual that is not self-given in it” (Husserl 1998, 151)

<sup>233</sup> (Husserl 1970, 211)



and apperceived or apprehended it as such.<sup>234</sup> If I experience a box now, I apperceive it as box based on a ““*primal instituting*,” in which an object with a similar sense became constituted [as a box] for the first time.”<sup>235</sup> Put simply, I analogise my current apperception with that apperception which was primally instituted as ‘box.’<sup>236</sup>

But this process of analogical apperception through presentation cannot be (of) the same regional *eidos* as that used when we apperceive the transcendental subjectivity of the Other within the reduction. The analogising apprehension must be conditioned on a primal instituting if we are to claim an experience as an *experience of*. Without our analogising apprehension there is no possibility to claim an *experience of* which is built

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<sup>234</sup> For Husserl, ‘apperception’ and ‘apprehension’ are identifying the same function. As Husserl himself states in the *Investigations*: “The term ‘apperception’ is unsuitable despite its historical provenance, on account of its misleading terminological opposition to ‘perception;’ ‘apprehension’ would be more usable” (243).

<sup>235</sup> (Husserl 1960, 111)

<sup>236</sup> There is clearly a tension here between constitution and institution. What I constitute for a first time as something can be a primal instituting for the next phenomenising which will, by its phenomenological similarity, be constituted as the same something or something different. What this theorising opens up though, is the conditions of the first constitution – genesis – which counts as a primal institution. There is a great philosophical discussion as whether this “primal instituting” should be conceived in the way Husserl talked about it in the *Ideas*, that is, as a core sense or a schema which comes to be constituted through repetition, or as a genetic impression closer to a Humean conceptualisation of an empirical datum impressed on consciousness and retained somehow (in memory), or as a *cogitatio* whose re-presentation in the analogising process becomes a riddle or non-conceptualisable (following Henry (2015) and Derrida (1973; 2003)). To analogise with an older similar phenomenising/schema, the new datum must somehow be presented but it is not – yet it must somehow exist, to be analogised. Representation here reveals its full equivocality. The intentional act of consciousness as transcendence becomes either a re-presentation with a sense of simulation or a synthesis. The synthesis seems to make the notion of analogising redundant and the simulation demands another representation as synthesis with what is (synthesised?) as analogon. That is why some phenomenologists, following Merleau-Ponty and giving primacy on the embodied aspect of consciousness, will depart from this metaphysically atomistic notion of the primal instituting and theorise about the intentional act of consciousness as pure transcendence in the sense of an ongoing dialogical interaction between the body and the world in which both reveal themselves without prior institution/constitution. (An example which makes the analogical relation redundant could be the person who engages in *parkour*).

up through the relevant appresentations. The reason for this is that the primal instituting becomes a blueprint, if we can use such an expression, the rule-governing schema, by which a verification of what the consciousness transcends in the process of appresentation can be achieved through a corresponding fulfilling (empirical) presentation of what is transcended. Put simply, the primal instituting conditions the criterion of verification of the analogical apperception. For instance, if I am faced with the front part of a car, I have a perceptual horizon of the front part which I apperceive as the front part of a car. But to arrive at the conclusion that I am indeed having an experience of the front part of a car I need to experience the whole car out of which my experience of the front can be validated as such. By changing perspectives and perceiving the rest of the object I can receive the corresponding fulfilling presentations of what I appresented and thus validate my experience when these appresentations are *adequate* (or not –it might turn out to be a replica of the front of a car). However, the possibility of such appresentation after the phenomenological reduction with respect to the Other as Other like me, that is a consciousness, is as Husserl emphatically mentions “excluded a priori.”<sup>237</sup>

After the reduction, I am given to myself as a psychophysical unity which Husserl calls an animate organism. The Other is given to me firstly as a body. I cannot as of yet claim that this body *there* (of the Other) which I can appresent analogically with the body of my animate organism is equally another animate organism. To do that it would mean that I could have the possibility of a corresponding fulfilling presentation of the Other as a psyche in order to complete the appresentation which is impossible. What Husserl must have in mind is not the problem of epistemic access to the Other’s mental experience as framed by Descartes, for example. Rather, the issue must be the very possibility of that body there having epistemic access to itself, that is, to be conscious and, also, the possibility of my knowing that the how of my accessing myself is structurally/essentially the same yet not identical with the way that the body there can have access to itself. In simplified terms, whether there is another mind like mine, discovering its mind in the way I discover mine. *Simpliciter*, if the Other can perform a phenomenological reduction.

Husserl attempts to resolve this difficulty and to explain the analogising apperception at a transcendental level through the phenomenon of pairing. Pairing is

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<sup>237</sup> (Husserl 1960, 109)

defined as the phenomenological unity of similarity of distinct data that are given with the same prominence in consciousness. It is a form of association but this association is marked by a passivity in the sense that things are given in themselves and, though distinct, they are nevertheless given uncontrollably and synchronously in the unity of consciousness. The distinct data constitute a pair, a phenomenological unity, by being given ‘into’ consciousness together, in essence simultaneously, and with the same prominence even though there are distinct; or, as Husserl maintains, in coincidence. Their mutual givenness in the unity of consciousness associates them and constitutes them as a pair. That also means that, as a pair, an apperception of the one can be possible through the other by “a mutual transfer of sense.”<sup>238</sup>

Pairing is the first step towards apprehending the Other as a transcendental subjectivity, like when I apprehend my self as I am given to myself after the reduction. And this starts with the body. We shall quote Husserl’s explication extensively to make manifest a second sense of pairing that is presupposed in his exposition. Husserl writes:

Now in case there presents itself, as outstanding in my primordial sphere, a body “similar” to mine – that is to say, a body with determinations such that it must enter into a phenomenal *pairing* with mine – it *seems* clear and without more ado that, with the transfer of sense, this body must forthwith appropriate from mine the sense: animate organism.<sup>239</sup>

In the margin of this passage we can see that Husserl is oscillating between two types of association which are at work indeterminately. Let’s follow the reduction carefully. After the reduction and the *ἐποχή* of all predications, I am given to myself as an animate organism, a psychophysical unity. This is the first pairing that I must be experiencing. My body and my psyche are given to me as a unity. Their prominence is equal and their distinctness as data (not as objects) are given simultaneously in the objectified ego, my ego as phenomenon. My transcendental subjectivity is then revealed to me by and through reduction simultaneously with the psycho-physical unity, an original pairing. The reference point for this pairing is my transcendental subjectivity, whilst “its data” is the

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<sup>238</sup> (Husserl 1960, 113)

<sup>239</sup> (Ibid., 113)

unity of the psyche and the body. So, the first otherness is located in a new way within me in immanence: I am a psychophysical unity; better, I experience myself as a psychophysical unity, or, even, better I apprehend myself as a psychophysical unity.

The pairing that the previous quotation suggests is a different one. This pairing may have the same reference point, my transcendental subjectivity (or so it seems because Husserl is never clear on this), but its data is different. The body of mine and the body of the Other need to be first paired so that I can experience the Other as Other, as another psychophysical unity which could enable a transfer of sense to their transcendental subjectivity. The likeness now will refer to my body and the body of the Other. It seems that, by the body of another organism which I apprehend like mine, there must be a pairing, the same psychophysical unity of a body and a psyche hence the other is an other like me. But “is the apperception actually so transparent?”<sup>240</sup> This is indeed the second pairing that I must apperceive but since I apperceive it, I cannot arrive at it inferentially as we just did. I must be given it somehow. But how? It is at this point that Husserl’s intersubjectivity gets its transcendental flavor.

With the reduction, my body is given to me objectively but this objectivity cannot mean perspectival wholeness. As already mentioned, the transcendence that the reduction offers implies a stepping out of the world so it can be looked at from a distance, but this distance is not of a physical nature where one actually stands outside the physical like a metaphysical entity, able, from such a distance, to take an objective view.<sup>241</sup> That implies

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<sup>240</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>241</sup> To provide a familiar example: That the earth revolves around the sun is not something that we know as we know, for example, that we have hands, nor something that has been proven objectively in the strictest empirical sense. The senses of knowledge vary and we illegitimately or instrumentally mix up how we know something even if it just refers to knowledge in propositional terms (Feyerabend 1975c). The objectivity of knowledge in the case of sun-earth is an empirical indefiniteness precisely because “we can secure no standpoint from which a close whole of Being would be surveyable” (Jaspers 1957, 52). We are always within the whole that we examine. For the sun-earth whole, to prove their exact relationship would need an observer to be able to stand at a point of absolute rest or outside the universe. Only such an experience of the phenomenon could constitute unquestionable objective empirical data which we would require ideal circumstances. Husserl’s distance is not of this sort. To achieve the distance of the phenomenological reduction, as Merleau-Ponty explains in an effort to refute it, is to put something given

that though objectively given, it is given from the reference point of the 'I' – or better yet, the mental eye since Husserl talks about mental seeing. Phenomenally, though, this means one possible appearing, and this appearing is always present though not always prominent to the transcendental ego. Now, the presence of another's body is first given as another body that enters my intentional horizon much like my own body. It is just a body not an Other's body. To be precise it is not even a body, it is a phenomenon first and foremost much like my body as a phenomenon. The modality of givenness of the objectified body here must be the same with those in a phenomenological reduction. Both phenomenal entities are phenomenally given in the same modality to my primordial objectivating, constituting ego, and thus their difference becomes a difference of spatial presentation, and only that.<sup>242</sup> The only difference that reveals itself in the appearing is spatial, here versus there. This difference in spatial presentation suggests that as the modality of my body is given to me in its spatial exteriority from here, the givenness of the other bodily presence presents an analogue of the spatial modes that my body would have if it were there.

The phenomenal likeness of these two thematised phenomenalisations, given simultaneously in one act of consciousness, is what suggests a pairing but a pairing of a different kind and one very much close to an analogising apperception. To use the scissors example that Husserl mentions, when I apprehend scissors as scissors the primal instituting which guides the analogising is not present in my perceptual act. However, in the case of the other body and my body, both phenomena are simultaneously present and are analogised with and through each other due to their perceived likeness. Husserl is very clear about this from the start of §51 in the *Meditations*: “*the primally institutive original is always livingly present*, and the primal instituting itself is therefore always going on in

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from the world, that is a phenomenon, “entirely under our gaze” and “think it without the support of any ground, in short withdraw to the bottom of nothingness” (1968, 112). Only from such “nothingness” can what is given reclaim a being which is essential, that is, re-claim its eidetic structure.

<sup>242</sup> It is very tempting at this point for sexual categories to deter us and wonder how this is possible. But if we perform the reduction following Husserl's instruction and keep those categories in parentheses, the appearing of the Other's body (which is not yet a body but phenomenalisating) is phenomenally the same formally or schematically, a surface which is not sexed to use Judith Butler's expression (Butler 1989). Sex as a category requires constitution.

a livingly effective manner.”<sup>243</sup> It may well be that my body as a phenomenon from here becomes the primal constituting based on which the other phenomenon becomes a body as my body would look from there. But since both are present, the analogising apperception of that phenomenon over there as body like mine is of a different kind. It has the form of inter-x, where ‘x’ is a placeholder. I can constitute my body-phenomenon as a body only through appresenting it with another body which has become a body after being analogised as another (possible) appearing of my body-phenomenon. This pairing conditions how I am given my body in its fullest since, as mentioned earlier “in primordial viewing, I can never represent my body to myself as a whole.”<sup>244</sup> In other words, in primordial givenness I cannot arrive at the noema of my body without there being another body. This pairing becomes the possibility of completing the rest of the possible appearings of my body here through the similarity of the body over there. If we allow ourselves the terminology of the *Investigations*, there can be no schema of my body without an Other’s body. The other body comes also to fill up the rest of the possible appearings that are missing from the way I am given my body. I appresent my body as an object in the transcendental field through the other body that is found in my intentional horizon. In the case of my body, the Other’s body allows *both* for the schematisation of ‘body’ and the limit of what will constitute its adequate intention. We could say that the reduction that has phenomenally ‘my’ ‘psycho-physical unity’ and the appearing of the Other’s body, manifests a pairing which, in turn, allows for the constitution of ‘my body.’ Only such an interpretation can make sense of why Husserl ends up asking “What makes this organism another’s, rather than a second organism of my own?”<sup>245</sup>

Husserl’s question asks why we are left with the question of belongingness. In the phenomenological reduction, the modality of objectified givenness is the same for all parts of the phenomenally reduced world. That is, the phenomenal sameness of a body here with the body there are each two parts that together constitute a primal instituting of ‘body.’ Treating that appearance here as another appearing of the there which together constitute a whole, could leave us with the impression of a split of my body here and

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<sup>243</sup> (Husserl 1960, 112; all emphases in original)

<sup>244</sup> (Theunissen 1986, 66)

<sup>245</sup> (Husserl 1960, 113)

there. It is precisely when the other side of my body is not given as mine that the Other as an animate organism will reveal themselves, thus leading to the original pairing that I transcendently experience the Other as an Other like me. Yet, once again this revealing will be carried out appresentatively.<sup>246</sup>

As a psychophysical unity, I experience the givenness of myself in the way I behave. I govern my body. It is me who moves there, turns here, and operates my body. The other body there, through which I appresent my own, is not, however, governed by me. But the way I apprehend myself governing my body in a reflective act is manifold. Moving my arm, for instance, is a three-fold givenness in the plane of consciousness: (my) arm is moving, the movement of (my) arm, my moving my arm. The Other who moves their arm in a like manner suggests their being an animate organism like me. My behavior and the way my behaviour is given phenomenally to me, becomes the analogue

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<sup>246</sup>There is a hermeneutic discrepancy in this reading when compared with others in the literature. For instance, Theunissen (1986) reads Husserl as having proved the other body as an organic non-thing and then goes on to look at how Husserl will answer the belongingness question of that body. Yet Husserl excludes the experience of the Other inferentially, and though Theunissen does indeed appreciate the non-inferential aspect of Husserl's analysis, he continues to prioritise the apprehension of the Other as an animate organism before it is available to me as not being my body. In this way he cannot show how the Other is given as an Other through the governing of their body which reveals both that they are not me and that they are like me who governs my own body. Now this reading becomes of crucial importance because it relates to what we saw earlier: the issue of mine-ness. This problematic surfaces again in attempts to link Husserl's account to neuroscience. Evan Thompson, for instance, attempts to show that when neuroscience tries to account for the recognition of the Other through the so-called mirror-neurons it echoes Husserl's account of pairing. Crudely, a set of neurons have been discovered that display the "same" pattern of activity of goal directed bodily movements whether the movements are of the object of study (monkey) or an object of the object of study. Yet, if they are the 'same,' and the stipulation of non-inferential recognition of the Other is kept, Husserl's question "*What makes this organism another's, rather than a second organism of my own?*" (113) remains unanswered. Either there is a mineness that will characterise this activity as mine and the other's as an other, or, a difference between the activities must exist for the non-inferential pairing to occur as (felt) immediate pairing. This objection is not new. Sartre has shown the problems of any theory which attempts to link consciousness to "cerebral impressions" (1993, 108). Namely, such materialism fails to account for the material differences in spatio-temporal consciousness and drowns in a reductive representationalism.

based on which I can arrive at the Other as a pairing; as a psychophysical unity which has been given in the mode of pairing for me in the reduction. As already mentioned, I cannot appresent their psyche. I can only appresent the unity as a pair. I apprehend the Other's body as body because it is through that body that I claim my living body. But that organism having a body like mine does not necessarily mean that it is an animate organism like me. The analogising apprehension will have to occur by revelation of the Other's psyche. This apprehension will be carried out appresentatively in the following manner. It will be done through the Other's behavior which reveals the governing of the Other's body which in turn will reveal their being an Other like me. When the other body is revealed as not being governed by me it reveals its being an animate organism, *simpliciter*. That organism is appresented as an Other inasmuch as their behavior, the governance of that body, finds its analogue in mine in the way I have experienced my body being governed by me. In this way, the appresentation of the Other proceeds by a continuous fulfilment of analogising apprehensions of the Other's behavior with mine. There is a "fulfilling verifying continuation" of the Other's behavior which appertains to mine as it has been given in my own experience of my ego. This is why Husserl calls it a harmonious behavior "as having a physical side that indicates something psychic appresentatively."<sup>247</sup>

Husserl's attempt to find and found the Other in oneself through the phenomenological reduction has limited success and problems arise from it. We shall explore Sartre's and Heidegger's objections before trying to follow their view of the Other.

Heidegger first objects to what we can refer to as the chronological order of the encountering-the-Other. The Other is not "encountered by a primary act of looking at oneself in such a way that the opposite pole of distinction first gets ascertained."<sup>248</sup> For Heidegger, as we shall shortly see, the self, or *Dasein*, is structurally connected in being with the others in the world, and this connection is manifested through the everyday concerns of the self. Clearly, Heidegger's point of departure is our everyday life, what we can call the plainly empirical – the *vita activa*. But Husserl's avenue, according to Heidegger, thwarts this possibility. A transcendental phenomenology starts with the

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<sup>247</sup> (Husserl 1960, 114)

<sup>248</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 155)



ontological manifestation of the self's being related back to itself through transcendence and equates the otherness of the self with itself as a phenomenon of otherness in general. It becomes an issue of commutative praxis between the transcendental and the empirical levels. It becomes "a Projection of one's own Being-toward-oneself 'into something else.' The Other would be a duplicate of the Self."<sup>249</sup> Now this projection, even if one takes it in the psychological sense that it might suggest (but clearly not the psychoanalytical), it is not necessarily problematic. For instance, if by projection we include the appresentation of my body through the body of the Other in exteriority, no issues seem to spring up. Briefly, I might experience embarrassment when someone points out to me that there is a big stain on the back of my outfit. This being, that I would be, cannot but be conditioned on a primal instituting of my having been the observer of such an occurrence in another. I cannot be embarrassed about something that is not happening to me. But this happening to me – on my outfit – is not happening in me, it is happening there, in the exteriority of my body the access to which can be gained only through the Other.

Yet Heidegger insists by suggesting that all these cases which reveal an empathy among Daseins cannot hold base only on a presupposition that "Dasein's Being towards an Other is its Being towards itself."<sup>250</sup> If Dasein's being toward an Other is its being toward itself how is the relationship of itself to be made manifest to the Other as Other? Heidegger's single line challenge is indeed insurmountable. Husserl does not resolve the problem of the Other but transposes it. Transcendent egos reveal the primordial egos through and in a community of objectified embodied egos, but in this transcendence the transcendental subjectivities remain incommunicable. If the absolute certainty of the phenomenological reduction, as absolute bare givenness, is secured in the transcendental level, then the gap between the transcendental subjectivities that Husserl opens up renders his "transcendental intersubjectivity" a formal concept only. The givenness of the Other as a transcendental subjectivity can never be achieved not only because of its unworldliness, as Theunissen says, but also because the givenness of Other is always mediated by its phenomenological counterpart. The *inter-* in Husserl is between constituted subjects or, at best, between a constituting subjectivity and a constituted

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<sup>249</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 162)

<sup>250</sup> (Ibid., 155)

subjectivity but not between constituting subjectivities. The real problem is not because there is an observable distance between self and Other.<sup>251</sup> We accepted that distance in the phenomenological reduction. The problem is that of the asymmetry of constituting intentionalities (i.e empathy)<sup>252</sup> and a misguided presupposition of the “reflective self-understanding of an isolated first-person subject.”<sup>253</sup> Let us temporarily mark this phenomenon as *intersubjection* rather than intersubjectivity and promise to come back to it later.<sup>254</sup> It seems, so far, that “the true problem is that of the connection of transcendental subjects who are beyond experience.”<sup>255</sup>

The second objection that we need to state is inspired by Sartre’s thought, yet surprisingly Sartre never makes the connection. We can refer to this objection by borrowing a phrase from Theunissen: “the certification of the character of the Other as transcendent transcendence.”<sup>256</sup> In essence, we are dealing with the problematics of appresentation. In the introduction of *Being and Nothingness* Sartre demonstrates how the philosophical move from the dualism of the ancient substance-manifestation metaphysical accounts, to the equation of substance with manifestation – things are themselves as they appear – results in another sort of dualism, that of a finite being with infinite appearings. The fact that we can never grasp, say, a cup in its totality but through infinitely many adumbrations is not the only reason we reach this new dualism. To be sure, an innumerable concatenation of adumbrations are “this cup.” But at the same time, it is not only a change of the object. The innumerable is also multiplied by a “subject constantly changing”<sup>257</sup> and is infinitely referred to other ‘thises.’ Can we apply this criticism to the analogising apperception of the Other through appresentation? The continuous analogising apprehensions which will work as the fulfilment for the appresented Other raise the issue of sufficiency or, as per the above, the inability to certify that the Other is an Other. How much fulfillment is sufficient (appresentational adequacy) in order to be able to arrive at the point that the Other is existing much like me, a

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<sup>251</sup> (Crossley 1996)

<sup>252</sup> (Depraz 2004)

<sup>253</sup> (Apel 1998, 131)

<sup>254</sup> Cf. *Pathway Four; Pathway Five*.

<sup>255</sup> (Sartre 1993, 234; 324).

<sup>256</sup> (Theunissen 1986, 146)

<sup>257</sup> (Sartre 1993, xlvii)

transcendental self, who could engage in a reduction? If, as in modern philosophy, we dispense with the substance-appearance dualism and treat things as in-themselves appearing temporally, which allows for inexhaustible horizons of appearance, don't we end up with an infinity of possible appearances that could describe a finite object? Sartre's point about a finite-infinite new dualism can be framed with respect to the problematic of the Other in simple terms: How much fulfillment do I need in order to arrive at the certainty that the appresentation of the Other is sufficient for me to constitute the analogical apprehension complete/adequate? But how can it be complete when the primal instituting, which bears its stamp on my infinite behavioral possibilities, is not fixed and concrete? Is the death of the Self or the Other a sufficient point? "Yes, she was like me"? But if death is the ultimate point of sufficiency does this not mean that empathy brings a closure, an early death to the Other as an adequate analogised apprehension which limits what the Other could be? How could *what the other could be* ever be revealed adequately?<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> In the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl tells us that "adequate perception represents an ideal" (1970, 238). Does this mean that the Other remains an ideal and can never be touched? This is a issue of punctuation as discussed earlier. Some philosophers attempt to solve this issue by discarding the atomistic idea of primal instituting based on which these problems arise. They re-use the notion of Kantian spontaneity to talk of an immediacy of experience that does not need to be mediated by a genetic moment which will be (im)posed as the criterion of identification in the future. Henceforth "the immediate is no longer the impression, the object which is one with the subject, but the meaning, the structure, the spontaneous arrangement of parts" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 67). Thus, the question of how much appresentation is required as adequate fulfilment is a question neutralised. Yet cut one head and a thousand more appear. In his later work, Merleau-Ponty talks about all perceptions, be they illusions or not, all being part of the world; its various perspectives which are all real and each one is giving way to the other in the course of approximating the real being of the world "whose accomplishment is only deferred" (1968, 41). This approach does not differ much from the solipsistic theoretical attitude as with Husserl; instead of thinking with the mind here the whole body is the organon of theorisis. Now, Merleau-Ponty claims that this immediacy, this body to body spontaneity, reveals the Other as Other and, hence, the existential question of the Other does not get off the ground. Yet this Other is constantly revealed in every interaction as the same *deferral* is in play. The Other is *deferred*. In this case, the Other is constantly under development, under scrutiny, life in suspicion, in bodily skepticism, are you there? Is it you? Will I find you tomorrow?

***Heidegger and the (in)Authentic Being-with Others***

Heidegger begins with the world, the *vita activa* while exploring further the Husserlian relationship of finding-found. The self, the Dasein, finds itself as it is found(ed) in the world. I am thrust in the world some-where, *there*, full of entities that surround me. I am found as I find myself in an en-viron-ment and that is why I am *always already there*, *dans un environ*, *περί-που*, an approximate, an average. And this plays out in two ways. To say “I am in Glasgow” presupposes a convoluted complexity of a referential totality, a scheme of reference, since Glasgow is, for example, north of Athens but it is equally south of it from a different referential pole. But, I am there, also means that while found in this averageness, it is me<sup>259</sup> who finds myself in this environment among the other entities which are not me. It is also through these entities as they present themselves, appropriately or not for my concerns, that I am found as a being there with and among them. Furthermore, that I am found means that I am delivered to my own being based on what I do, and what I do reveals how I am related to this environment and hence my concern with it. I am found in the world, there, somewhere. I am related to this *there* in a manner that Husserl calls “undergoing and doing,”<sup>260</sup> and Heidegger, from Aristotle, calls the “in-order-to” or my overall comportment.<sup>261</sup> The referential totality based on which I am always found *there* is grounded on my practical concerns, my always end-oriented praxis already formed based on my concerns, my being “always already over and above beings, beyond beings.”<sup>262</sup>

My being among other entities has been revealed as a relation of my practical concern with reference to all surrounding entities; all entities which I also find there, in the world. I am revealed to myself as I am *en-viron-ed*, surrounded by entities the sum of which I appreciate as my world. My Being is manifested or, better still, disclosed in what Heidegger defines as my dealings with entities in the world which appear as ready-to-hand, or my concern,<sup>263</sup> or are disclosed as present-at-hand, for a possible concerned

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<sup>259</sup> This is what Heidegger usually refers to as Dasein-with and Husserl as a transcending Ego.

<sup>260</sup> (Husserl 1960, 165)

<sup>261</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 65)

<sup>262</sup> (Ibid., 68)

<sup>263</sup> (Ibid, 157)

being in the world. But this referential totality of entities in which I am found, that is, the world including myself, has already been interpreted, has already been founded for me before I find myself found there in it. It has been interpreted by other entities which are also disclosed to me, I find them; Others like me, who are already “at work, that is, primarily in their Being-in-the-world.”<sup>264</sup> To say that I am in the office on the fifth floor of the Sir Alexander Stone building already reveals what this referential totality suggests; a totality which I did not construct in order to define my being (t)here. This average complexity, this *en-viron* has already been interpreted by other entities which are/were like me, who have already been found there for their own concern. I am not only found there in the world, I am also found with Other entities in it and they are found in their world with me. In finding myself in the world I am always already found(ed) by being-in-the-world.

We have thus three structures that define the Being of Dasein. The Being-in-the-world,<sup>265</sup> the Being found in the world (Dasein-with),<sup>266</sup> and the Being-with with Other entities who are disclosed as having similar concerns. My praxis reveals a concern for my Being. My Being is an issue and this issue is manifested in my dealings with worldly entities which are disclosed in the process. In this process I am found with Other entities that manifest similar concerns through their dealings with the entities around us. My being is always disclosed as being-with them, but this Being-with structure does not signify an ontologically interpreted being as mere presence, as an arithmetic aggregate with Others. Being with Others can still find me ontologically in the being of feeling alone or, conversely, in the absence of Others, I can still be disclosed in the being of feeling their presence. These two occurrences are possible only because, essentially, the Being of Dasein in the world is *always already*, that is, Being-with-Others-in-the-world – an essential relation.

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<sup>264</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>265</sup> A two-fold structure: as a facticity among other entities which constitute the world, and as a transcendence, the in-order-to which constitutes Dasein’s dealings based on its circumspective concern, an overall comportment.

<sup>266</sup> Every dealing with the world and other beings reflects my self-comportment (1962, 65).

The Other is revealed as Other to me through common concern and it is through common concern that the Other is revealed to me as something that I also am. However, the everyday commerce with the Other has different manifestations either as solicitude or indifference or empathy (as a being with Others understandingly). All of these, however, must be conditioned upon a fundamental ontological relation of Being-with which is disclosed out of Dasein's concernful Being in the world. "Being-with is an existential constituent of Being-in-the-world."<sup>267</sup> And, concomitantly, "this means that because Dasein's Being is Being-with, its understanding of Being already implies the understanding of Others."<sup>268</sup>

As an ontological structure, this Being-with, which is disclosed in one's concern, conditions the various manifestations it may have. For Heidegger, a phenomenalsing of such a modality is what he calls the *They* – the French concept meant by the word 'on': *on fait, on dit, on va faire*. Before analysing the *They* and the being of this phenomenon, it must be understood that, for Heidegger, the ontological structure of Being-with *conditions* the *They*. That is to say, the being of the phenomenon of the *They* (along with any other of its possible manifestations) *could not be* if there were no primordial interconnectedness of Daseins; primordial interconnectedness is essential. Dasein is found in the world with Other Daseins. Dasein's Being is Being-with, "a primordially existential kind of Being."<sup>269</sup> We can, with ample textual evidence, read it, as Sartre does, as an *a priori* structure. As Heidegger writes in analysing Anaximander's fragment, we are *always already* in connection with Others through being in connection with Being which makes every being be.<sup>270</sup> Heidegger, and Jaspers following him, will try to delimit Being as that (which is) so encompassing that "it finds its limits only in nothingness"<sup>271</sup> – "assuming we may at all say something like that of nothingness."<sup>272</sup>

As mentioned earlier, I am thrust into the world. To be thrust into the world means that I do not have a conception of my beginning. But that I have a *conception of* reveals

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<sup>267</sup> (Ibid., 163)

<sup>268</sup> (Ibid., 161)

<sup>269</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>270</sup> (Heidegger 2012, 48)

<sup>271</sup> (Ibid., 54)

<sup>272</sup> (Ibid., 52)

that I can be delivered to myself; I am with myself, a Dasein-with. When I start to reflect on my being, when my being becomes an issue for myself, it is in a theoretical sense through reflection, a mode of Being which derives from my practical concerns; I am always found in a relational complexity depending on my at-hand concerns. Before anything springs up in a reflective manner, as present-at-hand, I am immersed in my circumspective dealings with the entities which offer themselves ready-to-hand for me. But these entities, even as ready-to-hand, along with the referential totality of other entities, are revealed as present-for-hand<sup>273</sup> or potential ready-to-hand in the process of being immersed in the actualising ready-to-hand, and they have/are already (been) interpreted by Others who have already been found in similar encounters in the world. All these Other Daseins, which are revealed through the way the world, in which I find myself there, has been interpreted for me, are the *They*. The *They* offer for me a world in which I find myself being concerned with myself in a way *they* have already interpreted.<sup>274</sup>

We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; ...we find 'shocking' what *they* find shocking. The "they" which is nothing definite and which all are, though not as the sum, prescribes the kind of Being of everydayness.<sup>275</sup>

We can safely infer that Heidegger is referring to the cultural framework within which we are found ourselves from birth to the point we are delivered to ourselves. In the terminology of Karl Jaspers who is very closely related to Heideggerian existentialism,

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<sup>273</sup> Heidegger never uses this term, present-for-hand. We borrowed the expression from Levin (1999) as a ready-to-hand tool, a heuristic implement in order to summarise what Apel calls "intermediate gradations" (1998, 132). That is, the passing of ready-to-hand to present-at-hand modes of being, gradations which reveal what Heidegger calls Dasein being-ahead-of-itself in the horizon of its praxes.

<sup>274</sup> Apel writes that our pre-understanding of Being-in-the-world-with-Others, what Heidegger usually expresses through the formula "always already," is itself a "pre-understanding [which] is always already linguistically articulated in the sense of the 'public interpretation of the lifeworld'" (1998, 107-108). The 'linguistically' has to be taken in the broadest sense possible as a language-game, forms of life, modes of existence (existentiell) rather than particular languages.

<sup>275</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 164; emphases in original)

the *They* is called the “encompassing authority.”<sup>276</sup> It is a form of how things are, “a compelling certainty,”<sup>277</sup> a form of truth, “a reality of the community that embraces all men, as the form of the truth claiming to support all truth” and I know this truth “to the extent that I have grown up in it. I can live by it, but never deduce it or classify it.”<sup>278</sup> And it is an authority that prescribes me towards without my realising it as “I never catch sight of it as authority.”<sup>279</sup> It is my very way of living as I have been brought up, my form of life as Wittgenstein would say, my language-game.<sup>280</sup>

To understand the importance of the *They* and its authoritative being we can use Malcolm’s example.<sup>281</sup> As I return home each day I leave my keys on my desk. This is the place from where I recover them if I want to leave my house. Out of a *They* which holds that physical entities cannot pop in and out of existence in this world, my keys cannot vanish into thin air. My understanding of a situation upon which I discover that my keys are not in the place I normally place them would most likely be to initiate a search of possible other places I might have left them or they might have dropped. Conversely, in a culture, and we can say out of a *They*, where a belief that physical things do pop in and out of existence is maintained, such an interpretation of the world would present a different set of possible actions. For instance, I may concern myself with something else until the keys are revealed to me somewhere instead of me going after them. Absorbed in a *They* where material things do not vanish, the horizon of appropriate possibilities of action would exclude anticipation of self-revelation of my keys since this is a possibility that, as Heidegger would say, has been levelled down<sup>282</sup> by the

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<sup>276</sup> (Jaspers 1971, 50)

<sup>277</sup> (Ibid., 47)

<sup>278</sup> (Ibid., 50)

<sup>279</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>280</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953)

<sup>281</sup> (Malcolm 1977). Malcolm never refers to Heidegger or the concept of the *They*. Malcolm talks about the role of ideology as a synthesis of theoretical knowledge as disclosed in everyday cultural practices or individual praxes – expansion of Wittgenstein’s concept of language-games as life forms. But as it will become evident, the reference to the same phenomenon is patently obvious. These similarities of Heidegger and Wittgenstein have already been explored in the literature (Apel 1998).

<sup>282</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 169)



interpretation of the world by the *They*. This example shows how the world to which Dasein is delivered is already interpreted (for the Dasein) by the *They*.<sup>283</sup>

The *They* subjects Dasein because it imposes how the world is; and this interpretation procures a distinctive set of possibilities of being for Dasein. The *They* is not a physical subject yet it is “the Realest subject” of everydayness which dictates in one way or another the how of the in-order-to of Dasein. Sometimes Heidegger equates the *They* with what we sometimes refer to as common sense which is expressed in the everyday discourse of Dasein with Others. Yet this common sense in which Dasein is absorbed and according to which it comports itself for its concerns is for Heidegger an inauthentic way of being. Dasein is not authentic to itself when it loses itself in the ways *they* think and act. Dasein lost in the *They* is, in a sense, idle. In its everyday commerce with the world as “the they-self”<sup>284</sup> Dasein is *guided* by-and-to the possibilities which open up for its concern based on how *they* have always already interpreted the world.

Heidegger offers two compelling examples of how the *They* cover up the authentic Being of Dasein: Death and Time. We shall be concerned with Death since it derives from the demands of the Fundamental Ontological Interpretation itself, that is, the meaning of Being which comes before anything else and conditions it. If Being is to be understood as a concept *transcendentalis*, the analysis of Being must start from the being (entity) for which Being becomes an issue. “In ontological Interpretation an entity is to be laid bare with regard to its own state of Being.”<sup>285</sup> But this cannot *prima facie* happen in the case of human Dasein for which Being is an issue. The being of this entity cannot

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<sup>283</sup> In terms of social Ontology, Alfred Schutz (1946) has made surgical contributions by analysing that this social interpretation of the world, this Heideggerian *They*, is not as contingent and impersonal as it may sound when we analogise it with ‘culture’ or ‘cultural practices.’ There is a process of approval of what kind of interpretation will be disseminated socially, institutionally, such that it will eventually end up being considered as “knowledge” and be lived as cultural practice. After all, it was Copernicus and not Hypatia who is credited with “discovering” that the earth revolves around the sun. Sappho is still a poet and not a philosopher like Parmenides while De Beauvoir is a literary critic and not a philosopher proper. This phenomenon may well be beyond our scope to engage here yet we appreciate it in all senses of the word.

<sup>284</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 167)

<sup>285</sup> (Ibid., 275)

be analysed holistically unless it is taken as that being “which is between birth and death.”<sup>286</sup> But can we understand the being of death? *Per impossibile*, the experience of death would not secure an understanding of Dasein’s entity as a whole. To experience the being of death already presupposes a being which understands the *experience of*. Understanding of death which would allow an ontological analysis of Dasein proper cannot include an experience of death since the latter presupposes some sort of Being. To experience death would mean to be dead but that is absurd since dead is not to be. (To be) ‘dead’ is for someone who is not dead.<sup>287</sup> A dead Dasein simply is-not for itself (an issue of, in, and for itself). But for an (living) Other Dasein, the former is dead. However, an ontological interpretation of Dasein requires an understanding of this experience since the formula “I am” can only be completed when no predicate awaits to attach to it. As Courtine maintains “I am in the full and absolute sense when I am-dead. It is only in dying that I can say certainly and absolutely I am.”<sup>288</sup> But *I* cannot get to (say that) ‘I am’ (dead). So, if an ontological analysis of death demands a hermeneutic of Dasein as a whole, then we can find *an experience of, but not arising out of the being dead or the Being of Death*,<sup>289</sup> that is, we need a being towards and to ward/word death.

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<sup>286</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 76)

<sup>287</sup> Drew Leder (1990) provides a nice example to make this oxymoronic point evident. I can imagine, Leder says, myself being inside that coffin where I see another lying there. Yet, “this is not a sight I can see with my own eyes” (144). I do not know what it is like to be in that state and it is impossible to know. It is “a necessary terminus at which the “I” cannot arrive” (145). Yet, Heidegger takes this point further. If this terminus is necessary *for me a posteriori* it is revealed as necessary for Dasein *a priori*; if it is revealed to me as (with) another Dasein, how can I know this necessity *for me* in advance? How can I testify to that necessary possibility not being only my possible possibility? It is unconcealed, as we shall see, through feeling, as angst – or dread as put it in his lectures on *Metaphysics* (2001). This testimony, this irreplaceability of my becoming is as if death has already taken place somehow; like an unexperienced experience (Blanchot and Derrida 2000).

<sup>288</sup> (Courtine 1991, 82)

<sup>289</sup> This is nothing other than the great transcendental lesson of Parmenides (Παρμενίδης 2002). Talk of becoming already presupposes something that can become. The possibility of becoming rests on the possibility of being. Following Parmenides, Heidegger refuses to compartmentalise being in its various or potential manifestations of becoming. We cannot converge more with Courtine when he says: “If in order to determine its being and the mode of being peculiar to it, *Dasein* cannot utter *I am*, except on condition that implicitly translates such a formula into an *I can die*, it is precisely because *Dasein is not*. This is why

How is this possible? Not by an experience of death but, in Heidegger's terms, *by an existentiell Being towards death the existential manifestation of which is felt as the lack of any potentiality of Being for Dasein*. The move is analogical par excellence. By seeing the death of Others we understand what death is. The absence of any potentialities of Being for an Other Dasein. As a Dasein's end, it is its ownmost *eschatic* (uttermost) potentiality. Since the Being of Dasein is constantly manifested in the horizon of possibilities that the world in which it is found opens, Dasein were, is, will or could be something. The existentiell conception of the Not-Possible as witnessed in the death of Other Daseins can lead to an existential manifestation of Being towards death since death is the totally and authentically Not-Possible. Therefore, for a proper ontological analysis we need to understand the being towards death which means, philosophically, to bring about the *ὑστερον-πρότερον*.<sup>290</sup>

The Dasein that performs the *ὑστερον-πρότερον*, experiences itself not in a noetic attitude of a theoretical vision but in a perfect attunement of its Being. It is a "primordial mode of attunement that effectively reveal's Dasein's entire structural make-up."<sup>291</sup> It is the existential manifestation of Dasein as it reveals the totality of its Being, it closes Dasein's circle of Being from within. That mood is not a thought but a primordial feeling that reveals the totality of Dasein. It is the ultimate certainty. The certainty of my death which does not rely on the inductive mode of "the unerringly confirmed fact that one dies."<sup>292</sup> The empirical manifestation of death is not enough to induce a certainty of the kind of "my death" as the ultimate full-stop of possibilities, the exhaustion, the no more. "A proposition of the type "one dies", " says Courtine, is not enough to present me with the certainty that I will die even if I logically make the deduction/induction/abduction.

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it would be vain, for example, to seek to oppose a fundamental ontological thesis in the sense of the *Fundamental-Ontologie* to the Parmenidian "esti gar einai" (*ἐστὶ γὰρ εἶναι*, part VI, p. 21) (82 all emphases in original). Just as Parmenides, Heidegger refuses, and rightly so, to fall into the trap of the *They* who provide instead "no recognition, no discussion, of the seasons of a lifetime" (Levin 1999, 130).

<sup>290</sup> The latter before - *hýsteron próteron*.

<sup>291</sup> (Magrini 2006, 78)

<sup>292</sup> (Ibid., 80)

Nothing can intro-duce me, in-duce or ad-duce to me the feeling of death. The certainty does not have any traces of logical/scientific causality. In the attempt to constitute my ultimate potentiality of Being I face a wall which my consciousness cannot surpass. I feel angst. Death is revealed to me as anxiety. It is my being towards death revealed in/as anxiety. Anxiety is feeling certain of my being of death, a certainty which no Cartesian hyperbolic doubt and no phenomenological reduction can dispel or spell out.

Anxiety, as an attempt to constitute, to attune with the ultimate potentiality of Being which closes Dasein, which reveals its non Being is primordial.<sup>293</sup> This attunement is not a sense of fear as *they* think because fear is always fear of something, it is intentional and it can be overcome, it can be rationalised. Anxiety does not have any sense and it cannot be overcome. It is a feeling of dread, and its aboutness is nothing, nullity, no

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<sup>293</sup> We have to note that anxiety is also revealed in an attempt to constitute the beginning of my being, as Derrida (2003) marginally notes in his doctoral thesis on Husserl. As an anecdotal example, around the age of four, I remember waking up from a weird dream – those dreams which are responsible for driving us to the abyss as Nietzsche once said – with the following thoughts lingering in my mind: *Where was I before I was born? Who would be in my place here if it had not been me? And if someone else was here in my place where would I be? Would I be dead? Where will I be when I die?* These questions do not have answers; these are the only questions that do not have answers. They do not have answers because the feeling on in-existence, the border of my existence is covered with feeling with no room left for any thing else. I cannot constitute my ego. The first time this happened, I felt I was turning into ice and then slowly melting as cold sweat was running all over my body; I wrapped myself with the covers and went back to sleep – unlike Marcel who was determined to find out – as Anne Marcel prefaces *Thou Shall Not Die*: “We must recall that this philosopher [Marcel] is primarily the same little boy who asked the adults in his life: “Where are those who have died?” The grown-ups replied that they do not know. “Well then,” said the child, “when I grow up, I shall seek to find out” (2009, vii). In this sense, we cannot really accept, as Jean-Luc Marion does, that the feeling of “mineness” of Dasein is conditioned only in the being towards death (1991, 238). Just because in being towards death it achieves clarity, a ‘position,’ as Heidegger says, or it is a distinctive mode of disclosedness, it does not mean that it is revealed only in that modality of Being. Rather, it is just that this modality is *clear, distinctive* as it is not adulterated in the everyday concern of X - which suggests a particular intentionality. But then again, as Sartre shows, the anguish cannot necessarily come from anticipating a physical death, but from the inability to resolve, to surpass it (1993, 32) and, we could add, to reflect one’s self out of this surpassing, *after this*. There is no consciousness (of) death. Unquestionably, however, as Maurice Blanchot wrote, this feeling, non ana-lysable and non trans-latable, changes forever what is left of existence (Blanchot and Derrida 2000).

possible constitution because it traverses the whole being which cannot be constituted, it cannot be sensed but felt in/as angst. At the same time, anxiety is the ultimate crisis of meaning, the ultimate breakdown of intentionality. In anxiety no thing has meaning. Dasein is revealed to itself as no-thingness, void, it sees no-thing, it is not at home. Just like “seaing along” as the poet Philip Bailey<sup>294</sup> wrote. It does not see itself as something; in its attempt to seize its being toward death it is seized; it *seas*. Seeing-death-is-seaing with no object to attempt to hang on to, completely out of reach, eyes/Is unwallid:

...Concha would cry when she found out I was dead, she would have no taste for life for months afterward. But I was still the one who was going to die. I thought of her soft, beautiful eyes. When she looked at me something passed from her to me. ... if she looked at me *now* the look would stay in her eyes, it wouldn't reach me. I was alone.<sup>295</sup>

The Being toward death reveals the totality of Dasein's Being in/as anxiety.

However, *they* distort the Being toward death into a being of death. Death has been interpreted as something “bad.” *They* talk about death in a “fugitive manner,”<sup>296</sup> as an occurrence in the world which is happening somewhere, to someone but “not right now;” it does not affect me as it has nothing to do with me now. The now for me is the everydayness of the world in my actual and possible concerns. The now is life, and death, its “opposite,” should not concern me. The profoundest anti-*phasis*, the ultimate concern, my ownmost potentiality of Being which is death is distorted in the sense that it will happen somewhere, somehow, indeterminately, whereas in reality it could happen anytime, anywhere, anyway. Being towards death is not something that could happen, it is happening. Living is being toward death and *they* conceal it. The being towards death which essentially starts by the being of birth is concealed so that dying “which is essentially mine in such a way that no-one can be my representative, is perverted into an event of public occurrence which the ““they” encounters.”<sup>297</sup> We encounter death; we

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<sup>294</sup> (Bailey 1872, 484)

<sup>295</sup> (Sartre 1948, 12; emphases in original)

<sup>296</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 297)

<sup>297</sup> (Ibid.)

count it; idly as in ‘there were five dead in that accident,’ but not recount it; we are encountering it by *discounting* death by giving prominence to numbers – “s/he was 80 years old.” *They* avoid it through numbers. “In the end, the dead will be represented, thus held at bay.”<sup>298</sup>

In *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* Tolstoy recounts:

Besides considerations as to the possible transfers and promotions likely to result from Ivan Ilych’s death, the mere fact of the death of a near acquaintance aroused, as usual, in all who heard of it the complacent feeling that, “it is he who is dead and not I.” Each one thought or felt, “Well, he’s dead but I’m alive!”<sup>299</sup>

By such a fugitive way of dealing with death, *they* orient Dasein towards how death should be understood. It should not interfere with the everyday circumspective concern of Dasein. By such an understanding, the state of mind which accompanies the ultimate possibility of Dasein, anxiety as in the face of death, is transformed into a fear of something that Dasein has to overcome by forgetting about it. Peter Singer writes:

If I think that [death] is likely to happen at any moment, my present existence will be fraught with anxiety, and will presumably [?] be less enjoyable than if I do not think it is likely to happen for some time. *If I learn that people like myself are very rarely killed, I will worry less.*<sup>300</sup>

Facing the ultimate possibility of Dasein and experiencing its anxiety is *presumably* not enjoyable and this presumes that the ultimate potentiality for human existence is to be joyful or, at least, more enjoyable; not being able to overcome the fear of death “gets passed off as a weakness with which no self-assured Dasein may have any acquaintance.”<sup>301</sup> A healthy, living Dasein is self-assured, and *will worry less, presumably*. In this way, Dasein is alienated from its authentic Being which is manifested

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<sup>298</sup> (Nancy 1993, 4)

<sup>299</sup> (Tolstoy 1998, 4)

<sup>300</sup> (Singer 1980, 91; emphases added)

<sup>301</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 298)

when one's ownmost potentiality for Being, being towards death is concealed or suppressed in one's own daily circumspective concern. In the workings of the *They* "One never dies, and a certain form of im-mortality might even represent one of the ultimate constituent features of the "They.""<sup>302</sup> *They* force Dasein towards a "mode of an untroubled indifference **towards** the uttermost possibility of existence."<sup>303</sup>

This mode leaves Dasein realising and potentialising itself without accounting for its a priori ownmost potentiality for Being which is Death. This way Dasein loses itself in all sorts of possibilities which open up when its concern is horizontally determined, interpreted, re-stricted by the *They*. This mode of being is for Heidegger inauthentic as the *They* constantly bars Dasein from opening up the way to its authentic potentialities for Being. Authentic potentialities accrue when the ownmost potentiality for Being, death, is appreciated by Dasein in the moment of potentialising. The concreteness of the self, the authentic self, a solid 'I' cannot be revealed when Dasein is not choosing itself and is alienated from its ultimate and ownmost potentiality for Being which for each Dasein is felt as/in mineness and it is non-relational; which cannot be avoided and which cannot be outstripped.

When Dasein anticipates death it becomes non-relational, it comes back to its individual mineness; its concrete pure self. Anticipation of death individualises the alienated Dasein previously lost in the *They* self, being a part of the *They*. Death lays claim to Dasein as individual says Heidegger. While *they* have expelled the occurrence of death to an atemporal topos, death can occur to Dasein at any time and place, what Heidegger calls the indefiniteness of certainty. This indefiniteness of certainty can bring back Dasein from the lullabies of the *They* by creating a rupture from the potentialities *they* propose for Dasein. At the same time by being called back from the *They*, anticipation of death in its indefiniteness of certainty calls forth Dasein to its individualised self which is nothing else but the true anxiety of the ultimate potentiality of Being. "The indefiniteness of death is primordially disclosed in anxiety."<sup>304</sup> But this anxiety is not produced because Dasein thinks of death. Rather, as Dasein is always ahead

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<sup>302</sup> (Courtine 1991, 80)

<sup>303</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 299; all emphases in original)

<sup>304</sup> (Ibid., 356)

of itself in its potentialising, it manifests itself authentically in resolving by anticipating its ownmost non-relational and not to be outstripped potentiality for Being, death. By such anticipatory resoluteness, Dasein can be itself, its authentic self. The authenticity is revealed as anxiety through a struggle of possibilities. Being resolute means choosing the one at present which could be as ultimate and unique, as individual and mine as my fundamental Being, death. The present is intensified in this moment of resolution, as Jaspers puts it: it is elevated.<sup>305</sup> it becomes the most important.

Based on our analysis, it has already become evident how the Other appears as a detrimental surface for the self in Heidegger. In the everydayness, the Other, in the form of the *They*, impedes the self from Being itself, authentic Being. While reading Heidegger's thoughts one wants to ask: Where is the determinate Other in Dasein's circumspective concern? Is she exhausted in the *They*? Does this hold in the reverse direction as well? That is, when the Other encounters me, am I a manifestation of the *They* for them which they – in both senses – don't realise? Does this also mean that since we are both lost in the they-self in our everyday encounters that we both perpetuate each other's alienation? And If I do find my authentic self in anticipatory resoluteness how does the existentiell possibility which I choose in the ultimate existentielle moment of anxiety contribute in the (re)shaping of the they-self after I choose? Can the Other, by the same token, not contribute in my coming to anticipatory resoluteness as motivation? Oxymoronically, the Other as an existentiell-existential human being is literally absent from Heidegger's analytic of Dasein. We encounter the Other as (a) *They* (be)coming a suppressive force for my being an authentic Dasein. In Heidegger, authentic Being is at bottom a rupture from the *They* which the Other represents *authentically* in our everydayness by being herself *inauthentic*.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> (Jaspers 1971, 81)

<sup>306</sup> This is not Sartre's critique about the "concrete Other" in a dew dress, the particular Other. It is the *other* side of Sartre's critique. Sartre accuses Heidegger of losing the concrete other person of the everydayness. My friend Maria is/as a part of *They* when I see her in the morning on the bus to go to work. Sartre talks about the determinate Other that Heidegger misses. Our objection lies on the dynamic interaction of determinate Others. What happens when self and other who constitute the *They*-self break off or not at different temporal moments in their everyday encounters? What do *they* do to themselves then, what happens *theyn*?



Heidegger could object saying that in anticipatory resoluteness Dasein is breaking away from the *They* whom the Other represents, and dialectically, by this leaping ahead, Dasein also frees the Other inasmuch as Dasein itself in its absorption in the *They*-self is contributing to the Other's alienation. So, by breaking off the *They*-self, Dasein is freeing both self and Other from the *They*. Yet, there are questions. First, Heidegger does not offer any account of how such a dynamic freeing can be manifested in the Other at the moment of anticipatory resoluteness for both Dasein and Other. How is such freeness experienced in terms of the Other, from the Other's perspective? Second, if, as we mentioned earlier, Being-with is a primordial structure, "an existential ontological determinant,"<sup>307</sup> which conditions all possibilities of Being, cannot we not, then, assume that the self can break away from the *They*-self and leaving the Other still alienated as they maintain other *They*-relations with Others?

There is another aporia with Heidegger's analysis. Earlier we understood and appreciated the importance that Heidegger places in the Being-with of Dasein as an ontological structure. With the anticipatory resoluteness, the Being-with cannot be reconciled with an existentielle structure of Dasein as the authentic manifestation of Being in a *solus ipse* Dasein; a Dasein in existential replete autarky,<sup>308</sup> itself alone. Let us elucidate this aporia. An existentiell possibility of being indifferent towards others can only be conditioned as we said in a primordial Being-with. So far, so good. *But*, can an individualised self, a Dasein in replete autarky, self-contained, (a) self-expressed (as an) existentielle Being of anxiety, a self found outside of an existentiell Other, an Other who is represented by and in turn represents the *They*, take us back to the ontological structure of Being-with? This aporia comes *de facto* and *de jure*.

It seems to us that Heidegger follows Nietzsche in talking about the distanciality of Self and Other (the pathos of distance) that can only be grounded in a primordial interconnectedness, a Being-with structure. Yet, what seems to be missing is a complete account of how the authentic self is grounded in this structure in the reverse manner, *βουστροφηδόν* [boustrophedon] so to speak, in order to close the ontological circle. The Fundamental Ontological Interpretation cannot close the circle in just accounting for the being towards death (or birth for that manner). From a factual perspective, how does

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<sup>307</sup> (Theunissen 1986, 176)

<sup>308</sup> The term is borrowed from Marion's reading of Heidegger.

Dasein pass, or in Nietzschean terms *overcome* this moment of its autarky in Being itself in the choosing of itself? In other words, how does Dasein *dis* the severance of the autarky in order to find itself in *deseverance* authentically back into being in the world, to disclose its (other) ontological structure? Heidegger leaves an unbridgeable gap between the Being-with and the solitary moment of vision, as he defines it, which is the moment when Dasein feels abandoned<sup>309</sup> and anxious in anticipatory resoluteness; the moment when its conscience, ontologically construed, calls it back to suspend its praxes in circumspective concern which is determined by the *They* and which conscience, if it is heard, now calls it (Dasein) forth to resolute/resolve in anticipation in the mode of Being towards death. Sartre is right here indeed: “Human-reality at the very heart of its ekstases remains alone.”<sup>310</sup> *But*, this being alone cannot be just an existentiell alone if the Being of Dasein is at this moment authentic. This alone means that there is an utter “dissolution of all direct connection between Others and me,”<sup>311</sup> pure existentielle, pure angst, pure severance. “Standing by and against other Existenzen.” It is “a contracted point.”<sup>312</sup> As Marion underscores, “we must conclude that it [Dasein] does not relate towards anything else”<sup>313</sup> – meaningless. How can we reconcile, how can we go from this *dissolution* which is construed as an existentielle Being of Dasein to its Being-with as an ontological structure,<sup>314</sup> to two *distinct* structures, existentielle and ontological with no in-between?

This *discontinuity*, this *discrepancy* can be revealed in an *other* way. Following Heidegger, Being-with is still evidenced when Dasein will choose in its anticipatory resoluteness. As Heidegger appreciates it well, in its calling forth it will fall again into

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<sup>309</sup> We shall return to this curious abandonment in our final pathway.

<sup>310</sup> (Sartre 1993, 250)

<sup>311</sup> (Theunissen 1986, 191)

<sup>312</sup> (Jaspers 1957, 61-62)

<sup>313</sup> (Marion 1991, 239)

<sup>314</sup> In Jaspers, the objection we are raising against Heidegger could not hold because Jaspers’s approach to the *They* as Spirit is one of the manifestations of the Existenz as an Encompassing. For Jaspers authentic existence is Transcendence and the *They* is that through which such mode of Being can be achieved. Heidegger distinguishes his thought sharply from Jaspers in the lectures on the fragment of Anaximander. However, the problem is that if human existence is “the Being of beings we our selves are” (65), then what is lost in the authentic resolution, what is di-solved needs that which needs to move it to the state of resolving. And that seems to be missing from Heidegger’s analytic.

the possibilities of Being which have always already been opened up horizontally by the *They*. But if the authentic self is only found in the moment of choosing, the call of conscience which makes Dasein reticent from the praxes determined from and by the *They*, and brings it forth face-to-face with itself to resolute; if the authentic self is found in that moment, then the temporal structure of Dasein as an ecstatic temporality, a temporality that temporalizes itself seems to be challenged. If authentic self is the moment being found in anticipatory resoluteness, in the grasping of the content-less call of conscience, then that moment must be a-temporal and non-ecstatic, pure formal self-presence or pure Being. There can be no ecstasis in that moment, that instant which instances death. It must be a consciousness as nothing, something-never, *τί-ποτέ*. And if we clothe this thought with more technical terms, the moment of anticipatory resoluteness must necessarily be non-intentional. That means that the moment of vision is devoid of all noema, it is nothing. As we said earlier seeing as seeing. But how then can the atemporal re-temporalize itself? How does it get ashore? What is the movement required from the nothing to something, from non-intentionality to intentionality, from atemporal self-presence to self-temporalisation?<sup>315</sup> Let's keep this question in reserve for a moment and move towards the *de jure* side of the aporia.

If the authentic Being is revealed in an anticipation toward death, then surely, if it is the call of conscience which awakens Dasein out of the *They*, that means that the ultimate potentiality for Being is apprehended negatively *while in the They*. Sylviane Agacinski asks us to pause here and re-punctuate the philosophical question. Who/What is taking a call to break off from the *They*? If the being whose Being is an issue asks the question of (its) Being, this “*who*” (who orients the question in this case) is not the *who to whom* or *to which* a question can be put in the sense of being addressed.”<sup>316</sup> And Agacinski is right to re-punctuate: “the experience of the question precedes the

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<sup>315</sup> Marion has elaborated on this question with respect to what comes after the subject if subjectivity or the transcendental ‘I’ is destroyed in the Heideggerian analytic of Dasein. “To what extent does Dasein still “destroy” the metaphysical project of a transcendental I unconditioned because self constituted? Dasein doubtless overcomes all subjecti(vi)ty by challenging the permanency of the *hypokeimenon* or of the subject of the *res cogitans*. However, the Self’s autarky remains connected with the strange motto of a “... *standig vorhandene Grund der Sorge*,” i.e., constantly present at hand basis of care” (Marion 1991, 240).

<sup>316</sup> (Agacinski 1991, 20)

determination of the *who*.”<sup>317</sup> But what kind of experience would that “experience of the question” be? There is some being here that is not accounted for in the *They*-self/self-existential ontological structure. The breaking away from the *They*, the attempt at severance is only possible as the introduction of a dash which can only ever be a *They-Self*. If this breaking off comes from a feeling of the certainty “dying,” a *sum moribundus*<sup>318</sup> or, in more Heideggerian terms, a felt temporalisation, “a time-to-come opened up by the “coming to die” and as though reflected by it,”<sup>319</sup> then the ultimate potentiality becomes the criterion based on which Dasein will resolve (out of) the *They*. Adding an *other* layer of metaphoricity here, the being towards death can only be the *medium* for the message, the authentic self. Otherwise, if we collapse them scientifically (medium+message), we can ask, as Albert Camus does, why not choosing the ultimate potentiality anyway? Why not dash away absolutely? Put it in Heideggerian terms, if authentic self is all about a turn(ing) to itself, a *kehre*, and realise itself away from the *They*, what could be the reason of re-turn(ing)? Some choose to scroll forward as David Levy did and keep “searching for meaning”<sup>320</sup> when all meaning is gone, but some do not. What is the difference? Jaspers makes an interesting remark:

But the more resolutely we are ourselves, the more decisively we learn that *we are not ourselves alone*, but that *we are given to ourselves*. Even our own authentic reality as Existenz is not “ultimate” reality.<sup>321</sup>

This is another way of phrasing what Heidegger has acknowledged. That is, that we will choose from the *panier* of the *They*, as it is “constantly present at hand in the basis of care.”<sup>322</sup> If meaning, noema, comes from care, *ἐν-voia*, and in the turning to ourselves the ‘ἐν,’ the ‘of’ is dropped, why should I care? Here the distinction de facto/jure collapse. The how/why separation is nullified. Can we risk the hypothesis that “we are given to ourselves” could entail that the Other is never only *They* but that *the Other* can *dis-sever*

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<sup>317</sup> Agacinski 1991, 20)

<sup>318</sup> (D. M. Levin 1999, 81)

<sup>319</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>320</sup> (Levy 2001, xvii)

<sup>321</sup> (Jaspers 1971, 68; emphases added)

<sup>322</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 240)

the contracted point of anticipatory resoluteness and bring us back as in re-temporalise us? Is not the Other who can re-introduce Dasein to the being in the world?

There are two possibilities if we look at the way other philosophers have dealt with this aporia. Marion suggests that the analytic of Dasein “designates not so much that which succeeds the subject, but rather the last heir of the subject itself, to the extent that Dasein offers a path whereby it may tear itself away from subjectivity, without being successful.”<sup>323</sup> Similarly, Marcel talks about this *choosing itself*, this *contracted point* as an ingatheredness where “I ought to say both that I am my life and that I am not my life.”<sup>324</sup> Despite their differences, both accounts see the possibility of an absolute detachment, a pure existential nothingness as a theoretical abstraction.

The second possibility is more pragmatic, as suggested by Levin. This Being unto death is taken as a recollection that can only take place on the condition of our being embodied beings. In connecting Heidegger’s investigations on metaphysics - where human reality is depicted as an organon of truth where truth is unconcealment of being(s) - with the analytic of *Being and Time*, Levin reads the recollection as the coming back to that primordial state where “we are exposed to the solicitations of the presencing of being and opened up to the dimensionality of being. As beings endowed with “ontological bodies,” we mortals can build and dwell in the clearing opened up by the presencing of being, letting ourselves undergo the opening-up and carrying-forward of our experience that this presencing can solicit.”<sup>325</sup> This reading, however, disregards the existentials of anxiety. The problem is not that there is not an opening-up or carrying-forward, this famous Hegelian surpassing. The problem is how to do those things after the contraction to the ‘I.’ In a colloquial sense, what is the motivation towards *after* all are found(ed) (in) vain? Could Sartre promise an exit from a severed I/eye?

### *Sartre’s dynamic Self-Other in entropy*

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<sup>323</sup> (Marion 1991, 240)

<sup>324</sup> (Marcel 1950, Vol.I: 137)

<sup>325</sup> (D. M. Levin 1999, 133)

If humanity consisted only of platonic philosophers who happened to read *Being and Nothingness*, then *they*, the philosophers as *kings* would have decreed that the writer had condemned human reality to a perennial conflict, antagonism, and endless war. Yet, Sartre would resist the subjection to such a totalitarian outlook by looking back at them. Looking at them and beyond the immediacy of their eyes, seeing on the other side of their royal (and) philosophical occultation would reveal them in their naked being, in their pure subjectivities. Making them ashamed of the nothingness that they really are, de-throning them and making them fall “into the world in the midst of things.”<sup>326</sup> If only for a moment, perhaps, Sartre would have helped them arise free. Sartre is our hodological option to altruism, perhaps. Let us look closely at the Sartrean text and the path he opened for us.

“The Existence of Others” in *Being and Nothingness* starts with a problem, a dissatisfaction, a question. Having previously explored ontologically the being of human reality as self-consciousness Sartre wonders: Do other consciousnesses exist? How could we know? For Sartre, neither idealism nor materialism can reveal the Other as self-consciousness. *Ab initio*, we have the Berkeleyan thorn of classical idealism: “The Other’s soul does not give itself “in person to mine.””<sup>327</sup> Human reality is not just a material body; a material substance experienced in the world like a stone. A material body is pointing to the soul but cannot deliver it. Then again, there can be no image or representation of the Other qua self-consciousness. We have no *eidos* of the Other *qua* self-consciousness. “It remains always possible that the Other is only a body. If animals are machines, why shouldn’t the man whom I see pass in the street be one?”<sup>328</sup> Classical idealism here fails. But so does modern idealism construed as what it is like to know the phenomenal consciousness of the Other. I can never know what it is like to experience something from the point of view of another consciousness otherwise I would be them – we saw that with Husserl as well. Finally, for Sartre, historical materialism fails. Sartre appreciates the Socratean question: How would one define a being, which, being human in all sorts of ways, is different in the sense of having been given birth by beasts? If the Other experience themselves like I experience (of) myself, then historical materialism

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<sup>326</sup> (Sartre 1993, 289)

<sup>327</sup> (Ibid., 223)

<sup>328</sup> (Ibid., 224)

falls into an idealism; some sort of material idealistic essentialism which could never allow us to know if there is an Other consciousness which can be self-consciousness.

On the other hand, going through Kant, Husserl, Hegel, and Heidegger, Sartre feels that their accounts cannot reveal an Other self-consciousness as they are ensnared in some sort of idealism. The attempts of finding the Other 'within' oneself as in a system of representations or deriving them logically from concepts, be they constitutive or regulative, fall one by one like houses of cards touched by a mild breeze. Sartre cannot find any satisfactory account for not affirming the ontological separation as he calls it<sup>329</sup> of Self and Other when taken as self-consciousnesses. Undeniably, human reality "at the very heart of its ekstases remains alone."<sup>330</sup> The Other as a self-consciousness to be proved logically or from a conceptual structure, syllogistically, or through a substantial world in-itself will always be a hypothesis that cannot be validated or invalidated. The Other may be "conceived as real, and yet I can not conceive of his real relation to me."<sup>331</sup>

How can we know, then, if there is an Other as self-consciousness? Let us first look briefly at knowledge. For Sartre, "there is only intuitive knowledge."<sup>332</sup> There is no difference between consciousness and knowledge.<sup>333</sup> If consciousness is "a being such that in its being, its being is in question in so far as this being implies a being other than itself,"<sup>334</sup> then, this primitive negation whereby consciousness is split into an in-itself and a for-itself creates the possibility of knowledge. This negation, transcendence, upsurge, dehiscence, detachment, and distance, allows the thrusting forth of consciousness as witness which makes things be on a foundation of its nothingness. Consciousness is knowledge as negation which makes things be. When I say "I am not a chair," or "I have eaten a doughnut," consciousness is revealed as the possibility of standing, of being

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<sup>329</sup> (Sartre 1993, 243)

<sup>330</sup> (Ibid., 250)

<sup>331</sup> (Ibid., 229)

<sup>332</sup> (Ibid., 172)

<sup>333</sup> As it will become obvious, we cannot share the motivation of some commentators who share Yiwei Zheng's (2001) reflection on the Sartrean text whereby "what Sartre meant by 'knowledge' is cognitive, linguistic, positional consciousness (which does not include pure reflection)" (38).

<sup>334</sup> (Sartre 1993, 172)

present in-between two things, this and that – me/chair; me/eating body. From the chair being here and the doughnut being inside me, there is only a standing consciousness as di-stance between them which is ultimately nothing. Consciousness is that distance, this very negation which makes them be, “this and that” yet adding nothing to the distance or the differing temporal stages and without altering them one bit as they are themselves. And this negation is knowledge as the presence of the for-itself to the things that it negates: that “this is not that.” “It is the very being of the for-itself in so far as this is presence to \_\_\_; that is, in so far as the for-itself has to be its being by making itself not to be a certain being to which it is present.”<sup>335</sup> *Ergo*, bodily senses are not immediately related to the ontological structure of knowledge, “nor can we derive knowing in its fundamental structure from the body in any way or manner whatsoever.”<sup>336</sup> Concomitantly, if the Other *qua* consciousness like me were to be proven, then I, as consciousness must be able to experience such a distancing which does not come from me but from another consciousness which can negate, which can know, which can think: another *cogito*. If the Other exists like I do, then my *cogito* in its being will be able to disclose the Other not as a structure of itself like an emaciated Kantian category,<sup>337</sup> or in terms of being constituted by me. The Other cannot be a concept, either regulative or constitutive. Rather, the only option, if there is an Other *qua* self-consciousness, would be for their *cogito* to be revealed in my *cogito* as their *cogito*; “by disclosing to me the concrete, indubitable presence of a particular ‘concrete’ Other just as it has already revealed to me my own incomparable, contingent but necessary, and concrete existence.”<sup>338</sup>

Based on these thoughts, the Other as self-consciousness cannot be revealed here among the signs of this text. Any kind of reflection cannot reveal the Other as self-consciousness. So, Sartre asks us to think through a modality of consciousness which *points to* “a radically different type of ontological structure”<sup>339</sup> in which the presence of the Other can be traced as self-consciousness: feeling (a)shame(d). Phenomenologically,

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<sup>335</sup> (Sartre 1993, 173)

<sup>336</sup> (Ibid., 218)

<sup>337</sup> Borrowing this expression from Michael Polanyi (1975)

<sup>338</sup> (Sartre 1993, 251)

<sup>339</sup> (Ibid., 221)



during its occurrence, being ashamed is a non-thetic, non-positional self-consciousness. When I am ashamed, what am I ashamed of? To be ashamed cannot be related intentionally to the entities outside me. I am ashamed of myself. So, my consciousness is directed towards me, my-self. But at the same time it is not me since it is I who am ashamed. Is it the Other? It cannot be the Other of whom I am ashamed because the Other cannot enter into my consciousness of shame in a reflective attitude. Also, “shame is not originally a phenomenon of reflection,”<sup>340</sup> while feeling ashamed does (necessarily) change when the whole experience is being reflected.

Let us try again. Being ashamed is a self-consciousness. Let us suppose with Sartre that the intentionality of this experience is interiority, pure immanence. In describing this immanence, however, what comes in-between the before and the after of this *biosis*, that is, my being ashamed of this being that I am ashamed of, is the Other. My being of which I become ashamed is conditioned upon the Other. We could say that “The Other makes me feel ashamed as the Other is the condition of my feeling shame.” But we would be going too quickly now. Let us reduce the speed of the reflection. We have already forgotten that, now, we are reflecting on having been ashamed. The Other, whom we just posited as the condition of our being ashamed is not an Other subjectivity, another self-consciousness like me, but part of our reflected-on self-consciousness of shame, or of having been ashamed. If anything, we have assigned the Other a subjectivity, as a subject of a proposition. If shame points to another subjectivity when reflected-on then the Other as subjectivity can be revealed when I am originally feeling ashamed, when shame is taking place in the encounter with the being that makes me feel ashamed, in a situation of shame. So, on the one hand, I can only encounter the Other in a situation where the Other makes me feel ashamed (or pride or apprehension). This is how the Other is presented to me, in a situation; it is an encounter, an absolute event. “Thus shame is shame of oneself before *the* Other.”<sup>341</sup> On the other hand, shame as an existentiell moment in human reality reveals not only a new mode of being of myself for myself but also the Other as “the indispensable mediator between myself and me.”<sup>342</sup> The Other as an Other

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<sup>340</sup> (Sartre 1993, 221)

<sup>341</sup> (Ibid., 222; emphasis in original)

<sup>342</sup> (Ibid.)

consciousness, another for-itself. If we now look reflectively and reconstitute the shameful experience the Other as self-consciousness will not be revealed as they are. We are still in the *cogito*, in reflective consciousness. But, “a little expanded,”<sup>343</sup> it reveals to us “as a fact the existence of the Other and my existence for the Other” in the same way it has revealed my existence. The troubling experience of shame motivates Sartre to suggest that only if there is an Other consciousness like me can I make sense, understand, the experience of shame. There is no noema of shame if there is not an Other consciousness like me.

This expansion of the *cogito* has a transcendental flavour mixed with a *reductio ad absurdum*. We can put this together as a *transcendental reductio ad absurdum*. His description seems like a transcendental argument yet it is not exactly that. For instance, it is not in the sense that we all know that Others like me exist and try desperately to find the methodology which will reveal them with certainty against the skeptic. “We can see here the sophistry of realism.”<sup>344</sup> At the same time, it is not the transcendentalism we saw in Heidegger or the one of Merleau-Ponty which we here mention *en passant*. For Merleau-Ponty “my experience must in some way present me with other people, since otherwise I should have no occasion to speak of solitude, and could not begin to pronounce other people inaccessible.”<sup>345</sup> That Heideggerian thought may be true, yet, Sartre, avoiding the recourse to the medium of meaningful propositions attempts to find the actual experience which *meaningfully* reveals (to intuition) the Other to me and me to the Other. This is another of Sartre’s innovations which even his critics, like Marjorie Grene,<sup>346</sup> had well appreciated. Sartre tries to find ways where logical descriptions and rational exegeses do not contradict the phenomenology of life. In his review of Camus’s ‘absurd,’<sup>347</sup> Sartre writes that one has to read both the *Myth of Sisyphus* in its philosophical explanation of the concept and look at the play *The Stranger* which makes

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<sup>343</sup> (Sartre 1993, 282)

<sup>344</sup> (Ibid., 224)

<sup>345</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 419)

<sup>346</sup> (Grene 1948)

<sup>347</sup> (Sartre 1988b)

you feel the absurd. The two sides of consciousness as he usually puts it which any philosophical account of being must harmonise.

At the same time, the approach introduces a *reductio* since in the formula *Only if there is an Other as self-consciousness* can I make sense of the experience of shame – the noema of shame – the options for the category of the Other are not closed by Sartre. Any possibility of this Other must be like me otherwise shame could not be consciously experienced as such. We can put in the variable ‘Other’ anything, from a robot, to philosophical zombies, aliens, animals to... “whatever or whoever he may be.”<sup>348</sup> If they are not like a consciousness like me shame would not occur. In a way Sartre anticipates Hilary Putnam’s multiple realisability of consciousness.<sup>349</sup> In our perceptual experience, the Other appears as an object - like the metallic indicator that shows me the seconds of the hour. The person *that* moves to step on that bus that I see coming does not reveal her being a consciousness to me. Even if I have been in that experiential context before, and her whole behavioural schema could be used to appresent her as a consciousness, it is not enough. She might well be a perfected robot. In this sense, Sartre says that, perceptually, pacing the behaviourist, the experience of the Other as a body moving leaves the being of the Other only probable as self-consciousness. It is “infinitely *probable* that the passerby whom I see is a man and not a perfected robot.”<sup>350</sup> How can I know that they are a self(-)consciousness<sup>351</sup> in my being as self(-)consciousness?

If the Other and the self are necessarily separate and no relation of whole-parts defines them; and if the only possibility of one existing for the Other is an immediate

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<sup>348</sup> (Sartre 1993, 263)

<sup>349</sup> (Putnam 1988)

<sup>350</sup> (Sartre 1993, 253)

<sup>351</sup> Henceforth, whenever we are referring to Sartre’s conceptualisation of *conscience (de) soi* we will be using the signs *self(-)consciousness* by putting the dash in parenthesis. We believe this is closer to what Sartre’s intention. The term ‘self’ might suppose for many readers a closure, a concrete, distinct, self-contained entity either materially or conceptually, a conceptual unity of ‘self;’ and this, in our reading, is precisely what Sartre wanted to avoid. The consciousness (of) self is not self-consciousness; there cannot be closure in the self being consciousness of itself hence the dash must be, as Derrida would say, *sous rature*, to remind us that there is always something non intentional which does not present itself in-itself-for-itself.

certainty as guaranteed by a reflective-transcendent cogito in its modality of givenness to itself; and if this modality also reveals that the self can never objectify itself even in self(-)consciousness but only be given as pure presencing to (it)self; then, the only possibility for the existential certainty of the Other, is the Other to be given to me (my cogito) as their cogito, their subjectivity. But since this subjectivity cannot be construed as Cartesian epistemic access, what the Other is in-itself, it must be given in a mode of an immediate ontic-existential way *in fundamental connection with me*,<sup>352</sup> as a consciousness with the certainty which my cogito can reveal and guarantee for-itself, as self(-)consciousness. In Theunissen's words "the task has much rather to be, or Sartre thinks, that of leaving the encounter with the Other its factual character and still exhibiting its indubitability."<sup>353</sup> *Only if there is another like me, can I make sense of my experience of presenting to myself my self as another* (that I am what I am not and I am not what I am, that is self(-)consciousness) which is shame. Let us retrace Sartre's steps.

My world opens up as an instrumental complex. I, as a consciousness, I am always for something. A plethora of possibilities which I can realise. The Other first appears as an object amongst objects for my project, my objective. Now, if take the body over there which moves as hiding a possible subjectivity, I would immediately and non-reflexively pass into a theoretical mode and treat them as subjects. The Other would just be a point of reference as they appear in my conscious horizon, "a privileged object."<sup>354</sup> Yet, when I attempt to thematise my world with the other as a subject(ivity), as a referential pole, it does not mean that the Other magically becomes an Other *qua* subjectivity *qua* me. The Other becomes subject as they are subject to my categories<sup>355</sup> or to my web of (objective) metrical relations – to borrow from Marcel's<sup>356</sup> reading of Sartre. If, however, I constitute the probable Other there as a subject like me, when I do that, when I thematise the world like that, then the world does not open up as the way it did before, it escapes me.

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<sup>352</sup> (Sartre 1993, 253)

<sup>353</sup> (Theunissen 1986, 205)

<sup>354</sup> (Ibid., 254)

<sup>355</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>356</sup> (Marcel 1970, 70)

“Nevertheless, this new relation”<sup>357</sup> which is given at once reveals a being which cannot essentially be revealed to me. “[T]here is a regrouping in which I take part but which escapes me, a regrouping of all the objects which people my universe.”<sup>358</sup> The Other as object, when treated as subject(ivity) (by me) in my consciousness, escapes me. They escape me because the world cannot reveal to me its being and its potentiality from that subjective view and it simultaneously reveals a being and a potentiality which is denied to me; and, at the same time denies (disintegrates),<sup>359</sup> the one that my subjectivity reveals for-itself.

What Sartre emphasises is that our concern about the existence of the Other as self(-)consciousness is not just another version of the Cartesian observation that we cannot have epistemic access to their phenomenal experience. The phenomenal experience, the “what it is like,” always refers to a past modality – of being conscious in the mode of the in-itself. The taste of the coffee as sweet is past/passed at the very moment I refer to it as sweet. Here, Sartre’s point extends to a future modality. When I suppose the Other body being like me, a consciousness, from a resemblance I see in that thingly body over there, I cannot have direct access to it the way I have to my own. If I did, as we saw with Husserl, I would be them. However, the disintegration which experience points to is an “appearance of a man in my universe.”<sup>360</sup> The issue of finding another consciousness then is how the world opens up for them as a for-itself. Merleau-Ponty fully appreciates this delicate point when he writes:

My consciousness, being co-extensive with what can exist for me, and corresponding to the whole system of experience, cannot encounter in that system, another consciousness capable of bringing immediately to light in the world the background, unknown to me, of its own phenomena....even if I succeeded in thinking of it [the other body there] as constituting the world, it would be I who would be constituting the

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<sup>357</sup> (Sartre 1993, 255)

<sup>358</sup> (Sartre 1993, 255)

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

consciousness as such, and once more I should be the sole constituting agent.<sup>361</sup>

Even if I treat that Other body as subjectivity just because it looks and acts like me, I can never have access to its motivations. The Other, alone, and from a sceptical distance cannot be revealed as a (subjectivity) for-itself to me. What is revealed is a phenomenon whereby, if treated as a subject(ivity) in the horizon of my other objects, that body just ceases to be what they were for me before, that is, when the Other was just treated as an object within an overarching instrumental complex. That is, the world is not correlatively unified as it does in my consciousness since (my) objects are now subjected by another consciousness hypothesised by me, revealing potentialities and thematisations that negate mine. But that does not reveal the Other as a subjectivity for-itself – the way my cogito has revealed mine. Both situations fall under the concept of ‘*asujettissement*’ (subjection, subjugation).

What reveals the Other to me is their metaphysically looking at me:

In a word, my apprehension of the Other in the world as probably being a man refers to my permanent possibility of *being-seen-by-him*; that is, to the permanent possibility that a subject who sees me may be substituted for the object seen by me.<sup>362</sup>

The look is the process by which self and Other are revealed to each other, offered to each other, in their being as self(-)consciousnesses. But this look is not *just* a look as looking at the grass. It is a metaphysical look, a look of *meaning to*. Many eyes can be directed at me, but not all of those eyes constitute a looking at me which can be felt as such, like Thomas Mann describes this delicately in *Tonio Kröger*:

The spectator by the glass door of the dining room was now beginning to attract attention after all, and from handsome flushed faces uncordial and inquiring looks were cast in his direction; but he stood his ground. Ingeborg and Hans glanced at him too, almost simultaneously, with that air of utter indifference so very like contempt. But suddenly he became conscious that a gaze from some other quarter had sought him out and

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<sup>361</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 407)

<sup>362</sup> (Sartre 1993, 257)

was resting on him... He turned his head, and his eyes at once met those whose scrutiny he had sensed. Not far from him a girl was standing, ... She had lowered her head and was gazing up at Tonio Kröger with dark, melting eyes. He turned away...<sup>363</sup>

It is a look which questions our world. Such quest makes us a-shame-d. It is the nothingness of an-other negation, of an other (w)hole in the world that I *feel* piercing my whole world and revealing my (w)hole of it. This quest(ion)ing does not derive from the ‘ocular balls.’ It passes through them as the question aims at an Other. The look is blind with respect to the eyes; the visibility of the Other is not related to vision in Sartre’s look. In the example of Sartre’s looking through a keyhole and experiencing someone looking at him, he experiences shame. My being ashamed is “a shameful apprehension of something and this something is me.”<sup>364</sup> It is the Other’s look which originally makes me feel ashamed. The origin, the *arche* of shame is an Other consciousness. Shame is the trace of an Other consciousness in *reflection* encountered by me in a *situation*.

In my project of getting satisfaction as a peeping Tom, I am leaning towards the keyhole to be able to see someone on the other side of the door.<sup>365</sup> I freely create the situation by subjecting the other in order to express my desire. In that setting the entities around me are objectified by me as my project – even that body behind the keyhole is another object part of/for my objective, the possibility of my (consciousness (of)) satisfaction. In leaning towards the keyhole I am transcending towards being satisfied. I am not being just a body that leans through the keyhole – I am what I am not and I am not what I am. When the Other looks at me and I apprehend it, this (Sartrean) facticity is sundered. The immediacy of my being conscious of getting satisfaction, this unreflected consciousness, which is me as the organization of the world toward that objective, where all things are without distance from myself in this relational circuit, this whole; all this is sundered, disconnected, put into relief, *mise hors circuit*. With the look of the Other my project is destroyed, a catastrophe takes place. All the objects receive a distance; the

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<sup>363</sup> (Mann 1988, 129)

<sup>364</sup> (Sartre 1993, 221)

<sup>365</sup> It is always on the other side of a *door* where consciousness happens – we shall come back to door in the end as a beginning.

whole ‘satisfaction’ is shattered; pierced by a look which reveals its parts of which I am one. The whole becomes a hole out of which irrupt parts, the keyhole, the handle, the door, a body next to the door. At the same time, a self which would have appeared only in reflective consciousness appears now and “comes to haunt the unreflective consciousness.”<sup>366</sup> A self is constituted through a motivation which is not mine. Something else mobilises the elements of the world while immobilising me. I am not a consciousness (of) satisfaction any more but a consciousness (of) *seeing my self as...* here as a *voyeur*: “I am a *voyeur*.” I receive a being which is the being seen as I am. The Other, another constituting subjectivity, reveals to me my being as being observed because it can subject everything into beings other than itself, that is, *make them be*. But this revelation is at the same time a revelation of the Other as an Other freedom revealed to me through my being ashamed. The Other’s freedom is revealed to me insofar as my consciousness (of) shame is indetermination and unpredictability for (my) being. I cannot escape it.

In being ashamed, shame is something that I am but it is out of my control; I cannot shake it off. I am nearly utterly passive. By being looked at, by being seen as an object amidst other objects, the Other is revealed to me at the same time, simultaneously, by the fact that I can be in the process of being objectified by an entity which can objectify, another freedom, subjectivity, transcendence. At the same time, the Other reveals their freedom to me, as my being ashamed is a revelation of a free organization of the world which in principal escapes me. Shame opens a wound and makes my world bleed, it is an “internal haemorrhage.”<sup>367</sup> If only for an instant, I am an object for the Other and a subjectivity for me, an in-itself-for-itself; a being “in the midst of the world which is at once this world and beyond this world.”<sup>368</sup> Shame reveals both the Other as a freedom and my subjectivity to me – in the way my cogito would have reflected it had it reflectively reflected-on itself.

I am being looked at, I feel ashamed, my possibilities are altered. This alteration is not just a different reorientation toward instrumental complexes, not yet. That would only be another form of transcendence that I could have initiated myself. This alteration of possibilities is an alienation of my transcendence. Sartre calls it my transcendence-

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<sup>366</sup> (Sartre 1993, 260)

<sup>367</sup> (Sartre 1993, 261)

<sup>368</sup> (Ibid.)



transcended. The world opens up and closes to reopen through the Other in their being present as a freedom, as a transcendence. In being ashamed, a new horizon of possibilities opens up. That dark corner which was previously present-at-hand now stands as a ready-to-hand possibility where I could hide and avoid getting caught, though only to close again as a possibility insofar as in the Other's freedom it is also a probability of being illuminated to reveal my being hiding. The possibility of the dark corner becomes a dead possibility for me. My transcendence is transcended by the Other's freedom. When I transcend to that hidden corner as a place to hide, the Other as a freedom could transcend it by illuminating thereby negating my transcendence. This corner is not a hiding place when I – speaking from the Other's perspective here – illuminate it. Sartre concludes: "The Other is the hidden death of my possibilities."<sup>369</sup> This is how the Other is revealed to me as another consciousness. The Other reveals my being and their being directly in my consciousness. This *see-saw* structure is not, however, interpreted teleologically by Sartre in the Hegelian sense as Jacques Lacan does. The Other is not there to be ultimately destroyed. That is an open issue, an empirical issue in the naïve sense; time will tell.

This *see-saw* can only happen if me and the Other are simultaneously present. It is at the same 'time-and-space' that the dark corner arises as a possibility for me and a probability for the Other only to remain as a dead possibility for me. It is a temporalising-with and a temporalising-through the Other and their probabilities. It is a "transmundane" presence<sup>370</sup> of the Other. The look *presences* the Other as freedom, a free subjectivity, a for-itself. It is not the spatiality of the organs that look at me. It is the look which is revealing my transcendence which in turn is revealing the disruption of my immersion in a situation in the same way that my reflective consciousness would have disrupted my being immersed in my situation. But because I can never be an object of myself as this chair is an object for me, the Other is "the being for whom I am an object; that is, the being *through whom* I gain my objectness."<sup>371</sup> Therefore, the Other with their look presents itself in my consciousness and is manifested affectively (pride/shame). So while we cannot prove the Other either as a representation or a Kantian category, or, *pace* Husserl, as a structural element found in a phenomenological *epoche*, we can be conscious

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<sup>369</sup> (Sartre 1993, 264)

<sup>370</sup> (Ibid., 270)

<sup>371</sup> (Ibid., 271)

of them as they deliver ourselves to ourselves in a way that we are unable to. The Other is present in my consciousness as I am conscious of this presence which is manifested in an affective correlate:

This demonstrates sufficiently that it is not in the world that the Other is first to be sought *but at the side of consciousness as a consciousness in which and by which consciousness makes itself be what it is*. Just as my consciousness apprehended by the cogito bears indubitable witness of itself and of its own existence, so certain particular consciousnesses – for example, “shame-consciousness” – bear indubitable witness to the *cogito* both of themselves and of the existence of the Other.<sup>372</sup>

Now we can go back to the compelling thesis. Only *if* there is another like me, can I make sense of my experience of presenting to myself my self as another (I am what I am not and I am not what I am) which is phenomenalised in the modalities of shame/pride. Sartre’s ‘*if*’ is not the modern logical conditional construed within a binary presupposition: where something is constituted as XYZ, it cannot (onto)(nomo)logically be A and not-A at the same time and in the same place; thus states the thesis of non-contradiction and exclusion of the middle term. Sartre assumes one of the ancient conditionals: the *ἄμᾶ*. What Derrida shows us in his analysis of the *ἄμᾶ*<sup>373</sup> in Aristotle’s discourse on time or through the Platonic *φάρμακον*,<sup>374</sup> is precisely this non-binary logical option, the inclusion of the middle, the middle voice. A logic which included rather than excluded the middle voice in its representations. The *pharmakon* is both cure and poison at the same time, in the same space. The ‘logic’ of life cannot tolerate a phenomenology which applies principles of exclusion.<sup>375</sup> This *ἄμᾶ* is what makes Sartre’s thesis so compelling. When the *if* is construed as *ἄμᾶ* then there cannot be an experience of shame

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<sup>372</sup> (Sartre 1993, 271; emphases added)

<sup>373</sup> (Derrida 1982)

<sup>374</sup> (Derrida 1981)

<sup>375</sup> Husserl for instance while bracketing and abstaining from everything in the phenomenological and transcendental reductions he leaves the principle of non-contradiction and exclusion of the middle term intact. In the *Ideas I* we read: “The only propositions of logic to which phenomenology might have occasion to refer to would therefore be mere logical *axioms*, like the law of contradiction, axioms the universal and absolute validity of which it would be able to make evident, however, on the basis of examples included among its own data” (136).

or pride without the Other as another consciousness like me – any other exegesis becomes absurd. These are happening both at the same time, at the same place. I feel ashamed *ἄμᾶ* there is an Other and/or there is an Other *ἄμᾶ* I feel ashamed. I/The Other comes to be each Other's counterpart: The Other side of my consciousness.

And now we can better understand Sartre's use of the metaphor of the perfected robot in order to emphasise that the factuality of the Other through their body in dis/tance cannot reveal their subjectivity just because it seems to be analogous to mine, empathetically. The perfected robot is an in-itself, an *en-soi*, by the very fact that it is already finite in its programming. There is no *pour-soi* in something programmed and perfected, be it even the most open system possible in quantum mechanics. Consciousness, subjectivity, is free through and through to constitute. Consciousness is not a system or "a formula."<sup>376</sup> Consciousness is pure motivation insofar as it is, its being is in question by being other than it is. The Other, if they exist as I exist, must be a true openness, a total freedom to be whatever they can be motivated to be, that is, they can choose out of the infinite rather than to adapt to the infinite possibilities of a (pre)determined finitude. Seeing Robert Olson's relevant analysis one could even conclude that 'consciousness and motivation' is a tautology for Sartre. Yet, we have to re-underscore that consciousness for both Husserl and Sartre is not a *causa sui* it is a motivation:<sup>377</sup>

For the same reasons it is impossible to assign to a consciousness a motivation other than itself. Otherwise it would be necessary to conceive that consciousness to the degree to which it is an effect, is not conscious (of) itself. It would be necessary in some manner that it should be without being conscious (of) being. We should fall into that too common illusion which makes consciousness semi-conscious or a

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<sup>376</sup> (Sartre 2007a, 21)

<sup>377</sup> If anything, Sartre fully respected Husserl's consciousness as motivation unlike many Husserlian and neo-Husserlian thinkers who miss the 70+ pages in *Ideas II* where motivation is explained by Husserl in a non-causal way and with a particular paragraph (§60) to 'resistance' and the 'I can.' Sartre made just one addition: the *Other*; who can motivate me as myself for myself.

passivity. But consciousness is consciousness through and through. It can be limited only by itself.<sup>378</sup>

That is why the relation with another consciousness is metaphysical and not causal. It is not *because of the other* that I feel ashamed. The look of the Other as a conscious look is not like looking at the grass, at the wall. When the look is directed at me it reveals to me and through me the Other by delivering me (a being ‘outside’ of me) to myself – the look is the pure middle voice. It confers a felt outside to my transcendence.<sup>379</sup> Sartre, to be fair, does not even consider the Other as a condition of shame. The Other can only be revealed as a *motivation*. Many commentators, for example Dan Zahavi, interpret the latter as intervention and the Other as mediator being me and myself of whom I feel ashamed of. Shame, Zahavi says, “presupposes the intervention of the other, not merely because the other is the one before whom I feel ashamed, but also and more significantly because that of which I am ashamed is only constituted in and through my encounter with the other.”<sup>380</sup> But it is very difficult to be motivated by such accounts. But let us try.

Let us look at what Zahavi refers to with the proposition ‘*that of which I am ashamed is only constituted.*’ What is ‘that’ which is constituted? Nothing, or better, still, no thing. Nothing is constituted by me from the Other’s look. Being conscious of being looked at, the look of the Other, “is first an intermediary which refers from me to myself.”<sup>381</sup> Being ashamed is both a being that I am as being ashamed and, simultaneously, a being that I am not as the one who is being ashamed of (my self). The other does not intervene but motivates. He is not a mediator, if by that we permit the creeping in of a rusty causal link to supplement a metaphysical source of motivation. The self is affecting the self through and through by being motivated by the Other; it is not a causal reaction as Gavin Rae<sup>382</sup> describes it. It is a feeling, an affectivity inspired by the Other reacting on my own. The minute I am conscious of being a voyeur I fail to be one.

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<sup>378</sup> (Sartre 1993, 27)

<sup>379</sup> (Sartre 1993, 263)

<sup>380</sup> (Zahavi 2014, 213)

<sup>381</sup> (Ibid., 259)

<sup>382</sup> (Rae 2009)

I can resume being a voyeur but that's my choice. The original being for-itself has been shattered, to continue to believe in it would be pure bad faith: "the objective fact of the being-in-itself of the consciousness of the Other is posited in order to disappear in negativity and freedom."<sup>383</sup> The Other, if they are like me, can cause things to happen and they can be motivated. But to be motivated by the Other means essentially that the Other is not an inert other – just a material object; a stone cannot motivate me – but a subjectivity like me can. Causation runs to the physical plane while motivation in its ontological sense – if motivation has any meaning at all – runs in the metaphysical. The Other as another self(-)consciousness is a motivation whose other side is resistance – no perfected robot can resist its programming or be in bad faith.

So the Other can only be revealed to me *ἄμᾶ* they reveal me at the same time and in the same place. Magically (borrowing from *The Transcendence of the Ego*)<sup>384</sup> or metaphysically (from the attestation in *Materialism and Revolution*),<sup>385</sup> they motivate me, they reveal me by resisting me. The Other's look is a "shock which seizes,"<sup>386</sup> a catastrophe which is immediately a strophe, *a turning about* or a *turning towards* myself, that is, *entropy*, shame.<sup>387</sup> From the perspective of the cogito there is no initiative and no

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<sup>383</sup> (Sartre 1993, 62)

<sup>384</sup> (Sartre 1988b)

<sup>385</sup> (Sartre 1962)

<sup>386</sup> (Sartre 1993, 264)

<sup>387</sup> Entropy genuinely means shame:

<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/#eid=37403&context=ljsj&action=hw-list-click>

Luce Irigaray follows Sartre closely in *Sharing the World* (2008). She writes: "...a subject who limits my freedom but restores my impetus by reopening my own world is not sufficiently envisioned. The Western philosopher considers that the relation to the world is determined by a single centre of source, a single opening to the world. Now the freedom of the other represents another opening, another project or centre with respect to the world" (76). This re-opening is sometimes called by Irigaray an 'anastrophe' which literally means a turning around. The limiting of my freedom, which we called with Sartre 'catastrophe,' a des/dis-traction, is followed by an anastrophe, an entropy, a dis-traction, by an other transcendence. The Other's look "can call me back there" (94). And this calling diss-es my course. It shocks and seizes my course as transcendence in the world. "This calling back to ourselves is also a calling back to the present" (ibid). We shall encounter again this *shock* when we face Pierce's shocking question in our last passage towards the Other.

effort; the look is a moment of *désœuvrement*, “a generic mode of potentiality that is not exhausted,”<sup>388</sup> or, in Sartre’s words “both ekstatic cohesion and the character of the in-itself,”<sup>389</sup> but only for a moment because consciousness always questions itself, flees itself. This re-turning to and revealing myself is motivated by an Other other than myself in reflection “*as if*”<sup>390</sup> it were myself. It is through encountering the Other as a free subjectivity that the category of “as if” comes about when later on in our personal reflections we will try to constitute, to provide an ac(curate)-count of the en-count-ering the Other as a response to the question of the existence of the Other.

Apart from shame, Sartre will use the body as another example that points to the phenomenolising of an Other subjectivity. In this case, the body which I am is to be objectified by the Other. I am my body or as Sartre says I exist my body. I cannot render my body an object for myself. Everything else is an object for me where my body stands as a reference point where all other entities reveal their objectivity for me. As Adrian Van Kaam<sup>391</sup> put it, my body is a bridge to the world. We could extend this metaphor analogising the body as a diving board; the board from which I try to dive and get acquainted with the world. In this sense I cannot identify with my body, as I am and I am not my body at the same time and place. I can only div(id)e (in) the world with the body that I am; I cannot objectify my body without destroying it and with it the world that is revealed through or in virtue of this body. The body is the medium but the medium is not the message – I transmit myself to the world through this body. However, the Other can utilise and know my body as an object in a way that I cannot. As shame reveals me, myself in pure immanence, shyness reveals my body as experienced as object for the Other-as-subject. In both cases it appears that “the Other accomplishes for us a function of which we are incapable and which nevertheless is incumbent on us: to see ourselves as we are.”<sup>392</sup> However, whereas in the first case it is me, in my transcendence-transcended and in pure interiority that I grasp myself as the Other alienates my possibilities as subjectivity

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<sup>388</sup> (Agamben 1998, 62)

<sup>389</sup> (Sartre 1993, 266)

<sup>390</sup> (Sartre 1993, 227)

<sup>391</sup> (Van Kaam 1967)

<sup>392</sup> (Sartre 1993, 353-354)

– or, in Sartrean terms, as a for-itself, the Other arrests my transcendence and I am presented to myself as a for-itself-in-itself; in the case of the Body, the “how we are” is relayed to us not in pure immanence as this is not possible, but through language – broadly construed as means of representation. Body is alienated through an accessory reflection which is nothing but an observation coming from ourselves where the body is just a quasi-object: “we constitute it as a quasi-object by means of an accessory reflection.”<sup>393</sup> This quasi-object is the psychic body, the alienated lived body. To make that quasi-object an object we need the Other, or better the language that the Other can freely use and which we can understand. With the Other as a consciousness it is possible to reveal myself as a body’s object-ness, in a way I could otherwise never have access to. I need another freedom which can attempt to objectify it just as in the case of the for-itself where I need the Other to reveal me as a for-itself-in-itself.

*Ergo*, I need the Other. Without the Other I cannot exist, “the Other’s disappearance as look throws me back into my unjustifiable subjectivity and reduces my being to this perpetual pursued-pursuit toward an inapprehensible In-itself-for-itself.”<sup>394</sup> And this is why we desire the Other’s body. Looking for the Other’s subjectivity is realised by an attempt to objectify the Other (looking at), and can only be motivated if the Other suggests their being a subjectivity. As the Other is found in the world with us and suggests their subjectivity by their looking at us, this being will first and foremost be revealed in a situation as Body. That is why the body is not desired only in its pure materiality. The body which is desired, “the organic totality which is immediately present to desire is desirable only in so far as it reveals not only life but also an appropriate consciousness.”<sup>395</sup> Consciousness, revealed by a look passing through ocular balls, is the motivation toward the Other who is the only possibility of revealing what I am. So

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<sup>393</sup> (Ibid., 355)

<sup>394</sup> (Sartre 1993, 381)

<sup>395</sup> Irigaray phrases this phenomenon thus: “The objectivity of the other [the other’s body] cannot be reduced to any object; it corresponds to a reality irreducible to any subjectivity, but is, however, a perceptible expression of it, a sort of phenomenal projection of the existence of the other” (87).

the Other's For-itself must come to play on the surface of his body, and be extended all through his body; and by touching this body I should finally touch the Other's free subjectivity.<sup>396</sup>

Through my attempt to capture the Other's body in desire I reveal myself and the Other as incarnated consciousness but always from my perspective. I experience my consciousness incarnated by my body as flesh through the erotic desire in the caress. The body of the Other which appears, which phenomenalises itself as erotic desire, questions. An embodied consciousness is attracted to another embodied consciousness as a question, a manifold question.<sup>397</sup> For Sartre, this question is a quest(ion) of revealing free subjectivity – *a quest to touch* the Other as subjectivity.

I experience my flesh through the Other as my body is an object for them in pure passivity, and at the same time I do the same for them when I caress them. To be precise, the transcendence of self and Other is limited to each other. I can never, as Sartre says, fully objectify myself. If it were possible I would become an in-itself which can never happen. But in intimate encounters with the Other, the Other becomes the limit of my transcendence and I to theirs in caressing. It is this limiting of the transcendence which reveals my self and the Other as incarnated consciousnesses in caressing. The Other's body is not found in an instrumental complex to be used for; it is not a possibility of something that the self sees for-itself. It is there in its presence against which the Other's Body is revealed as flesh. Desire is just the manifestation “of that reciprocity”<sup>398</sup> to reveal my Being through the Other while I reveal theirs. But since I am never aware of the true nature of my desire, the caress degenerates into taking over a body as an object of satisfaction. “I take and discover myself in the process of taking, but what I take in my hands is *something else* than what I wanted to take.”<sup>399</sup> When I surpass the limit of the transcendence which reveals to my consciousness both my and the Other's freedom, we degenerate into the phenomena of objectification of the Other expressed bodily in masochism, sadism and so on. If I surpass the limits through which the Other consciousness reveals itself by itself in the surface of the body, then no matter how much

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<sup>396</sup> (Sartre 1993, 381)

<sup>397</sup> (Van Kaam 1967, 230)

<sup>398</sup> (Sartre 1993, 398)

<sup>399</sup> (Ibid.)



I turn it around or penetrate it, it would only be revealed to me as what it is in-itself, pure materiality.

Although Sartre introduces us to a brand new dynamic phenomenology of the Other he raises expectations which are not in the end met, perhaps. There is one objection against the look which Sartre anticipates and directs to himself. Yet, as Sartre has well appreciated, there will be no definite answer to this one particular question, because it is *the* question itself, the philosophical question. It is the question of the being of presence.

It could always be the case that I feel that I am being looked at and yet nothing is revealed as such in the horizon to motivate such an affectivity from my side; I could (have) be(en) mistaken. But Sartre says no. Even in those cases the Other, as we said earlier, cannot be conceived simply as a physical-material substance. The fact that I can perceive the Other in that noise behind me, a noise which challenges my enterprise as (being) immersed in my instrumental complexes in (unreflective<sup>400</sup>) consciousness, reveals phenomenologically that “the Other is present everywhere, below me, above me, in the neighbouring rooms; I feel profoundly my being-for-others.”<sup>401</sup> Later on, Sartre tells us that “the Other’s omnipresence is the fundamental fact, the objectivity of my being-there is a constant dimension of my facticity.”<sup>402</sup> This is consistent in terms of shame and of shyness were I am presented in a reflective consciousness with a being as the Other sees it; for example, I can still feel ashamed reminiscing of something which happened a year ago. Clearly, a material presence of an embodied consciousness, *hic et nunc* is not required. But that can only happen in a reflective mode in which case, retrieving Sartre’s old term, is a (past-present) consciousness reflected-on. Shall we not suppose a difference in the situation with an embodied Other? How can we reconcile *the Other's omnipresence* with the difference between the Other as embodied in a situation and the Other as a mis(ed)taken sound – particularly in consciousness (of) shame

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<sup>400</sup> Gavin Rae (2009) analyses the *Look* through the concept of “pre-reflective” consciousness which is ultimately the for-itself. We want so much to agree with this interpretation yet there is a question. Why did Sartre, who introduced the pre-reflective in the introduction, started using the unreflected in the *Look*? Is there any meaning other than possible error behind this? We are satisfied with posing the question and reserve a hypothesis for a later work.

<sup>401</sup> (Sartre 1993, 277)

<sup>402</sup> (Ibid., 354)

reflected-on? Also, if a noise coincided with the silent entrance of a thief who could become present in my horizon, which of the Other's look would have primacy? Would there be a difference? Are they overdetermined? How could the two 'looks' be reconciled in the reflected-on consciousness where we trace the Other? Sartre always asks us to account for the being of differences in being. And if the look of the Other *is a constant dimension of my facticity* to which facticity do we refer? Is it the fact that I am always an Other for myself or that the Other is revealed to me through being an Other for myself? Let us reflect.

To say, on the one hand, that the Other pushes me to a particular horizon of possibilities based on a re-interpretation of the world because of their looking at me is close to saying that I do not choose my possibilities authentically as in the case of the Heideggerian *They*. If the Other directs me towards\_\_ how does this direction matter? When the Other interrupts my project it "is to be defined as an escape-from-itself towards\_\_".<sup>403</sup> In Heidegger, we have an undifferentiated self in the *They* who in order to be itself needs to break off from the *They*; and in Sartre we have a concrete cogito which *could be* dissolved into an alienated cogito insofar as it is being affected by the presence of an undifferentiated Other-look as *They*.

On the other hand, what will condition that affectivity? If I am to claim the noise behind me as a possible look toward me, then the look is not a look but something ( ) in my horizon which arrests my attention, brackets my transcendence, my for-itself, my project. If this is a structure of Being as Sartre claims, one of the three ekstases of the being of human reality, then it cannot be conditioned on the particularity of the ontic-existential occurrence but rather expressed by it. Either as a peeping Tom or as just looking through a window at the Parthenon or daydreaming, something ( ) must result in the my-being-seen which comes to present (to) myself as my being seen. Lacan reads this in a similar way and turns the look into a gaze that "sees itself"<sup>404</sup> or thinks it does in the insatiable desire of the 'subject' to master itself by unifying itself. It is "a gaze imagined by me in the field of the Other"<sup>405</sup> to perpetuate the narcissistic desire to be (the)

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<sup>403</sup> (Sartre 1993, 100)

<sup>404</sup> (Lacan 1999, 226)

<sup>405</sup> (Ibid.)

one, to the master(y) of an illusory I/eye. But with this gaze this ( ) is imagined within me as being the Other. I give “body to the gaze.”<sup>406</sup> Rightfully, perhaps, Lacan asks

But does this mean that originally it is in the relation of subject to subject, in the function of the existence of others as looking at me, that we apprehend what the gaze really is? Is it not clear that the gaze intervenes here only in as much as it is not the annihilating subject, correlative of the world of objectivity, who feels himself surprised, but the subject sustaining himself in a function of desire?<sup>407</sup>

This seeing itself is not the choosing itself in the case of Heidegger. It is an attempt to apprehend ourselves from without or as a thing. But it is *my* encountering *from without* not my encountering an Other embodied being; the latter is encountered *as if* it were me. In this, Lacan appears exact. Sartre tell us elsewhere that this is the typical structure of the for-itself, of consciousness.

This turning back upon the self is a wrenching away from self in order to return to it. It is this turning back which effects the appearance of reflective nothingness. For the necessary structure of the for-itself requires that its being can be recovered only by a being which itself exists in the form of for-itself. Thus the being which effects the recovery must be constituted in the mode of the for-itself, and the being which is to be recovered must exist as for-itself. And these two beings must be *the same being*.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>407</sup> (Lacan 1999, 227). The desire that Lacan speaks of is the desire of the unity of identity, of an Ideal-I, which we always strive to achieve as we are trying to escape the abyss of desire opened up as lack after the dehiscence of the primitive state of the ultimate satisfaction in the womb, the so called primitive narcissism. We cannot enter into the details of Lacanian mis(sed)-readings of the Sartrean text. Suffice it to say that it seems to us that we look at Sartre’s look as ontologically neutral. Sartre does not rely on any regulative idea such as evolution or utility as Lacan does (1989, 5) in order to describe human reality as such. The being of negation is not a Hegelian lack which “has no other outcome – Hegel teaches us this – than the destruction of the other” (199, 220). The Other is missing just like ‘I.’ (Lacan and Mehlman 1987).

<sup>408</sup> (Sartre 1993, 154)

Can we accept that the being of this event (in the Sartrean sense) claims the same being as in the case of the embodied presence of an Other who interrupts my project – if the Other is another for-itself? Is there a difference? Even if we cannot fully follow Lacan's insatiable desire as lack which ultimately destroys the Other outside the symbolic-reasoned world, we can admit that Lacan's gaze at the look reveals interesting things: the phenomenon of surprise and desire. We shall keep these in reserve and continue with the look.

With their look, the Other not only arrests my transcendence but 'destroys it.' I stop being immersed in looking at the Parthenon or daydreaming. I wake up and reveal this immersion, this for-itself to myself – the for-itself passes into the in-itself: I was looking at the Parthenon – the being looking at the Parthenon was made-to-be/is-was, *est été*.<sup>409</sup> The Other has darkened the Parthenon revealing to me my looking at the Parthenon. There is a *scotoma*, in the Greek sense, a darkening, a killing of the initial transcendence: the initial transcendence is killed, is transcended. But what is this killing? Is it a death as an inability to transcend?

- *Yes*, if it refers to the initial project that has been transcended; it has been killed, it is in-itself. No Proust can bring it back as it was (being) for-itself.
- *No*, because it is not me who is killed, scotom-ised but only my being as a particular transcendence, as a motivation towards. The Other does not annihilate me by looking at me, they destroy me.

But this destruction, is just distraction, catastrophe. "Man's relation with being is that he can modify it."<sup>410</sup> We can never annihilate; we only modify; destroy/create is that relation of modification. The Other destroys *the towards*, our intentionality: the motivation ~~towards~~, "the destruction of all objectivity for me."<sup>411</sup> The motivation itself is still there, if only for a moment suspended, deferred;<sup>412</sup> it is looking to hold on to something else. It is just free, if only for a moment anxious to hold on towards, "in suspense... in the mode

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<sup>409</sup> (Sartre 1993, 22)

<sup>410</sup> (Ibid., 24)

<sup>411</sup> (Ibid., 267)

<sup>412</sup> "For a moment, the totality of the world is kept in suspense" (Irigaray 2008, 89).

of the ‘not yet’ or of ‘the already-no-longer.’<sup>413</sup> The for-itself-in-itself revealed in anxiety of no thing in particular, of no intentionality.

Destruction is nothing other but the modification of possibilities; to turn to a new direction (*κατά-στροφή*), a *cata-strophe*, a new trope, a new intentionality, a new course, a new path to reveal the world. Destruction is at the same time creation – from *stroy* to story. Insofar as I live, I am a for-itself, a possibility. Therefore, the Other as a destroyer, a distractor motivates me towards \_\_. But how can the Other be revealed as Other *qua* me when the transcendence-transcended as “rejected possibles in turn have no other being than their “sustained-being;” it is I who sustain them in being, inversely, their present non-being is an “ought-not-to-be-sustained”?”<sup>414</sup> In other words: If anxiety is revealed in the same way in the look as for example, in walking over a ridge and deciding how to proceed, there is not ultimate possibility rather than the one I make to be. Is there a difference between these two phenomena of making to be? What is the felt difference between my own motivation and the motivation I receive from the Other such that will allow both to reveal the other subjectivity as embodied consciousness and overcome the philosophical reef of solipsism? If there is no difference between the Other as an embodied consciousness and the Stoic Other as *They*, are *they*, Merleau-Ponty – interpretation of Sartre as pure idealism – Heidegger – the Other as *They* – and Lacan – subject of sustaining itself in desire – not right to criticise Sartre?

We need to go back and clarify the two negations of self(-)consciousness: the external and the internal. According to Sartre, the external relation is rather easy. When I say that ‘this cup is not this inkwell’ there is a being as a witness (myself) that stands in-between these beings and can categorise them without altering them in any way in their being. “Both of these objects are what they are and that is all.”<sup>415</sup> However, when I say “I am not this inkwell” or “I am not handsome” the negation is internal:

The negation becomes then a bond of essential being since at least one of the beings on which it depends is such that it points toward the other, that it carries the other in its heart as an absence.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> (Sartre 1993, 285)

<sup>414</sup> (Sartre 1993, 31)

<sup>415</sup> (Ibid., 175)

<sup>416</sup> (Ibid.)

This negation belongs to the for-itself and not to the in-itself as the former has nothingness as its own foundation – it can only detach itself from itself to stand witness for-itself. In other words, consciousness is always for-itself, the negative relation of consciousness to itself as the split between the for-itself (what consciousness is not in its ecstatic mode and it is not what it is) - in-itself; as such, it

is the being of the For-itself, [which] causes there to be an Other. This does not mean *that it gives being to the Other* but simply that it gives to the Other its being-other or the essential condition of the “there is.”<sup>417</sup>

That is the case for the cogito as a schism in its possibility of self(-)consciousness. However,

with regard to the Other [the other as another subject], on the contrary, the internal negative relation is a relation of *reciprocity*.<sup>418</sup>

The aporia: Does this mean that we have two negations at play in the embodied encounter with an Other? If the being of negation is founded on the nothingness that characterises human reality as a nihilating withdrawal from being, (in-itself(-)for-itself), to which being would this new negation of reciprocity relate; mine, or the Other, or to both? The event with the Other introduces this other negation which is distinct from the always happening interior negation which makes consciousness possible. What is their difference and what makes it such that my transcendence-transcended, the resistance felt by another consciousness reveals another subjectivity, and not a perfected robot or a phantasised Other? Is there a difference between the negations?

If the negation is essentially the same then the reciprocity differs from the interiority by the fact that the negation in reciprocity is performed by me through the Other, it is motivated from the outside (by another subjectivity in the process of being revealed to me). The Other inspires a refusal or negation as consciousness overflows the bodily presence to reach me. In this sense

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<sup>417</sup> (Sartre 1993, 283)

<sup>418</sup> (Ibid., 284)

...the Other exists for consciousness only as a refused *self*. But precisely because the Other is a self, he can himself be refused for and through me only insofar as it is his self which refuses me.<sup>419</sup>

But now this is a bit strange because a refused self could equally be mine when I sustain all my possibilities and reveal my freedom in anguish. The choice is a negation there as well, a for-itself. The self can only be the for-itself, only (the) for-itself (is) never in-itself. If the Other is presented to my consciousness as a refused self, what would be the difference between that mode and the for-itself which refuses or negates its past-ing counterpart – which is essentially a difference which is nothing in-itself yet it conditions all knowing? “Knowing belongs to the for-itself alone, for the reason that only the for-itself can appear to itself as not being what it knows.”<sup>420</sup> Is there something different intuited in these two negations?

If not, we end up in an extreme solipsism in the way Merleau-Ponty re-reads Sartre in his later works. “How in the first place could I ever recognize other (my) selves? ... Unless I learn within myself to recognize the junction of the for itself and the in itself, none of those mechanisms called other bodies will ever come to life... .”<sup>421</sup> The negation of reciprocity is still operating within a unity of consciousness as is my interior negation; and since we cannot avoid the structural interiority as immanence, the Other who, as refused self is presented in my consciousness, is not another Self, another negated in-itself, another subjectivity which unites its own negations, but it is another me: “The solipsist being is already in himself the absolute other which he becomes for himself with the apparition of the other.”<sup>422</sup> *A fortiori*, in such pure immanence, the possibility of being conscious of the being of the distinction between Pierre and Robot Pierre is forever lost. The reef of solipsism is there in all its efficacy. Is there an alter-na(rra)tive?

The second option is to appreciate the reciprocity as a transcendently revealed Being-with structure which can secure how the simultaneity, as felt transcendence-transcended in pure immanence, can present an eidetic difference between a real conscious Pierre and his clone-produced robot – there must be a ‘felt’ presence since a

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<sup>419</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>420</sup> (Sartre 1993, 175)

<sup>421</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 434)

<sup>422</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 62)

robot Pierre could also potentially arrest my transcendence. Even with an expanded cogito we are in pure immanence and, particularly so, because Sartre's phenomenological analysis has bracketed any kind of language in the encounter with the Other as look – the Other is left to be manifested affectively in me, in a consciousness that I am, in shame or pride or... . And since “these feelings themselves are nothing more than our way of affectively experiencing our being-for-others,”<sup>423</sup> the only way to arrive at an eidetic difference of the interior negations, which would allow the Other to be received as Other *qua* Other like me and not a robot, would be through a metaphysical being-with structure which allows an accidental for-itself to be revealed.

But if we took that road, absolute freedom without foundation will be compromised for we would be always already connected with a metaphysical bond to the Other. Even if the for-itself “must be *they* in order to deny that it is they,”<sup>424</sup> there is still a difference. Either there is a difference of denial between and among the for-itselfs that constitute the world through the realisation of their different projects (historical difference) or a difference of the thickness-es of the in-itselfs which are negated. In response to this worry, Merleau-Ponty adopts a materialist outlook and denies the primacy of the cogito which does not allow for the possibility of a presence of the other in the self. It seems that for Merleau-Ponty, “the contact of my thought with itself seals me within myself, and prevents me from ever feeling that anything eludes my grasp.... there is no opening, no ‘aspiration’ towards an Other for this self of mine, which constructs the totality of being and its own presence in the world.”<sup>425</sup> Away from the cogito as an internal negation, the intentional character of consciousness as active transcendence is a material contact, “the simultaneous contact with my own being and the world’s being”<sup>426</sup> since we all have come from the same worldly flesh. But, if consciousness in general receives such a construal, why could it not be expanded to the consciousness of the Other grounded in simultaneity of being, to a reciprocal presence as per Sartre? Are we not in danger of confronting a parallelism of individual immediate

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<sup>423</sup> (Sartre 1993, 288)

<sup>424</sup> (Ibid., 176)

<sup>425</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 434)

<sup>426</sup> (Ibid., 439)



presences for which we cannot account? Merleau-Ponty's material Kantianism, the material categories of perception, are still left unbridgeable. As Sartre initially thought,

...abandoning it [the useless and disastrous hypothesis of a transcendental concrete subject] does not help one bit to solve the question of the existence of Others. Even if outside the empirical Ego there is nothing other than the consciousness of that Ego – that is, a transcendental field without a subject – the fact remains that my affirmation of the Other demands and requires the existence beyond the world of a similar transcendental field.<sup>427</sup>

Finally, if we are always already in contact with each Other, how could we account for the transcendence as negation, as the coming back to question that contact, or that the Other could not exist for that matter? If everything were material this paper would not exist. No thing could write it – *in all senses*.

We could look for the solution in the cogito and its *cogitationes* and remember that all these descriptions have “been worked out on the level of the cogito.”<sup>428</sup> During the encounter with the Other during which I reveal myself to myself through them I do not gain any *particular* knowledge of myself. What is revealed is neither “knowledge nor category,”<sup>429</sup> only feeling subjective(ity). What is revealed *during the* encounter is nothing. I feel “uneasiness,” *entropy* as I endure the Other's presence. But this entropy, this coming back to myself, this reprise, is felt as surprise as Lacan said. But surprise requires another embodied being looking at me otherwise it would become a fright. It is here that we can distinguish between the negations. An authentic entropy is not self-motivated but motivated by an Other revealed in my feeling (of) surprise. I can never surprise myself and no object can surprise me either. Inert objects, of the causal order, can scare me, spook me, give me a fright, can cause me fear but never surprise me. The Other is about to take me as an object (*m'entreprend*) and thus surprises me (*me surprend*) and at the same time I am ashamed (*entropy*) of my self (*je me déprend de mon entreprise*). In this

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<sup>427</sup> (Sartre 1993, 235)

<sup>428</sup> (Ibid., 268)

<sup>429</sup> (Ibid., 275)

way I stand under the existence of the Other, I come to understanding them (*comprendre*), “an implicit and non-thematised comprehension.”<sup>430</sup> The object through which the Other presences can be moral shame, pride or fear during the constitution of the reflective attitude, but in the event unfolding in its ontological time it is the Other revealed in the entropy, the instant of surprise. Lévinas’s account shares the entropic movement: “The Other who provokes this ethical movement in consciousness, and who disorders the good conscience of the coinciding of the same with itself involves a surplus for which intentionality is inadequate.”<sup>431</sup> This surplus of intentionality is the surprise, awe; a we.

The proof that the Other exists as a mind is not only a proof of consciousness but a proof of consciousness as freedom revealing the self’s for-itself in-itself. But that is always from the perspective of one ‘I.’ Since the for-itself can never be in-itself and will flee to something other than it is, the wrenching away will constitute a resistance to the objectification of the Other. By resisting this in-itself the Other self becomes conscious of my freedom as resistance to being objectified by the Other’s freedom. Since only another freedom as subjectivity can objectify, I need the Other to resist them in their attempt to my being objectified by them. And since I can never be fully objectified as consciousness, the proof for the Other of my subjectivity would be *mutatis mutandis et ceteris paribus* that they experience a resistance in my attempt to flee their attempt to objectify me. I resist the Other in the(ir) process of (1) attempting to objectify (me) and (2) being objectified (by me). This is the process by which the Other as a subject is revealed to me as subjectivity in the certainty of the cogito. It is me who will resist the objectification of the Other by being presented as a subject to them. But because I will resist, I will be presenting myself as an-Other-to-them-as-subjects. Only in this way can we claim that the Other is “appearing to me within the unity of its own temporalization.”<sup>432</sup> Thus, simply, all *Is* (eyes) converge, meet in an attempt to constitute the world. But, as Sartre says, the goal for the revelation of both freedoms as reciprocity

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<sup>430</sup> (Ibid., 289)

<sup>431</sup> (Levinas 1961, 353). The event of the ‘we’ cannot take place without surprise. “The event is something which happens without the horizon – there is a horizon – but the event crosses or exceeds it” (Derrida 2009, 65)

<sup>432</sup> (Sartre 1993, 241)

is not to look for the Other. The encounter must be gratuitous. Freedoms are revealed in resisting their reciprocal objectivating processes.<sup>433</sup> Consciousness can never become an object; if it attempts it, it lives in bad faith. I need the Other to destroy their transcendence ontologically as they attempt to do the same to me. “I possess the being who has the key to my object state and since I can cause him to make proof of my freedom in a thousand different ways.”<sup>434</sup>

For Sartre, self and Other are necessary and always in conflict.<sup>435</sup> They say so, perhaps. As Iris Murdoch observes, the “lesson of *L'Être et le Néant*” would seem to be that personal relations are usually warfare, and at best represent a precarious equilibrium, buttressed as often as not by bad faith.<sup>436</sup> The Other conditions the way we are to become conscious of our freedom only by trying to destroy it. Freedom cannot be defined, only felt in a negative way, when it is threatened. And the freedom is revealed by being threatened not in its interiority but in its exterior expression as a bodily manifestation. Marcel<sup>437</sup> concludes by attributing a vociferous nihilism to Sartre. It is true that in the *Being and Nothingness* Sartre does not show if this conflict is an ontological necessity – he does mention though that the whole work is describing the eidetics of bad faith. Some commentators have tried to find solutions in his later works as to whether the conflict is a necessity and how Sartre attempts to overcome it – and even if the whole work of *Being and Nothingness* does not reveal an ontological necessity.<sup>438</sup> But, following Hans-Georg Gadamer’s<sup>439</sup> advice, let us subject the text to a different question; in Sartrean words, let us resist it ontologically: How can Sartre talk about a radical freedom, a dreadful freedom

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<sup>433</sup> As Irigaray notices, if we grant that we are transcendences in the sense of freedoms, then we cannot talk about knowing the existence of Other by sharing their freedom; “freedom is not shareable as such” (2008, 100).

<sup>434</sup> (Sartre 1993, 380)

<sup>435</sup> (Ibid., 364)

<sup>436</sup> (Murdoch 1953, 87)

<sup>437</sup> (Marcel 1970)

<sup>438</sup> Rae for instance following Zheng is trying to work out what constitutes authentic social relations in Sartre through the concept of “conversion.” This conversion is a radical decision but we are not ready yet to talk about it. We need to explore what the metaphysical feel is first.

<sup>439</sup> (Gadamer 2004)

to use Grene's<sup>440</sup> phrase, and still make a claim about an ontological structure which suggests something so platonically eternal, the universal and the necessary, the *a priori*? If we posit the idea of consciousness as absolute free motivation emerging as regulative from the Sartrean text, what kind of antinomy is this to be free and at the same time be in conflict forever?

Our hermeneutic has revealed that Sartre's dynamic phenomenology which is indeed, as Marcel says, "masterly"<sup>441</sup> reveals human reality as a desire to reveal myself through the Other. Most of the times this encounter can indeed degenerate into the various other manifestations - which in the case of the body Sartre analyses beyond a bastardised evolutionary Freudian lens. It starts with a desire and crescents into love. Desire is the ontological foundation of transcendence. If transcendence is freedom then it is revealed only through the other. As Lévinas further explored, Sartrean desire is not a need. Andrew Kelley, commenting on Lévinas writes that "on Lévinas's account if there were only one human being in existence and no others, then this single human being would not and could not experience of the wholly other. In, short, for Lévinas, the spark for there to be experience of the wholly other, comes from, as a result, of the other person."<sup>442</sup> This spark is the analogy that could fit in Sartre's account of the desire for the Other. It is not that the Other is Hell with ontological necessity. Rather, the Other could become Hell for me as I could for them. Murdoch is just: Me and Other are in a precarious equilibrium, buttressed as often as not by bad faith. But that is not an ontological necessity. We are free to create a safe equilibrium.

There is a balance required for my desire to be free and to be revealed to myself as the freedom that I am. In my desire to be free I request the Other. The Other is the catalyst for revealing my freedom by questioning it. Desire is not lack as in Hegel. Desire is not linked to need where lack dovetails as in Lacan. Desire is transcendence, a for-itself, a project to be accomplished. Desire is the desire for recognition of my being a freedom. This recognition comes negatively through an attempt to be negated by another freedom. But is this a necessary event, an ontological necessity? This is what Irigaray

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<sup>440</sup> (Grene 1948)

<sup>441</sup> (Marcel 1970, 71)

<sup>442</sup> (Kelley 2013, 35)

asked. Yes, only if we look for our own-selves, for our narcissistic survival where the Other becomes a threat and an antagonist. But that is only one regulative idea(l) of living. I can be with the Other *in a thousand different ways*. We can attempt each other, we can be with each other in creative and inspiring rhythms rather than a competitive, antagonistic, *inter-subjecting* one where one (m)eats the Other to satisfy their survival.<sup>443</sup> We can meet the Other in the surprise of creating. We can look for each other to create. This being with the Other, authentic understanding, comes to be just like making music together – as Alfred Schutz<sup>444</sup> understood Sartre.

There is still one worry however with the desire to be revealed as free. According to Sartre

It is what I have to be as having-been-it. Therefore, I can not free myself from it. At least, someone will say, I escape it for the present, I shall escape it in the future. But no. He who has once been for-others is contaminated in his being for the rest of his days even if the Other should be entirely suppressed; he will never cease to apprehend his dimension of being-for-others as a permanent possibility of his being.<sup>445</sup>

How does this contamination involve my being as existing desire? If I desire the Other to reveal me as subjectivity, I do not seek to destroy the Other but I am haunted by a desire to be revealed by the Other. If I am haunted by the Other who has revealed me, what does this haunting mean? We are not ready yet to follow this path.

### *hodological options, horizonizing*

Earlier, we came to believe that altruism is a phenomenon revealed through promising. The formula *I promise to you* led us to an investigation of the Other to whom we promise. The Other is revealed by coming to unveil our fragile *bios*. This is another promise, a silent promise coming from the presence of their existence, an existence without words. But it is our word that we give to the Other when we promise. We need to attempt another quest now. We need to question the giving of one's word, the "*donner la parole,*" or

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<sup>443</sup> (Derrida 1991b)

<sup>444</sup> (Schutz 1945); (Schutz 1951)

<sup>445</sup> (Sartre 1993, 534)

“δίδωμι λόγον” (give logos). Can existence be present without logos? Is there promising without logos to be given? If the promise is to give to the Other, what is this giving if not a gift, a gift as one’s logos?

# 6 PATHWAY THREE: PRESENCE AND EXISTENCE

*For your **eyes** only, only for you ...*

*Sheena Easton*

*When Nita was very young, I took her to her first July 4th picnic and she got scared ... she got frightened and before I knew it, she was gone, lost. A million people around me. I felt **this panic** start to rise up and before hit I suddenly could hear her. **Not her voice.***

*It was the sound that she used to make when she slept against my chest. It was a... **feeling** ....or a vibration and.... I ... **followed** it straight to her. No one believed me... I knew that it happened*

*The Wachowskis*

*That logic has already, from the earliest times, proceeded upon this sure **path** is evidenced by the fact that since Aristotle it has not required to **retrace** a single step...*

*Immanuel Kant*

*But what is the use of appealing to contradictions, if logic itself is in **question** and becomes problematic?... Thus the field is now **characterised***

*Edmund Husserl*

*We can be deluded about whether here or there something is present at hand, but **presence** at hand as such is beyond delusion*

*Martin Heidegger*

*“Can I do it like you do it?” That's what they be asking us*

*Logic*

*The one, the wise, both wants and does not want to be called Zeus*

*Heraclitus*

*Every separation is a link*

*Simone Weil*

*And who is to decide?*

*Rosi Braidotti<sup>446</sup>*

We have followed a path to where it becomes very difficult to resist Sartre’s point that by the time we reflect on something, that lived something is no more.<sup>447</sup> Reflection breaches and divides what was originally the lived phenomenon in the process of reliving it differently, revealing it in reflection, as another *biosis*. It is this thought, this movement, this *skopsis*, perhaps, which led Sartre to claim that the Other, just like the self, is never fully (re)presented in reflective consciousness, but, rather, that the Other is presencing (as) feeling (of) motivation-and-resistance; feeling traced in reflection and (re)presented as shame. Following Sartre, we said that ‘feeling’ is not to be related with sensibility, rather, it is metaphysical and unable be reduced to any particular description or materiality. It can neither become an object of thought or a thing; either indexed referentially as a predicated object of thought (ideal abstract object) or designated

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<sup>446</sup> (Easton 1981); (The Wachowskis 2016); (Kant 1929); (Husserl 1999) (Heidegger 2012); (Logic 2014); (Ηράκλειτος 1999); (Weil 2003); (Braidotti 2013)

<sup>447</sup> It is only by the means of a footnote, here in the margin, outside the linearity of the text, that we can supplement this proposition with the qualifier that this very proposition ‘*it becomes very difficult to resist,*’ will allow us to bring to affinity, to analogise and create a path through metaphysical, feel, and logos.



indexically as a determinate physical thing. In classical terms, it cannot be consumed or consummated into an *eidos*, a type or a form – neither a universal nor a particular, and definitely not a function or a process. Earlier, we attempted to describe ‘feeling’ as *entropy*. Now, we will reflect further on this inflected movement, and elaborate on its description with the aid of the concept ‘metaphysical.’ We will do this by taking the word of other philosophers according to whom *there is* no (such) thing as *metaphysical*.

Already, it seems that we have contradicted ourselves. What we will be reflecting on in this chapter, oxymoronically as this (future continuous tense) sounds – although paradoxically there can be (no) sound if one is reading these lines-signs without the aid of their lips – is the attempt to bring into materiality, insofar as these signs are material, ‘feeling’ which, following Sartre we characterised ‘metaphysical’ – transcending, going beyond the material. Through the Other, not an other world, we say we can attempt to accomplish the metaphysical. We are not projecting another world, another real, intelligible one versus the one in which we are living as the sensible, phenomenal one. But even such *logos*, which divides the world into two, decides it metaphysically. The metaphysical comes to be *logos* as decision.

The decision as *logos* given by the Other comes to be feeling metaphysical or metaphysical feel. The Other’s writing, their *logos*, is our aid to the metaphysical. The aid is in-between and beyond the material, the blank between ‘aid’ (and) ‘is;’ the *ἀϊδής*, (*aidis*), unseen and silent, beyond the *eidos* – Other philosophers presented here materially through their writing, their signs. Just like it was necessary for the student of Neoplatonic (Christian) Schools to “know the many names and views of previous philosophers”<sup>448</sup> to understand the catechesis of Plato and Aristotle, *analogously*, it is through other philosophical writings that we will feel the metaphysical – with the *logos* of the Other, *ana-logously*. Through the writings of other philosophers, then, we will attempt to penetrate the physical and feel beyond, *meta-physical*.

To penetrate the physical and go beyond it *feels* like a movement with no ledge, no standing on a firm ground, to guide the reflection on our standing. No ledge to support our thought - only existing (the) presence of the writings of other philosophers. These writings will be our guides to the metaphysical. Writings presenting the *other-wise*, or,

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<sup>448</sup> (Mejer 2006, 23)

other-*whys*, other reasons for believing that there is nothing beyond the material. In these words, being in presence amounts to the same, as being in existence. In following these different writings, we shall trace feeling metaphysical or metaphysical feel back to the fragments, the character, that is, the ‘*logos* of Heraclitus’ – in all its senses. But first, let us start with a question. Let us ask: *How do other philosophers understand and talk about the metaphysical?*

***meet-in(g)the ‘meta’ of the physical***

The metaphysical has always been related to/with *Metaphysics*. We shall start with a contemporary introduction to *Metaphysics*, presently, Michael Loux’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*.<sup>449</sup> Let us follow Loux to introduce us to metaphysics. Loux’s *Metaphysics* is (an) enjoined and enjoyed (text) in four editions. Each edition is more or less the same with the preceding and the succeeding one. Changes are overall summarized in each preface. In the first edition we read:

Metaphysics is a discipline with a long history; and over the course of that history, the discipline has been conceived in different ways. ***These different conceptions associate different methodologies and even different subject matters with the discipline***; and anyone seeking to write an introductory text on metaphysics ***must choose*** from among these different conceptions. ... ***I have chosen to follow a very old tradition (one that can be traced back to Aristotle) that interprets metaphysics as the attempt to provide an account of being qua being.*** On this conception, metaphysics is the most general of all the disciplines; ***its aim is to identify the nature and structure of all that there is.***<sup>450</sup>

The second edition adds another chapter in introducing metaphysics

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<sup>449</sup> (1998). There is much to say about this decision but let us not get ahead of ourselves.

<sup>450</sup> (Loux 1998, x)

...but the most important change is the addition of a new chapter on the debate between Realists and anti-Realists... relationship *between thought/language and the world*. The view, which can be traced back to the origins of philosophy in the Greek period, is that *there is a mind independent world correspondence which makes our beliefs/statements true*.<sup>451</sup>

The third edition “adds a chapter on causation and a chapter on the nature of time.” The fourth edition adds two chapters: one on the relation between a commonsense whole and its parts ... and one on the problem of metaphysical indeterminacy,” as well as another writer. “Both were written by Thomas Crisp.”<sup>452</sup>

In the introduction proper we read

Philosophers have disagreed about the nature of metaphysics. ... Sometimes, they *characterise* it as *the attempt to identify the first causes, in particular, God or the Unmoved Mover*; sometimes, as the very general science of being qua being.<sup>453</sup>

It is not easy *to say what metaphysics is*. If one looks to works in metaphysics, one finds quite different *characterizations* of the discipline. ... *the difficulty of identifying a unique subject matter and methodology for metaphysics* is not simply traceable to the long history of the discipline. Even in its origins, there is ambiguity about *just what metaphysics is supposed to be*.<sup>454</sup>

Yet, most philosophers *grosso modo*

*Follow the Aristotelian characterization of metaphysics as a discipline concerned with being qua being*. That *characterization* gives rise to the *attempt to identify the most general kinds or*

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<sup>451</sup> (Loux 1998, xii)

<sup>452</sup> (Ibid., xiii)

<sup>453</sup> (Ibid., 1)

<sup>454</sup> (Ibid., 2)

*categories* under which things fall and to delineate the relations that hold among those categories.<sup>455</sup>

We shall follow closely these highlighted, emphasised signs.

As Loux says, most philosophers agree that Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* is about τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν, being *qua* being. Indeed, in his *Preface to Metaphysics*, Jacques Maritain states that the “subject matter of metaphysics is *being* as such.”<sup>456</sup> Étienne Gilson agrees and, quoting W. D. Ross’s widely accepted translation, takes *Metaphysics* “as ‘a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature.’”<sup>457</sup> Heidegger, while initially going with the flow of the “being as such” or the “being of beings”<sup>458</sup> as relating to the subject matter of metaphysics, he later changed his mind and characterised τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν differently<sup>459</sup> –feeling of nothingness.

The difficulties that Loux identifies with respect to *Metaphysics* are not about transferring τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν into *being qua being* or *l'étant en tant qu'étant*. But it is in this very transference or translation that we would like to make manifest the metaphysical. The anonymous feeling of translating the one material schema into another, the feeling of passing from one language(-game) into another. Feeling lucky, we do not have to express or articulate the metaphysical with being since it writes its own history as translation, which is always already transformation and as, we shall characterise, logos. Logos as feeling metaphysical or metaphysical feeling, which writes itself as a decision and which, in turn – *entropy* – comes to be reflected as the difference of feel between the meaning, the noema of the linguistic expressions and the feel of whether or not these linguistic expressions amount to the same (‘thing’) *after* having been translated.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>455</sup> (Loux 1998, 1)

<sup>456</sup> (Maritain 1939, 17)

<sup>457</sup> (Gilson 1952, 1)

<sup>458</sup> (Heidegger 1995)

<sup>459</sup> (Heidegger 2001)

<sup>460</sup> We are not dealing with “what should be understood as the unitary meaning of these words of the three languages” (Apel 1994, 74) which would lead us to wonder whether there is “a unitary normative dimension to be presupposed in our understanding of *meaning* and *understanding*” (ibid). Our focus here is on the passing of one medium to another, the passage which allows for such meaning/understanding. Not what

Loux's difficulties, however, are difficulties of identifying 'τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν' adequately with "what metaphysics is." The "difficulty of identifying a unique subject matter and methodology." But this is not the only characterisation of metaphysics. As Loux admits "I have chosen to follow a very old tradition" or "One must choose." Metaphysics as an identification is based on following and choosing. Loux decided on one from other traditions and possible interpretations. But there is a double choice: One made by Aristotle as "characterisation" since "even in its origins, there is ambiguity about just what metaphysics is supposed to be" and one made by us (along with Loux) as "following Aristotle." This duplicity of choosing, the possibility of deciding which rests on both affirmation and negation and goes beyond it, comes to be feeling metaphysical or metaphysical feel. Loux's logos.

We shall begin with two of Loux's terms 'characterisation' and 'following.' Logos is all about characterising follows and following characterisations. Two terms: to follow and to characterise. These terms seem ambiguous precisely because we cannot immediately and/or conclusively decipher their role. Are we to take these terms literally or metaphorically, or both at the same time? To characterise is, literally, to engrave, to imprint, to inscribe, or, simply to write on or in something; as in a surface, material.<sup>461</sup> But we could also say: to characterise literally, is to engrave, to imprint, to inscribe, or, simply to write on or in something; as in a surface, material. Metaphorically, we can say that to characterise means to give an account, to make a judgment or an evaluation. The difference between the above characterises metaphysical follows. But let us ask, how did Aristotle characterise "metaphysics" as *the being qua being* if that is what we are all

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makes "it possible to play off the one language game against each other" (146) but what it is like to *play* off. This interplay between passing and passage from one language into another is what Wittgenstein called the imponderable feeling. As Oswald Hanfling (2002) observed, this is not 'what it is like' as some personal sensation or quale but that which motivates us to say for instance that today what I am feeling could be best analogised with the word blue. This feeling is also felt as the inability to fix a criterion of identifying it by repetitive representation(s). In Descartes, this feeling is written not as a soul as an immaterial object, but feeling that "peculiar effort on the part of the mind," this new effort which "shows the difference between imagination and intellection" (2006, 41).

<sup>461</sup> <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30656?redirectedFrom=characterise#eid>

following? Similarly: In what sense have we all followed what Aristotle characterised – at least those of us who follow him? And why?

Let us begin with the first question and the issue of characterisation. *Following Loux*,<sup>462</sup>

The term ‘metaphysics’ as the name of the discipline is taken from the title of one of Aristotle’s treatises. Aristotle himself never called the treatise by that name; the name was conferred by later thinkers. Aristotle *called* the discipline at work in the treatise first philosophy or theology, and the knowledge that is the aim of the discipline wisdom.<sup>463</sup>

And now the mimodrama begins – we shall come back to follow this characterisation. Nevertheless, we are on a quest with no beginning or end: From Loux we understand that Aristotle never characterised (literally) what he characterised (meaningfully) as ‘metaphysics’ but as ‘first philosophy.’ The text *Metaphysics* was never characterised *as/ἡ/qua/en tant que Metaphysics* but as first philosophy. Two questions arise from this: How did *Metaphysics* come to be? How is first philosophy characterised within the text such as to be a philosophy which is first? According to Marie Louise Gill:

The title of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (*ta meta ta phusika*) literally means “the things after the physical things.” This was not Aristotle’s own title<sup>1</sup>. In *Metaphysics* A.1 he calls the project wisdom (*sophia*) and says it is knowledge of the first causes and principles (982a1–3). Though not his own title, “*metaphysics*” is in one respect a suitable description of Aristotle’s project.<sup>464</sup>

Whether ‘suitable’ means ‘adequate,’ which would open up a discussion of criteriology as principles of adequacy, will not affect us for the moment. We decide to focus on the

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<sup>462</sup> Another instance of the metaphysical we are trying to characterise is the difference between reading and writing these two words. ‘Following’ *comes before* Loux in writing while it goes *after* him. In reading, no one is followed if Loux does not become the object of the following thus coming *after* the verb. Yet, this difference makes no difference in meaning.

<sup>463</sup> (Loux 1998, 2)

<sup>464</sup> (Gill 2006, 347)

fact that the title that Aristotle never himself characterised to characterise his work based on our characterisations was not even metaphysics but *ta meta ta phusika* – which is here characterised as meaning literally *after* the physical. Before dealing with the word “after” let us follow the footnote that Gill has inserted.

Perhaps the title is due to Andronicus of Rhodes (first century bce) or an earlier Hellenistic editor. On the tradition about the *transmission* of Aristotle’s texts, see Pellegrin, THE ARISTOTELIAN WAY, in this volume.<sup>465</sup>

Let us then defer for a moment the reading of Gill’s text and follow Pellegrin so as to understand how metaphysics, which is and is not metaphysics – unless one accepts that metaphysics amounts to the same as *ta meta ta phusika* – has been characterised (by the followers of Aristotle) but has not been characterised (by Aristotle) and yet has been the bedrock, the ledge, of all philosophy in the west as first philosophy.

Pellegrin recites a(n) (a)mazing anecdotal account of the writings of Aristotle passing through the hands of at least four people (Theophrastus, Neleus, Appelicon, Tyrranion) before

Andronicus corrected and edited the texts of Aristotle and, most important, set them in the order in which they have been transmitted to us. All later editions are thus merely reincarnations of that of Andronicus of Rhodes (see Mejer, ancient philosophy and the doxographical tradition, in this volume).<sup>466</sup>

But did he write them on a surface, characterise them literally? Jorgen Mejer<sup>467</sup> doubts this as the ancient tradition was primarily dialectic and rhetorical, such that the logographer need not necessarily have coincided with the speaker. In Paul Moraux’s extraordinarily meticulous research<sup>468</sup> we read that the logographers were scribes who were paid to write down, characterise literally, the dialogues that took place in in these

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<sup>465</sup> (Gill 2006, 347; emphasis added)

<sup>466</sup> (Pellegrin 2006, 239-240)

<sup>467</sup> (Mejer 2006)

<sup>468</sup> (Moraux 1951)

long walks of the Peripatetic School. The scribes in-scribed (the) “testaments.”<sup>469</sup> It may seem then that, according to Pellegrin:

we do not have a text that is, strictly speaking, from Aristotle’s own hand (or, more precisely, dictated by him, since the ancients did not write but rather dictated the works published under their names).<sup>470</sup>

It is reasonable then to suppose, once again, that not only “metaphysics” or “*ta meta ta phusika*” are words unknown to Aristotle but ‘all’ Aristotelian texts are “a loosely-stitched motley.”<sup>471</sup> Or, particularly for *Metaphysics*, we could say that metaphysics is a myth, a discourse which, according to Plato, is without origin, without source, without *arche*; just like the Pegasus, springing out of no single source but from a movement of insemination that is transformed into dissemination. *Metaphysics*, then, which according to one chosen tradition is a discourse about the first principles and causes of all things, contradicts itself since as a being *qua* being it does not have any one such first cause or principle itself – no identity, no unity, no categoricity.

After following these “traces,”<sup>472</sup> let us go back to Gill’s proposition that “*The title of Aristotle’s Metaphysics (ta meta ta phusika) literally means “the things after the physical things.” This was not Aristotle’s own title<sup>1</sup>. In Metaphysics A.1 he calls the project wisdom (sophia). What we now must ask is who is ‘he’? We read in some philosophers that Metaphysics deals with unity, identity, and categoricity. Insofar as we follow Pellegrin, what does it mean to talk about Aristotle as a unity, a person characterising, either by proxy or himself, any of his texts if “Andronicus corrected and edited the texts of Aristotle and, most important, set them in the order in which they have been transmitted to us”?* What exactly is unified, identified and categorised here as ‘Aristotle’ or the pronoun ‘he’? Without forgetting these questions, let us keep them in reserve and go back and follow another discernible thread for the title *Metaphysics*.<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> (Moraux 1951, 244)

<sup>470</sup> (Pellegrin 2006, 244)

<sup>471</sup> (Shields 2014, 232)

<sup>472</sup> (Moraux 1951, 245)

<sup>473</sup> Heidegger is just in saying that all we can say about Aristotle is that he was born, thought, and died – as recounted by Arendt (1978). Anything beyond that becomes speculation. Yet, the thread that we pulling



*Metaphysics* refers to those texts of Aristotle for which Andronicus found no apt name and *baptized* them as those texts which go or come after (which follow (from)?) those of the *Physics*. *After* a detour we are faced with follow-up issues. The meaning of ‘after’ can be, as Anton-Hermann Chroust mentions, a

[a] purely arbitrary designation, which owes or allegedly owes its origin to a library cataloguing reference and, hence, to a mere *accident* born out of embarrassment and *practical necessity* [and] is the supposed historical origin of the term or title ‘metaphysics.’ ... this fanciful story, which borders on the incredible, has been *accepted* by nearly every scholar without challenge.<sup>474</sup>

But then again, it could be that it was not born out of embarrassment but a decision, a *logos*:

We may suppose that Andronicus thought that this is the natural place of the *Metaphysics*, because he thought that the study of all things and of things simply in so far as they are beings, i.e. *metaphysics as characterised by Aristotle*, comes naturally after the study of changing and material things, the things with which we are directly familiar from sense perception and experience, i.e. *physics as characterised by Aristotle*.<sup>475</sup>

In Politis’s characterisation, the ‘meta/after’ “*comes naturally after the study of changing and material things*” and suggests a chronology of serial order or sequence – a logic of mathematical sequence. But this observation is not based on perception or experience strictly speaking, but on supposing and inferring based on other principles. It might as well be supposed, as other thinkers do, that the title had a more utilitarian purpose for the catechesis of this philosophy in the neo-platonic schools – *after* all, Loux characterised *metaphysics* as a discipline. “Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* is a difficult work. It is also one of

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out from this analysis is the difference of *feel*, when saying “according to x” where x is a person I talked to last night and “according to Aristotle.”

<sup>474</sup> (Chroust 1961, 602)

<sup>475</sup> (Politis 2004, 1-2)

the most dense pieces of philosophical writing.”<sup>476</sup> And, since, philosophy in these neo-platonic schools “had become mainly the study of texts by Aristotle and Plato,”<sup>477</sup> then the title might as well represent the utilitarian reason for creating and editing *Metaphysics* for discipline – a syllabus for a didactic sequence. Depending on what principle-criterion one decides to follow, depending on the arche one makes, different options will come about. Which one to choose? *After all*, following ‘Aristotle,’ it is the first principle-cause of *Metaphysics qua Metaphysics* that we are looking *after* here – just like ‘he’ instructed (*διὸ καὶ ἡμῖν τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν τὰς πρώτας αἰτίας ληπτέον*).<sup>478</sup>

Finally, Moraux’s work suggests yet another hypothesis. In his (a)mazingly “minutieuse”<sup>479</sup> intertextual analysis he feels compelled to claim that Ariston of Ceos had the original, the authentic and complete list of Aristotle’s works including his testaments. The interesting part of this is that ‘testaments,’ as we read in a footnote cited in ancient Greek, is a decided translation of a word which deviates from its customary-traditional translation (*διαθήκαι*) and is used to refer to Aristotle’s writings (inscriptions – *Ἀριστοτέλους λόγους*) and not simply to refer to a testament that a scribe could have (re)inscribed based on Aristotle’s diction. Ariston was writing only *after* one hundred years *after* the supposed (hypothesised, mortgaged, recorded) date of death of Aristotle, so Moraux’s claim that Andronicus possessed the authentic list has merit. Supposing that what Ariston had at his disposal was coming from Aristotle himself, *αὐτ-ὄν καθ’ αὐτ-όν*, Aristotle *qua* Aristotle, *Aristote en tant qu’ Aristote*, and at the same time that nothing had happened over the hundred years *after* his death, then it is reasonable to believe that, as Moraux says, *Metaphysics* can be traced directly to their creation, their beginning, the voice of Aristotle. But that temporal difference will always haunt with respect to being sure whether Ariston’s hand re-presents the whole list of Aristotle’s works rather than a re-collection of it based on a representation, or recollection, a testament of another follower.

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<sup>476</sup> (Politis 2004, 22)

<sup>477</sup> (Mejer 2006, 22)

<sup>478</sup> (1003a.21) The original ancient text is derived from the *Κάκτος Edition 1992*. We follow the standardised mode of citation. Translations of the ancient text into English are ours unless otherwise noted. For the translation, we have consulted the modern Greek Editions and various English editions in order to *decide* which one feels like a smooth passage from the Ancient to the English voice.

<sup>479</sup> (Moraux 1951, 245)

Now, let us draw some further implications from these last characterisations (*λεγόμενα* / *legomena*). Following Moraux, not only can the title and all the texts be plausibly attributed to Aristotle himself, *αὐτ-όν καθ' αὐτ-όν*, but the meaning of the title *Metaphysics* can be deciphered as well. *Let* Moraux be right, *Metaphysics* cannot be just a haphazard name, there is *logos* behind it and we can be fully justified in going back and forth to all the texts of Aristotle and trying to understand what *he* meant. *Let* Moraux be not right, or that we cannot decide whether Aristotle characterised his works; on what grounds are we to be intertextual? *Let* Moraux be right, per our decision, or as 'Aristotle' says in *Metaphysics*: *ἔστω* – letting it be. We, then, just need to find the *logos* of the title of *Metaphysics* and (de)cide the others which have come about accidentally.

Following the higher abstraction principle of metaphysics, we can say that all these suppositions, which have taken place, which place is for us now the present discussion, can be considered what 'Aristotle' has 'characterised' as *συμβεβηκότα*,<sup>480</sup> beings (*ὄντα*) happening at the same time and place with being (*οὐσία*) flowing from being, like the flow of Pegasus, but not being being (*οὐσία*). We have the accidents but we do not have the essence – from Loux: “*the unique subject matter and methodology*” of metaphysics.

According to 'Aristotle' there is another distinction that can be made to help us uncover the identity of the title of *Metaphysics*. With respect to us, all these suppositions about the title are happening at the same time, but with respect to the title '*Metaphysics*,' insofar as it is a title itself *αὐτό καθ' αὐτό*, with reference to itself, someone must have written it, inscribed it. And for inscription, a hand is required as first principle, “the most certain principle of all is that regarding which it is impossible to be mistaken”<sup>481</sup> (*βεβαιωτάτη δ' ἀρχὴ πασῶν περὶ ἣν διαψευσθῆναι ἀδύνατον*).<sup>482</sup> The 'Hand' could be the first principle of characterising unless a title can come into being in another way which would belie it. Following this principle then, how could one decide whether the hand that wrote the title was the hand of Aristotle *αὐτό καθ' αὐτό* and not that of a scribe or a faithful acolyte, a follower? One could say here that a witness could decide, a witness who was

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<sup>480</sup> '*συμβεβηκότα*' ever since the Scholastic translation has, unfortunately remained, 'accidents.'

<sup>481</sup> Ross (1912) translates '*διαψευσθῆναι*' as mistaken but it could also be 'to belie.'

<sup>482</sup> (1005b.5)

being present at the time of the inscription and could testify it – having always already decided that the witness being present was not blind or experiencing an illusion.<sup>483</sup> This decision opens up as it closes down a universe of further possibilities; without however allowing for closure of this universe, nor allowing for an indeterminate horizon. How can we bring all these possibilities to an end; who ended up characterising the title *Metaphysics*? Being itself a title, *Metaphysics* can be said in many ways but there must be one way for all, the universally objective way (*οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς μὲν ἀλλ’ ἅπαν πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν*).<sup>484</sup> For ‘Aristotle,’ the ultimate principle to guide us should be the principle of non-contradiction.

Before following this path of the ultimate principle, let us reflect for a moment. We are always in the process of characterising ‘feel’ as metaphysical by following *metaphysics* which we traced through Loux back to its source, the *arche*: ‘Aristotle.’ And we have also been following the text in the sense of miming it with respect to finding the being *qua* being with respect to its title. Just like *Metaphysics* qua *Metaphysics* as a title, so being is said in many different ways: “*οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς μὲν ἀλλ’ ἅπαν πρὸς μίαν ἀρχήν*.”<sup>485</sup> With respect to being, there seems to be another principle in the beginning: this untranslatable ‘*οὕτω*,’ which concerns the way ‘Aristotle’ decided how ‘being’ is being said or described (‘*ὄν λέγεται*’) always based on an ultimate principle. And this way could be one too many. Any which way based on how ‘Aristotle’ “collect[ed] and consider[ed] the credible views, or *endoxa* concerning his subject matter, because he th[ought] it advisable to survey the progress which has been made prior to his investigations.”<sup>486</sup> One way (*οὕτω*) to express the metaphysical feel would be to decide to characterise it as the (principle of the) decision of what constitutes the whole, the universe of all the “credible views.” That is, what makes what is being said (*λεγόμενα* / *legomena*) come to be *all* the *possible* credible perspectives, or *endoxa* concerning his

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<sup>483</sup> As Derrida writes, “witnessing substitutes narrative for perception. The witness cannot see, show, and speak at the same time, and the interest of the attestation, like that of the testament, stems from this dissociation. No authentication can show in the present what the most reliable witness sees, or rather, has seen and now keeps in memory” (1993, 104).

<sup>484</sup> (1003b.5)

<sup>485</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>486</sup> (Shields 2014, 334) Or the *endoxa* as “of “reputable opinions” (*endoxa*), that is, opinions granted by everyone, or by most people, or by the wise, or by the majority of them” (Pellegrin 2006, 234).

subject matter – and that there are no more to look for or follow. Hence, the beginning is the end: the cessation/ciding of looking for more sources of *λεγόμενα* or endoxa. Another decision (always already) silently decided or a decided decision.

In this way of viewing the metaphysical feel, what is written in the text is not only an issue of how many credible views exist, but, also, what has always already been decided as what counts as credible views. And this has implications for what counts as existence. In ‘Aristotle’s’ example about whether Socrates and Socrates-seated are two different substances/essences, feeling characterises existence as coming to *dis*, distinguish, dis-ascern one from the other; the de-cision of what (is) phenomenised ahead of us : “ἡ τῶν πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν λεγομένων, ἡ τούτων τινὸς ἀποφάσεις ἡ οὐσίας.”<sup>487</sup> Before coming to wonder whether Socrates and Socrates-seated are two or one, there is a decision about the contours of the difference of each being. ‘Being’ is a way of thinking which is a way of doing and which rests on the modality that it can be conceived as such, that we can count ‘it’ as distinct. We can risk the term punctuation here, yet again. Decision is in the old use of the term *tinct*: to dye, to imbue, to subject; putting a mark, a stop, a stigma, a stigma on the phenomenolising or the appearing, and as such, indexing it as this, ‘τόδε,’ and placing it within this spacing *τοιόνδε*.

Thus, one might think as Shields does:

What matters in the current context is that debate about this matter is a *metaphysical* debate, and not just any metaphysical debate, but one concerned with unity, being, priority, and categoricity,<sup>488</sup>

with the proviso that the metaphysical is not explained through the concept of existence prior to the *apophasis*, the decision, the punctuation of the phenomenolising. The decision comes from logos which is not what is said, the *λεγόμενων*, as discourse or reason. Logos comes to be the *apophasis* and *apophansis* at the same time-space always-already. This logos is what we are *trying* to link step by step with the concept of decision and feel, and now it does not feel we can call it a concept any more. It feels more like the in-between,

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<sup>487</sup> (1003b)

<sup>488</sup> (Shields 2014, 339)

that other which allows for the debate to take place as the in-between (Hume), the *τόδε* and *τοιόνδε* – as we said in the prologue: the in-between, the passing from *this* to *that*:

ἔκ τε δὴ τούτων [λεγόμενων] θεωροῦσι *φανερὸν* ὅτι οὐδὲν τῶν καθόλου ὑπαρχόντων οὐσία ἐστὶ, καὶ ὅτι οὐδὲν σημαίνει τῶν κοινῆ κατηγορουμένων *τόδε τι, ἀλλὰ τοιόνδε*.<sup>489</sup>

If, then, we view the matter from these *standpoints*, it is plain that no universal attribute is a substance, and this is plain also from the fact that no common predicate indicates a *'this'*, but rather a *'such'*.<sup>490</sup>

I think these *arguments* show pretty conclusively that none of the things that pertain universally is a substance. And we have also given its due weight to the fact that none of the things predicated in common picks out a *this-thing-here*, but rather *such-and-such a kind*.<sup>491</sup>

All western philosophy is encased in these lines: theory (*θεωροῦσι*), phenomenon as an object and/or evident (*θεωροῦσι φανερόν*), totality (*καθόλου*), unity (*οὐσία, τόδε τι*), existence-existents (*ὑπαρχόντων*), being/substance/essence (*οὐσία*), signification (*σημαίνει*), predication-categorisation (*κατηγορουμένων*), indexing (*ἔκ τε δὴ τούτων/τόδε τι /τοιόνδε*), criterion of being (*οὐσία τῶν κοινῆ κατηγορουμένων*). The metaphysical comes through logos as decision. A decision on what there is, literally, an act beyond the physical: *apophasis* and *apophansis*. Let us juxtapose the above with the following passages from the *Of Interpretation*:

ἔστι δὲ εἷς *λόγος* ἀποφαντικός ἢ ὁ ἐν δηλῶν ἢ ὁ *συνδέσμων* εἷς, πολλοὶ δὲ οἱ πολλὰ καὶ μὴ ἐν ἢ οἱ ἀσύνδετοι. τὸ μὲν οὖν ὄνομα καὶ τὸ ῥῆμα *φάσις ἔστω* μόνον.<sup>492</sup>

<sup>489</sup> (1039a.1; all emphases added). We here encounter an interesting concept, the phaneron (φανερὸν). In what follows, and after we have explored presence and existence we shall explore the phaneron.

<sup>490</sup> (Ross 1912, 1039a.1; 2370)

<sup>491</sup> (Lawson-Tancred 1998, 1039a.1; 180)

<sup>492</sup> (17a)

Now, those *propositions* are single which *indicate* one single fact or are one, as we said, by *conjunction*. And those propositions are many which indicate not one but many or else have their parts unconjoined.<sup>493</sup>

A single *statement-making sentence* is either one that *reveals* a single thing or one that is single in virtue of a *connective*. There are more than one if more things than one are revealed or if connectives are lacking.<sup>494</sup>

And also, the signifying passage that follows:

Ἔστι δ' ἡ μὲν ἀπλῆ ἀπόφανσις φωνῆ σημαντικὴ περὶ τοῦ εἰ ὑπάρχει τι ἢ μὴ. ὑπάρχει, ὡς οἱ χρόνοι διήρηνται· κατάφασις δέ ἐστιν ἀπόφανσις τινὸς κατὰ τινός, ἀπόφασις δέ ἐστιν ἀπόφανσις τινὸς ἀπὸ τινός.

ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔστι καὶ τὸ ὑπάρχον ἀποφαίνεσθαι ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχον καὶ τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον ὡς ὑπάρχον καὶ τὸ ὑπάρχον ὡς ὑπάρχον καὶ τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχον.<sup>495</sup>

The *simple statement* is a *significant spoken sound* about whether something does or does not hold (in one of the divisions of time). An affirmation is a statement affirming something of something, a negation is a statement denying something of something. Now it is possible to state of what does hold that it does not hold, of what does not hold that it does hold, of what does hold that it does hold and of what does not hold that it does not hold.<sup>496</sup>

And a *simple proposition*, more fully, is *a statement possessing a meaning*, affirming or denying the presence of some other thing in a subject in time past or present or future. We mean by affirmation a statement affirming one thing of another; we mean by negation a

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<sup>493</sup> (Cook 1938, 17a; 123)

<sup>494</sup> (Ackrill 1963, 17a; 46)

<sup>495</sup> (17a23)

<sup>496</sup> (Ackrill 1963, 17a23; 46)

statement denying one thing of another. As men can affirm and deny both the presence of that which is present and the presence of that which is absent.<sup>497</sup>

What we have is a logos that makes a statement, a declaration (apophantic). Every logos is apophantic: letting something be seen. The logos ranges from simple words to propositions (words connected together by a voice<sup>498</sup>). But there is also a *simple* declarative which is the signifying voice claiming something or nothing. And then apophasis is the negation or affirmation of the declarative based on some criterion. But to declare whether something exists or not in the simple apophansis there will always already have been a decision, it would only have come *after* deciding what counts as existence which will make the necessary connections so it can be that *which* the voice will declare. Here, Aristotle lavishly enjoins and enjoys the one noun *ἀπόφασις* which comes identically from two different sources: two verbs *ἀποφαίνω*, declaring, categorising, judging, predicating (*including*) and *ἀπόφημι* denying, negating (*excluding*). So, before the voice and before the apophantic logos as predication, there is another logos which opens the field for both declaring, categorising, judging, predicating and denying all of *which* are the same but not identical.<sup>499</sup> ‘This’ silent logos is a decided decision: The decision of the dictum is the dictum of the decision – the apophasis of the apophansis is the apophansis of the apophasis. And all terms lead back to existence *ὑπ-ἀρχει* which we could characterise literally as ‘under principle.’

We still have not reached our end to decide whether *Metaphysics* either as title or as determinate text belongs to Aristotle *qua* Aristotle, *ἀντ-όν καθ' ἀντ-όν*. Now, Aristotle or the text of ‘Aristotle’ tells us that there can be a principle on which we can

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<sup>497</sup> (Cook 1938, 17a23; 123)

<sup>498</sup> The voice as *phonē* is not necessarily what comes out of one’s mouth in particular. In *Cratylus*, Plato uses the voice to refer to ancient language or dialect (398b-e), or both; as tradition it is more akin to women’s idiom (418). In Orpheus’s *Argonautica*, the *phonē* is also used to describe not what one does, as in speaks, but what one hears. In this case the *phonē* is never one’s own as it is one of the sounds, one of the ways through which the other appears and, thus, it could dissimulate the logos which is supposed to represent (845-849). One can still de-cide between the Derridian translation or the Scholastic translation as a statement.

<sup>499</sup> Just like Pegasus whose source is an intercourse, not intended either before or after, and silently springs forth (*πηγάξει*).



decide about (the) being *qua* being on all levels of theoretical discourse. The ultimate principle is the principle of non-contradiction: something cannot be and not be at the same time and place. Let us quote extensively two famous (peripatetic) passages

τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ ἅμα *ὑπάρχειν* τε καὶ μὴ *ὑπάρχειν* ἀδύνατον τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό (καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα προσδιορισαίμεθ' ἄν, *ἔστω* προσδιορισμένα πρὸς *τὰς λογικὰς δυσχερείας*): αὕτη δὴ πασῶν ἐστὶ βεβαιοτάτη τῶν ἀρχῶν· ἔχει γὰρ τὸν *εἰρημένον* διορισμόν. ἀδύνατον γὰρ ὄντινοῦν ταῦτόν ὑπολαμβάνειν *εἶναι καὶ μὴ εἶναι*, καθάπερ τινὲς οἴονται λέγειν Ἡράκλειτον. οὐκ ἔστι γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον, ἅ τις λέγει, ταῦτα καὶ ὑπολαμβάνειν<sup>500</sup>

It is impossible for the same thing at the same time *both to be-in and not to be-in the same thing in the same respect*. (This will bear some *logical sharpening*, but *let that pass* for now.) Here, indeed, we have our securest of all principles, which entirely fits the standards that we have set for it. No one can believe that the same thing both *is and is-not*. *On one interpretation*, this is the point that Heraclitus was making. (What of course is not impossible is that one can say one thing and believe another.).<sup>501</sup>

It is, that the *same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject and in the same respect*; we must presuppose, to guard against *dialectical objections*, any further qualifications which might be added. This, then, is the most certain of all principles, since it answers to the definition given above. For it is impossible for anyone *to believe the same thing to be and not to be, as some think* Heraclitus says. For what a man says, he does not necessarily believe.<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> (1005b.5)

<sup>501</sup> (Lawson-Tancred 1998, 1005b5; 91)

<sup>502</sup> (Ross 1912, 1005b.5; 2271)

If we go by the book, *per scriptum*, we have to translate *ὑπάρχειν* not with being but with existence.<sup>503</sup> So, we can have something like this: this or that cannot, at the same time and place, both exist and not exist with respect to itself and according to itself. Even if we claimed some accuracy for this translation, there is yet another issue which creates difficulty. What if this *logos* occurred during a *peripatos* and Aristotle was pointing at something or holding something, referring to the perceptual domain? As we shall see later, the whole text starts with the importance of perception. The referential *αὐτό* (this/that) would have different possibilities for interpretation than the case in which ‘he’ would be using this indexical to refer to his own thought, as if holding a belief.<sup>504</sup> But is this not another way of saying whether something can exist at once in-itself and for itself or not? And this principle becomes the first science :

Ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη τις ἣ θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ’ αὐτό. αὕτη δ’ ἐστὶν οὐδεμιᾶ τῶν ἐν μέρει λεγομένων ἢ αὐτῆ· οὐδεμία γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπισκοπεῖ καθόλου περὶ τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν, ἀλλὰ μέρος αὐτοῦ τι ἀποτεμόμεναι περὶ τούτου θεωροῦσι τὸ *συμβεβηκός*, οἷον αἱ

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<sup>503</sup> Reading Edward Halper’s paper on Aristotle’s principle of non-contradiction there is immediately a question. This recalcitrant *ὑπάρχει* is at times translated as “falling under the scope” and a little bit further down as “belongs:” “It seems to me that Aristotle is using the discussion of non-contradiction in T4-8 to explain how metaphysics can include all beings... More interesting than the claim that non-contradiction holds is the claim that all beings fall under its scope *ἅπανσι γὰρ ὑπάρχει τοῖς οὓσιν* 1005a22-23)..., there is the question of what he means by the claim that the principle “belongs to all beings.” The term “belongs” (*ὑπάρχει*) regularly expresses the relation of attributes to substance” (1984, 369). Obviously, with different translations there will be different interpretations but what is important is the decision as feel conveyed here metaphorically with “It seems to me.” Another interesting translation is that of Michael V. Wedin. Our disobedient word *ὑπάρχει* takes another *peripatos* in metaphors: “It is impossible for the same thing to hold and simultaneously not to hold of the same thing and in the same respect (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ ἅμα ὑπάρχειν τε καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ἀδύνατον τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό). This passage denies that there can be something that has and does not have a given property or attribute” (2006, 108). From falling under the scope, the word by word translation always already platonically broken into its parts, to belonging, to holding, to having, discloses a vast difference. And surprisingly, with de-cision as feel there is no justification for these interpretations to follow, they just f(ol)low.

<sup>504</sup> Wedin for instance decides the latter option with no justification from the text however. “If one presses the relativist side of this option, then it is not clear that someone else could believe the same propositions that I believe” (125). If one follows this route, as Husserl did, a new science emerges: phenomenology.

μαθηματικαὶ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἀκροτάτας αἰτίας ζητοῦμεν, δῆλον ὡς φύσεώς τινος αὐτὰς *ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι καθ' αὐτήν*. εἰ οὖν καὶ οἱ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῶν *ὄντων* ζητοῦντες ταύτας τὰς ἀρχὰς ἐζήτουν, ἀνάγκη καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ ὄντος *εἶναι μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἀλλ' ἢ ὄν*· διὸ καὶ ἡμῖν τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν τὰς πρώτας αἰτίας ληπτέον.<sup>505</sup>

There is a kind of science whose remit is *being qua being* and the things pertaining to that *which is per se*. This science is not the same as any of the departmental disciplines. For none of these latter engages in this general speculation about that which is qua that which is. Rather, they delimit some section of what is and study its *accidental* features (a prime example is mathematics). We, however, are investigating principles and fundamental causes, and these *must* evidently *pertain per se* to a kind of nature. *Now the traditional search* for the elements of the things that there are is in fact the search for these very principles. So the elements, too, of that which is must pertain to it not accidentally but qua thing that is. And by the same token this inquiry also comprises the investigation of the primary causes of that which is qua that which is.<sup>506</sup>

There is a science which investigates *being as being* and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own *nature*. Now this is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences; for none of these others treats universally of being as being. They cut off a part of being and investigate *the attribute of this part*; this is what the mathematical sciences for instance do. Now since we are seeking the first principles and the highest causes, clearly there *must* be *some thing to which these belong in virtue of its own nature*. *If then those who sought* the elements of *existing* things were seeking these same principles, it is necessary that the elements must be elements of being not by accident

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<sup>505</sup> (1003a21)

<sup>506</sup> (Lawson-Tancred 1998, 1003a21; 86)

but just because it is being. Therefore it is of being as being that we also must grasp the first causes.<sup>507</sup>

There is so much going on in these peripatetic passages that we need first to delineate, adumbrate, fence off, that is, in ‘Aristotle’s’ idiom, *phrase* this logos with questions. What is the first justification of ‘Aristotle’ for this principle? The justification which in some editions comes in bracketing “(καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα προσδιορισαίμεθ’ ἄν, ἔστω προσδιωρισμένα πρὸς τὰς λογικὰς δυσχερείας)” is precisely bracketing the difficulties of logos. Ross translates this statement as “we must presuppose, to guard against dialectical objections any further qualifications which might be added.” Whatever the merits of this translation, our worry is on “*letting pass*” the imperative form of ‘to be’ (‘ἔστω’) and the sense of logos. To translate *δυσχερείας* as objections is loose; a rather abstracted way of referring to difficulties, nuisances, disgusts. Now, *λογικὰς δυσχερείας* may refer either to difficulties of reason or logical difficulties, in which case it would mean paradoxes or contradictions; or difficulties of coming into a discussion with someone, hence, dialectical difficulties as in conversational difficulties. The latter is the sense that Plato uses in *Politics*<sup>508</sup> while being annoyed by the sophists because he could not understand them – as did Aristotle with Heraclitus. We do not have to be logical to make dialectical sense. Logic or dialectics, how can we decide? What shall we *let pass*?

Back to the PNC. If this principle is not ‘to be supposed’ or not ‘supposed to be,’ **but be** the ultimate ground under which all beings are to be ruled or ruled out (*αὕτη δὴ πασῶν ἐστὶ βεβαιοτάτη τῶν ἀρχῶν*), then, to avoid any logical contradiction which could stand against it (its self-proof), the principle must be self-evident, per se, itself with respect to itself, self-respecting, in-itself, that is, *αὐτό καθ’ αὐτό*, being *qua* being or *τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό*. Is this circular? Is *Metaphysics* just an attempt to prove the apodicticity of PNC? *Metaphysics* is the first science investigating the being *qua* being and its principle must be the object of itself – at once for-itself and in-itself – apodictic, analytic, a priori?<sup>509</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> (Ross 1912, 1003a21; 2264)

<sup>508</sup> (Πλάτων, Πολιτικός 1993)

<sup>509</sup> We should cross-reference this circularity with Heidegger’s “study of first principles” whereby any “formal objection” referring to setting out first principles “are always sterile when one is considering concrete ways of investigating” (1962, 27).

Another option is to think that what is meant by *θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό* is a question about what it is for something to be, following the ‘in virtue of itself’ option. But as Politis has shown, if one takes this interpretation then Loux’s previous point that the aim of metaphysics, which he traces back to Aristotle, “*is to identify the nature and structure of all that there is*” does not follow. The issue is not to create lists of beings and ask why *these* beings are what they are and not others, but why the things that exist for us are what they are in the first place. Following this line of thought one must suppose, as did Heidegger and Politis does, that Aristotle must have thought that we have a pre-understanding of beings and based on this pre-understanding their being becomes a concern for us as a theoretical issue. This makes sense but it is dangerous for two reasons. One, because we have already decided that from the definition *θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό* we have not taken into consideration the part “and everything that exists in-itself or based on-itself” and so we are disregarding the role of existing. Two, the pre-understanding that Aristotle has in mind is based on vision, “the sense of sight” (Ross) / “sight is the sense that especially produces cognition in us and reveals” (Lawson-Tancred): “*τὸ ὄραν αἰρούμεθα ἀντὶ πάντων ὡς εἶπεῖν τῶν ἄλλων. αἴτιον δ' ὅτι μάλιστα ποιεῖ γνωρίζειν ἡμᾶς αὕτη τῶν αἰσθήσεων καὶ πολλὰς δηλοῖ διαφοράς.*”<sup>510</sup> The contours of being, what is distinct comes only from vision, that is the ultimate principle. Combining the two, the world is interpreted by/for (my) eyes only, only with and by vision.

In the peripatos of vision there comes a visible, apparent contradiction blind to the eye. Vision as *aesthesis* of knowledge is supposed by ‘Aristotle’ to characterise the strongest appetite of all people. “By nature, all men long to know. An indication is their delight in the senses. For these, quite apart from their utility, are intrinsically delightful, and that through the eyes more than the others.”<sup>511</sup> If this delight, desire, love, affection (*ἀγάπησις*) is for vision, and as it has been characterised in Plato’s *Definitions*<sup>512</sup> that “*Ἀγάπησις* (agapēsis) [is] contentment, welcoming everything” then, as Nietzsche says,

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<sup>510</sup> (980a)

<sup>511</sup> (Lawson-Tancred 1998, 980a)

<sup>512</sup> Most scholars highly doubt that this text has been characterised by Plato himself – but that does not affect us here.

we are on the verge of madness – or better, yet, we are versing madness, letting it be. The original text is “*Ἀγάπησις ἀπόδεξις παντελής.*”<sup>513</sup> The affection of vision becomes the vision of the affection, and that is the principle of knowledge; self-contentment through the vision. And then, from the absolute delight of vision to the absolute delight of logic as PNC. If vision is the grounding sense, the ultimate principle, then we need to stop and stare, verse as one *res public(a)*,<sup>514</sup> in unity, and choose: which of the two has priority, vision or logic? The logic of vision and/or the vision of logic?

But since we are being altruistic, and just as we followed Husserl in the abyss, let us follow Aristotle into the madness of PNC and apply ‘it’ (whatever ‘it’ could be) to our question of *Metaphysics*. We can characterise the following: either Aristotle characterised *Metaphysics* or he did not. Can we decide the truth value of this proposition without appealing to what is meant by characterised? Only a decision can set in motion the PNC, a decision that *lies* before it, otherwise following Heraclitus, we could characterise the following: Aristotle characterised and did not characterise *Metaphysics* without lying and without re-lying on any ultra-transcendental principle. And further, if we decide that *Metaphysics* is Aristotle’s creation, in all possible ways that this utterance could correspond to fact – in all possible ways of looking *after* the scattered matter of ‘Aristotle’ – then, what can be said that *there is* – in the language of metaphysics – in the present, is one affinity: his logos and his death. It is logos that becomes the counterpart to death; it is the logos of the other who kept Aristotle’s anamnesis by imitating what he recorded Aristotle as having said. Perfect and instructing imitation of praxis, that is, drama. And the editor of this metaphysics a mime: philosophy as knowledge is (in the language of being and metaphysics) a mimodrama.

We are *deciding* another punctuation of ‘logos’ beyond what we think as logic, either in its ancient or its modern vestiges. Logicians have followed Aristotle and have created a system of calculation of thought (logistic-syllogistic) presupposing an end based on Plato’s dialectics of good and bad and Aristotle’s ultimate PNC. But the history of logic is not the history of either of them as Robert Zaborowski showed in his question of the logic of feeling.<sup>515</sup> Aristotle’s logic is based on logismos (calculus). Logos does not

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<sup>513</sup> (0059.037.10)

<sup>514</sup> (One Republic 2007)

<sup>515</sup> (Zaborowski 2007)

need a telos other than itself as beginning and end. Logismos, what in the west we call “logic” presupposes an end as truth, the good, God, evolution and so on – some kind of eschatology or teleology. Presently, the logos we have been attempting to link to metaphysical feel or the decision is predicated on nothing in the language of Plato-Aristotelian metaphysics – that is, it is nothing. No thing obeying no principles but creating them. In the language of metaphysics it is imperative and magic: the magic of the imperative and the imperative of magic; the “void toward which and from which we speak.”<sup>516</sup> Logos allows us to create lying beyond the positive/negative or any binary dialectic: logos comes to being as *apophasis* of the *apophansis* and the *apophansis* of the *apophasis*.

Logos characterises metaphysically beyond binaries. Is it by coincidence that Kant sets out the groundwork of the moral good will with his good *character*?

Understanding, wit, judgment and the like, whatever such *talents* of mind may be called, or courage, resolution, and perseverance in one’s plans, as qualities of *temperament*, are undoubtedly good and desirable for many purposes but they can also be extremely evil and harmful if the will which is to make use of these gifts of nature, and whose distinctive constitution is therefore called *character*, is not good.<sup>517</sup>

What *we* will emphasise is the “distinctive constitution,” the character of the mind; a mind which is characterised by “Understanding, wit, judgment and *the like*,” all analogues, all of which are gifts. The will’s distinctive constitution is called character, it makes use, it characterises. The will is not itself good. Kant characterises what the will should do in order to be considered good. He analogises. He *likes*, he phrases the good as “universal ends.”<sup>518</sup> What the will needs to do in order to be good. We saw it before and now again, deontology is teleology, calculus, and logismos – not logic, but an art of logos, a technology. A particular kind of technology, a technology of the kind. The will as

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<sup>516</sup> (Foucault 1998, 89)

<sup>517</sup> (Kant 1998, 7)

<sup>518</sup> (Ibid.)

character is neither good nor bad in itself. It lays its paths, “it brings into conformity,”<sup>519</sup> it characterises. In-itself it, the will as logos, is absurd phrasing, an absurd passing, an intermediate zone (lède) with Stéphane Mallarmé.

Logos comes to being as *The Demon of Analogy* characterising itself.<sup>520</sup> Logos folds like Zeus – the passing movement from Zeus to Dias. Logos creates passages. That is why Heraclitus said *the one, the wise, both wants and does not want to be called Zeus*. Logos comes from beyond physical; it comes to being: *Eleusis*.

### *metaphysical mimodrama*

We are now in the right time and place to come back and look after a term we characterised but did not follow: mimodrama. The action (of) miming. The movement of looking *after* to taking *after*. Logos as follows from Mallarmé and Heraclitus or what amounts to us the same, comes in (the) in-between (the) two, that is, “la voix [voie] même (la première, qui indubitablement avait été l’unique).”<sup>521</sup>

The mimodrama, on which Mallarmé writes, had happened, as the “Preface by a certain Fernand Beissier”<sup>522</sup> recounts, *after* passing “un chemin tout sombre ce soir-là descendent le long de la Seine: puis, poussant une petite porte... .” But not for Mallarmé. He read it in a booklet, entitled *Pierrot Assassin de sa Femme*. A booklet that Paul Margueritte had written on his own performance as a mime which Fernand Beissier prefaced. This mimodrama is about a crime: killing a woman with no trace. Following Derrida, that on which Mallarmé writes has a(n) (a)mazingly flowing structure with changes like river currents change:

The temporal and textual structure of the “thing” (what shall we call it?) presents itself, for the time being, thus: a mimodrama “takes place,” as a gestural writing preceded by no booklet; a preface is planned and then written *after* the “event” to precede a booklet written *after the fact*,

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<sup>519</sup> (Kant 1998, 7)

<sup>520</sup> (Mallarmé 1897)

<sup>521</sup> (Ibid., 14)

<sup>522</sup> (Derrida 1981, 198)



reflecting the mimodrama rather than programming it. This Preface is replaced four years later by a Note written by the “author” himself, a sort of floating outwork.<sup>523</sup>

This structure is taking after the follow with which we have been characterising metaphysics on this white surface, this “paper,” *οἴτω*. If we re-cite Loux again,

For reasons I try to make clear in the introduction, I have chosen to follow a very old tradition (one that can be traced back to Aristotle) that interprets metaphysics as the attempt to provide an account of being qua being.<sup>524</sup>

In this phrasing, it is not only Aristotle’s metaphysics or what scattered or extended matter matters, but something that has been interpreted by many traditions including *one that can be traced back to Aristotle*. Yet, *the attempt to provide an account of being qua being* has traditionally been the (philosophical) character of Aristotle. Is there another metaphysics, one that bears not its title? For the time being, we have Loux, a writer, who writes something, *chosen to follow*, a follow of an interpretation of metaphysics, which appears not to be that of Aristotle, but can be traced back to him, but then again, is a follow, an interpretation of what ‘Aristotle’ has characterised as being *qua* being. And since “Aristotle’s characterisation” “gives rise to the attempt to identify the most general kinds or categories,” *Metaphysics* amounts to the action (of) miming Aristotle, a mimodrama of ‘Aristotle,’ this time in re(-)verse.

Just as Mallarmé writes on the operation of the Paul Marguerite as the mime, anyone’s writing on the operation of Aristotle as the philosopher of the first philosophy, looks after taking after what can and cannot be referred to, characterised as Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* – strictly speaking, no thing and/or nothing. We have seen how it is impossible to know whether the proposition “Aristotle characterised *Metaphysics*” is a re-presentation, a complete and exact translation of praxis to speech, a transfer from one system to another without (ontological) loss – especially if each proposition refers to a single unit, or a horizon of meaning. The truth of the proposition as an accurate representation, that is, a precise and exact re-presentation of something happening in the

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<sup>523</sup> (Derrida 1981, 199)

<sup>524</sup> (Loux 1998, x)

world, a platonic word-to-world relation of correspondence, cannot be decided unless one decides to punctuate the differential structure of each term all of which/witch form the proposition. If the latter is taken as a unit, an object, as something distinct, a particular, then the proposition does not re-represent, and one can go as far as saying that the proposition does not represent at all but simulates. Its operation, like that of Aristotle or Marguerite is simulation: “It is the generation of models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.”<sup>525</sup> And these models are modes, tropes, movements of “perpetual allusion” “une allusion perpétuelle sans briser la glace.”<sup>526</sup> There is no stopping, no silvering in the other surface of the glass to allow for a reflexion, a mirror-image, a re-verse of what might have happened, a pure re-presentation as transferring the presence of the past into the presence of the present. If there is no decision, there is no silvering but slivering. If there is no decision, no siding, then there is endless sliding from one to the other, a maze, an amazing representation of no thing in particular. The decision is always related to the ‘which’ and the ‘witch:’ the Magic that spells it. The connection, as we saw in Aristotle’s signifying voice which precedes it; the magic of the connection: the which/witch which commands: it is the imperative of magic and the magic of the imperative.<sup>527</sup> It is logos as decision: creating spells, spelling out, making wor(l)ds.

Let us begin again with the analogy. In the beginning there was walking, meandering, a promenade, a peripatos. The booklet that Mallarmé reads starts at the end of an accompanied and followed path, a peripatos. A path that, in his analysis of the text, Derrida decided to leave out. “C’est ici, me dit la vieille bonne qui m’accompagnait, dès que nous eûmes traversé la *cour* dont la porte à *claire-voie* s’ouvrait large et neuve sur la *berge*,”<sup>528</sup> through a path of the river Seine. Just like Aristotle’s peripatos with Plato following paths along Ilissos river to reach the Lyceum or the academy, Mallarmé’s reading of Pierrot and our reading of *Metaphysics* are traced to following, meandering, promenades – peripatoi. According to Carlo Natali:

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<sup>525</sup> (Baudrillard 1981, 2)

<sup>526</sup> (Mallarmé 1897, 187)

<sup>527</sup> (Agamben 2011)

<sup>528</sup> (Marguerite 1882; this part comes from the Preface of Fernand Beissier which is unpaginated, online version: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k715330/f1.image.langFR>).

The name *peripatos* means “promenade” or “place where one can stroll,” after dinner for example (*Eudemian Ethics* I.2, 1214b23–24; see Bonitz 1870, *s.v.* *peripatos*). .... It is not clear exactly what this *peripatos* was; it might have been a colonnade, or else a leafy walkway. The term later came to indicate the lessons of the “philosophical school,” and it is used in this sense in the passage by Dicaearchus just quoted, in which the philosopher plays on the ambiguity of the term *peripatos* and contrasts the more usual meaning with the more technical one. ... the school of Plato was indicated with the term *peripatos*. ... In his will, Lyco uses *peripatos* to describe the buildings of the school, or the school itself (Diogenes Laertius 5.70).<sup>529</sup>

A manner of walking or a place where one can stroll or a pathway to be followed. But what is there nomologically, a priori if one will, for there to be walking? What is that which could unify the promenade, the stroll, the pathway, the school, and the buildings? Peripatos is always already peri-patos, about walking. And walking needs always already a ground, a bottom, a patio, a patos, a ledge. Before (under)standing, hands or feet, there is touching a ground, ledging – can we stretch ‘ledge’ so that ledging could come after in the sense of looking after and taking after legein (*λέγειν*), logos? With no ledge there is no walking. Both the booklet of Pierrot and the letting (be) of the book of *Metaphysics* is about an ultimate ground, an ultimate principle, a ground for moving.

The book of Pierrot is about a beginning, a principle, *composé et rédigé par lui-même*,<sup>530</sup> *en tant qu’ étant*, (like) the principle of the book *Metaphysics*. Both, attempt to characterise the ultimate principle of having something in and of itself, in-itself-for-itself, just like the mime

In the beginning of this mime was neither the deed nor the word. It is prescribed ... to the Mime that he not let anything be prescribed to him but his own writing, that he not reproduce by imitation any action (*pragma*: affair, thing, act) or any speech (*logos*: word, voice,

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<sup>529</sup> (Natali 2013, 118)

<sup>530</sup> (Mallarmé 1897, 186)

discourse). The Mime ought only to write himself on the white page he is; he must *himself* inscribe *himself* through gestures and plays of facial expressions. At once page and quill, Pierrot is both passive and active, matter and form, the author, the means, and the raw material of his mimodrama. The histrion produces himself here. ...<sup>531</sup>

The mime is ultimate beginning, looking and taking after himself by himself. To backtranslate this in ancient Greek  $\delta\tilde{\nu}\ \tilde{\eta}\ \delta\tilde{\nu}\ \kappa\alpha\tilde{\iota}\ \tau\tilde{\alpha}\ \tau\tilde{\omicron}\tilde{\upsilon}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\omega}\ \upsilon\tilde{\pi}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\rho}\tilde{\chi}\tilde{\omicron}\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}\ \kappa\alpha\tilde{\theta}\tilde{\prime}\ \alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\omicron}$ . And he is producing, creating the ultimate principle in showing how a crime can be committed without contradiction, a crime, which is another being, another  $\delta\tilde{\nu}$ , to take place and time per se,  $\tau\tilde{\alpha}\ \tau\tilde{\omicron}\tilde{\upsilon}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\omega}\ \upsilon\tilde{\pi}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\rho}\tilde{\chi}\tilde{\omicron}\tilde{\nu}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}\ \kappa\alpha\tilde{\theta}\tilde{\prime}\ \alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\omicron}$ . Just like Pierrot, Aristotle, like our mime, is creating, producing a principle that would make the first philosophy possible, the PNC. Trying to turn the river into a rivet so that it grounds itself. And just as the proof of the crime has been left in suspension,<sup>532</sup> so the proof of PNC has been left in suspension. Both went for peripatos<sup>533</sup> and... *abducted* by the demon (of) analogy. All knowledge of metaphysics analogous to, according to, conformable to, following, guided by, prescribed by the imitating of the logos of Aristotle-Plato to the no ledge of being comes to an inertia. Inertia as a habit, a habitual following without logos, without *logicis* as Nietzsche characterised this metaphysics of the good logismos/calculus. A metaphysics which is not logical, not coming from *logicis*, but a *kind* (of) metaphysics or the metaphysics of the kind, of the good calculation or the calculation of one's good – idiocy/stupidity.

Yet, just as the story of Pierrot has a pre-text from which it flows or follows, or mazes, “back corridors and genealogies,”<sup>534</sup> so the story of the metaphysical character of

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<sup>531</sup> (Derrida 1981, 209)

<sup>532</sup> The audience never experiences a crime in the act of Margueritte nor has there ever been such a witnessed crime.

<sup>533</sup> ‘Going peripatos’ is an ancient Greek expression meaning going somewhere and getting lost. Just like the proof of how “the laws of logic are rules of judging which are necessarily valid” (Brentano 1969, 5), as Brentano wrote and yet, supplements with “I do not wish to claim, however, that there is now general agreement on this point. After all, if we had to wait for universal agreement, we could not even be sure of the law of contradiction” (ibid., 35).

<sup>534</sup> (Derrida 1981, 204)

the PNC has a pre-text, the logos of Heraclitus; a logos about a river which is and is not the logos of a river.

*to follow a scot river or to river a scot follow or the logos of Heraclitus*

We shall start with a recent book of Heraclitus called *Apanta* (absolutely everything),<sup>535</sup> which is a book without a single author. This materially distinct object is written – in the colloquial metaphorical sense – printed in modern Greek and comprises a prologue from Greek authors, a translation of W.K.C Guthrie's<sup>536</sup> work in modern Greek by an author other than those two of the prologue, and, finally – reading from top to bottom – an epimeton, addendum, by another author other than the previous ones. All men, though we shall go after that later. At the end of the first page is the signature-logo of the Editions, its logotype: the expression of that in virtue of which we have a unified thing with all these texts that (re)present everything available for Heraclitus.

In a book otherwise written in Greek, the sections have been annotated with Latin characters, A, B, C. It is the 'C' section that interests us – in all the possible ways that this last sentence could be read. But first let us follow its title: Mimeses. It is a section of a collection of writers who attempted to follow the logos of Heraclitus. A similar section exists in Guthrie as an Appendix and its title is "The river-statement."<sup>537</sup> Guthrie writes "The evidence that Heraclitus said (in whatever exact Greek words), 'You cannot step twice into the same river', is perhaps stronger than that for the genuineness of any other fragment."<sup>538</sup> After citing seven different sources that imitate, that is, re-cite and recite respectively, this proposition, Guthrie mentions those who claim that Heraclitus might have talked about his river differently and wonders "What is the evidence that he

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<sup>535</sup> *Απαντα*. (Ηράκλειτος 1999).

<sup>536</sup> The possible follow to the Scottish origin of Guthrie was not initially intended – ironically enough. Yet, most of this journal was never intended as such, as such. It writes itself, we sometimes edit here and there.

<sup>537</sup> (Guthrie 1962, 488)

<sup>538</sup> (Ibid.)

put it differently?”<sup>539</sup> And here another mimodrama of metaphysics begins. Do the exact words matter? What is the matter of the river dictum?

The first-century A.D. writer of a book on Homeric allegories (also called Heraclitus but otherwise unknown), after seriously misquoting fr. 62, proceeds: “And again he says: ‘*We step and do not step into the same rivers, we are and are not*’” (Heracl. Homer. Qu. Horn. 24, fr. 49 a DK: ποταμοῖς τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐμβαίνομέν τε καὶ οὐκ ἐμβαίνομεν, εἶμέν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶμεν.<sup>540</sup>

And most importantly

Since our authorities agree that this allegory stood for an essential of Heraclitus’s thought, he himself may well have stated it more than once in slightly different terms. It is certainly tempting to suppose that what Vlastos has called the ‘yes-and-no’ form is his own (cf. ‘is not willing and is willing’ in fr. 32, ‘wholes and not wholes’ in 49 fr. 10)<sup>541</sup>.

But how can we tell? Don’t we need a principle, an ultimate one? A principle that is for-itself-in-itself, writing itself, author-itative, *αὐτό καθ’ αὐτό*?

The words ‘we are and are not’ are *irrelevant* to this discussion, save as they do or do not tend to discredit the preceding sentence. *I agree* with Vlastos that, taking the verb in the full *existential* sense, they express a thoroughly Heraclitean sentiment. They have been thought to make an abrupt transition, and it is not improbable that Heraclitus’s unscholarly namesake should have thrown together two utterances which did not come together in the philosopher himself. But he had *his reason* for doing so, for they both illustrate the same Heraclitean doctrine, *that so-called natural entities or substances* have no permanent being but undergo a constant flux of change and renewal.<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> (Guthrie 1962, 489)

<sup>540</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>541</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>542</sup> (Ibid., 491)

Whether something is irrelevant or not, does not follow naturally or (nomo)logically in-itself. It is a feel Guthrie ‘has,’ his logos. Heraclitus’s logos writes itself in this ‘ $\Delta V$ ’ decisive syllogistic operation which happens in one stroke (earlier characterised as the apopha(n)sis): everything follows based on the principles one has always already *not questioned*; going with the flow of the all, the f(ol)low of rivers. There is never absolute questioning of our references; there is some, like in the way Quine interprets Heraclitus.

Quine decided to interpret, decided to not or decided not to question a particular interpretation of Heraclitus’ fragment. From the first edition of *From a Logical Point of View*<sup>543</sup> all the way to its revised editions and then to *Word and Object*<sup>544</sup> Quine never questions this translation: “You cannot bathe in the same river twice, for new waters are ever flowing in upon you.” He takes it as a logico-linguistic paradox resting on the indeterminacy of meaning of the term ‘river’ which can be solved by taking river as a materially scattered object; spread in space and time. Taking river as a process through time, the river can be split into the horizon of the follow and the water as multiplicity of molecules – as in Guthrie: *so-called natural entities or substances*. In this way, river as water as multiplicity as a class of molecules can be found a bit further down the horizon of the f(ol)low of the river as a different stage of the horizon – keeping the variable of substantial matter (natural entities) rigorously intact. In this case, and insofar as one can run faster than the flow of the river as water, that is, insofar as one can get hold of the flow of the water alone; or use “in these days of fast transportation” a metaphorical means faster than the flow of river as a particular substance as a class of molecules, then indeed, they can “bathe in the same water twice while bathing in two different rivers”<sup>545</sup> – having always already decided to exclude the dirt of the dirt and the dirt of the water; the waters are clean and pure, unsullied, virgin. But, is this not what the other translation of the fragment of Heraclitus is trying to convey, among other things? As Alec Misra points out, the first fragment forbids the possibility of interpreting Heraclitus as affirming the possibility of bathing in the same river twice.<sup>546</sup> But having appreciated that, it would

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<sup>543</sup> (W. V. Quine 1953, 65)

<sup>544</sup> (W. V. Quine 1960, 105)

<sup>545</sup> (W. V. Quine 1953, 66)

<sup>546</sup> (Misra 2005)

amount to verifying Quine's very own thoughts about the indeterminacy of translation which is the same as Heraclitus, as Nietzsche's, as Heidegger's, and as Derrida's but not identical.<sup>547</sup> Rather than charging Quine with "misquotation"<sup>548</sup> or with being a material nominalist in bad faith – since he cannot avoid theorising without making use of abstract (ideal/immaterial) objects<sup>549</sup> – we merely draw attention to Quine's 'feel,' those spaces in the text which phenomenalise his judgments of what is plausibility – what is/seems for him plausible – which comes to characterise the (w)hole of his project; carves it, literally characterises it at its joints, no less that twenty times:

The sifting of evidence would seem from recent remarks to be a strangely passive affair, apart from the effort to intercept helpful stimuli: we just try to be as sensitively responsive as possible to the ensuing interplay of chain stimulations. What conscious policy does one follow, then, when not simply passive toward this interanimation of sentences? Consciously the quest seems to be for the simplest story. Yet this supposed quality of simplicity is *more easily sensed than described*. Perhaps our vaunted sense of simplicity, or of likeliest explanation, is in many cases just *a feeling of conviction attaching to the blind resultant* of the interplay of chain stimulations in their various strengths.<sup>550</sup>

The interanimation of sentences is sensed, not described or represented. It is a blind feeling or feeling blind which cannot be designated in any of the ways Quine has explored. It can only be traced, like the dirt of the river, the stream of experience where

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<sup>547</sup> In a similar fashion Appel writes: "Thus, for example, modern semanticists like Quine or Davidson may hardly be aware of the fact that not only the thesis of the "indeterminateness of translation" but even the question of "radical translation" or "radical interpretation" had a certain equivalent in the hermeneutic tradition (e.g. Schleiermacher's supposition that even with regard to ordinary conversation, nonunderstanding rather than understanding should be considered as a matter of course)" (1994, 52).

<sup>548</sup> (Misra 2005)

<sup>549</sup> This charge comes from David Armstrong (1997) and Hilary Putman (1956).

<sup>550</sup> (W. V. Quine 1960, 17)



actual memories are mostly traces not of past sensation but of past conceptualization. We cannot rest with a running conceptualization of the unsullied stream of experience; what we need is a sully of the stream. Association of sentences is wanted not just with non-verbal stimulation, but with other sentences, if we are to exploit finished conceptualizations and not just repeat them.<sup>551</sup>

Let us follow Quine and interanimate: Sullied streams like coloured rivers with sedimentations and algae growing out of control, the overhaul of dirt which can make the river an unclear passage or a crimson tide which allows for meaning and experience, for life; sullied like the woman's flow, the period, the punctum.

Reading these passages, and, *en passant*, a passage is always already a follow, a flow, characterising without saying/telling the logos of Heraclitus: (what is saying and/or hiding comes as) signalling, just like the Oracle of Delphi. The signalling is that, not only have we been miming metaphysics, but that we have been habituated in not thinking in any way but through metaphysics – with Being.

The logos of Heraclitus, in all senses (is) dark, as (it is) exposing this habituation, this 'this,' 'th' is:' by lifting up the punctuation he reveals this first principle of Being as decisive interpretation which comes as a negation of not questioning.<sup>552</sup> Heraclitus is not obsessed with Being or beings. Heraclitus questions what Nancy calls a western architectural obsession: "nous sommes obsedes de montrer un *ceci*, et de (nous) convaincre que ce ceci, ici, *est ce qu'* on ne peut ni voir, ni toucher, ni ici, ni ailleurs."<sup>553</sup>

His question is thus unbe-coming, dis-turbing. Dispelling the dream of the wa(l)king crowds<sup>554</sup> who walk and talk of being. Heraclitus questions and makes one lose grip of the world. It is hard to hold on to being when punctuation is lifted. Aristotle

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<sup>551</sup> (W. V. Quine 1960, 9)

<sup>552</sup> This interpretation comes directly from Kostas Axelos and his *Héraclite et la Philosophie : La première saisie de l'être en devenir de la totalité*. The original text was published in French but we are here using the Greek edition as reference (Αξελός 1974).

<sup>553</sup> (Nancy 2008, 2). The thread of the (t)here is a pathway we shall follow later.

<sup>554</sup> Fragment 73: We must not act and talk like in the way sleeping people do ("οὐ δεῖ ὥσπερ καθεῦδοντας ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν· καὶ γὰρ καὶ τότε δοκοῦμεν ποεῖν καὶ λέγειν").

laments for “where punctuation is hard, as in the writings of Heraclitus. To punctuate Heraclitus is no easy task, because we often cannot tell whether a particular word belongs to what precedes or what follows it.”<sup>555</sup> One could say with Nancy that Heraclitus breaks language to the point where language touches sense, where he comes in contact with what he could say. The dark philosopher gives light, by making the concealment utter the (un)concealment in the language of Being. How the (ir)relevant comes to be, and how being(s) come(s) to be ending up in the same beginning, one’s unquestioned follow, their (non)decision – what divides has always already united; one’s decision is always already an (non)decision. It is not an issue of dialectics here as there is no possibility of negating the follow, there can never be un/dis to ‘follow.’ To *dis-* the follow is to question it. To understand, then, the logos of Heraclitus amounts to the ultimate principle: changing paths, courses, follows; creating quest(ion)s.

### *logos*

We shall start following Heidegger who quest(ion)ed all traditional interpretations of metaphysics. *Metaphysics*, following its history, Heidegger says, seems as an attempt to think being *qua* being or the Being of beings as the grounding ground onto-theologically – as we saw with Loux. But, “a specific laying of the foundation of metaphysics never arises out of nothing but out of the strength and weakness of a tradition which designates in advance its possible points of departure.”<sup>556</sup> Thus, a deconstruction is required, a going back all the way to the first texts which would help us “recover those primordial experiences in which we achieved our first ways of determining the nature of Being;”<sup>557</sup> yet forgot them along the way.<sup>558</sup> Heidegger advises us to take a turn by re-reading the first texts while trying to bracket in a way the onto-theological interpretation that was sealed with Plato-Aristotelian metaphysics and Christianity. He tries to show us how to read differently without using today’s categories in order to make sense of these first texts about Being. A different reading (as) following the signs of these fragmented texts and their interrelations could allow us to understand what has been lost through the myriad

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<sup>555</sup> From Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* G5 1476b II. Quoted from Ross (1912, 3272).

<sup>556</sup> (Heidegger 1990, 5)

<sup>557</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 310)

<sup>558</sup> (Biemel 1981)

interpretations, translations and transformations. In other words, *to adopt* a different *οὐτως*.

And in this re-reading Heidegger gives us a new interpretation whereby Parmenides is not to be thought as contrary to Heraclitus but rather as a logical/natural follow on. That is, one follows the other without one being contra-dictory to the other contrary to what has been thought so far. As Iain Thomson observes, with such an undertaking, Heidegger comes to think that metaphysics as an “ontotheological project is not historically necessary.”<sup>559</sup> Being can be cleared from categories such as the one that Guthrie used to interpret Heraclitus’s fragment – i.e *so-called natural entities or substances have no permanent being*. But this clearing of metaphysics is still a path,<sup>560</sup> even if circumferential, contour-ial, within the outer layers of the horizon of Being which is everything and nothing, out of which everything flows. The “river-bed of thoughts may shift,” says Wittgenstein, but we can “distinguish between the movement of the waters on the river-bed and the shift of the bed itself; though there is not a sharp division of the one from the other.”<sup>561</sup> And what about the banks where everything is deposited? It “consists partly of hard rock, subject to no alteration or only to an imperceptible one, partly of sand, which is one place now in another gets washed away, or deposited.”<sup>562</sup> In Heidegger, everything keeps flowing from the bank of Being. The bank of Being comes like Mallarmé’s river, *rêve* (dream) which is of undecided origin and from which everything flows. A movement of a stream of images struggling to come to a focus, like a dream, like a poetic verse. Or like Heidegger’s struggle

to bring into focus other aspects of Being’s ‘inceptive’ self-showing, not out of some antiquarian ‘nostalgia’ (*pace* Derrida), but rather in an anamnetic attempt to recover ways of understanding Being otherwise than as the ontotheological ‘ground’ of beings.<sup>563</sup>

But (what) Heidegger never quest(ion)s, at least, in these works, (is), understanding without Being. If anything he (f)allows it. And, by all means, our composition or con-

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<sup>559</sup> (Thomson 2000, 318)

<sup>560</sup> In *Contributions* Heidegger questions the range of the questioning of being not being itself.

<sup>561</sup> (Wittgenstein 1969, 15)

<sup>562</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>563</sup> (Thomson 2000, 23)

verse-ation could not have been characterised without such (f)allowing. Heidegger was the first to show how the subject-object thought that characterises western thinking is just a modality of thought and not a necessity. It permeates all western expression including western technology which enframes the world in a particular way. Is understanding possible without Being and its followers, its flows and its excretions: being, essence, presence, beingness, unity identity, horizon, PNC? Heidegger never quest(ion)s the principle and circumference of Being – hori-z-on. His “other beginning of thinking”<sup>564</sup> as enowning, is a thinking with(in) be-ing. This zigzag philosophical movement, this follow, this end of principles of Being Derrida questions in *Marges*.

In the thinking and the language of Being, the end of man has been prescribed since always, and this prescription has never done anything but modulate the equivocality of the *end*, in the play of *telos* and death. In the reading of this play, one may take the following sequence in all its senses: the end of man is the thinking *of* Being, man is the end of the thinking of Being, the end of man is the end of the thinking of Being. Man, since always, is his proper end, that is, the end of his proper. Being, since always, is its proper end, that is, the end of its proper.<sup>565</sup>

The quest of Heraclitus is a pace, a passage, a path, a peripatos to the dark outside of Being, the dark follow of Heraclitus’s river. A question of understanding without passing through Being which yet passes through beings, the ontic-ontological teleology, the natural, the physis, the physical. In this question Heraclitus is not apprehensive and gives the most shocking positive answer: yes: logos: creation.

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<sup>564</sup> (Heidegger 1989, 175)

<sup>565</sup> (Derrida 1982, 134). When Heidegger asks in *Being and Time* which point should be the point of his departure he *chooses* the being for which being is an issue, *Dasein*. And then again, “We must rather choose such a way of access and such a kind of interpretation that this entity can show itself in itself and from itself” (1962, 37). This is not coming from any givenness – there is no phenomenological reduction. There is evaluation from the very beginning. It is this evaluation that Heidegger will question later through a *kuhre* (turn), a quest(ion) to the pre-Socratics. To be fair, Heidegger may have been hesitant yet still was thinking the crossing when he was writing in *Contributions* “still they [the contributions] are not able to join the free jointure of the truth of be-ing out of be-ing *itself*” (1989, 3).

Logos has always been associated with denotation, logic as calculation, reason, and the passing from one to the other – even Derrida thinks logos with Being. It is only with Heidegger that logos is traced historically and finds an expression of care through questioning being for a being whose being is an issue. It is through logos that this being is expressed, revealing itself to itself or to Others; logos is “the letting something be seen.”<sup>566</sup> In other words, logos derives from a particular kind of being as an expression of its being. Thus, “because the function of λόγος lies in merely *letting* something be seen, in letting entities be perceived.... λόγος can signify the reason.”<sup>567</sup> Heidegger takes logos as discourse or saying in the sense that it makes manifest to another person what is being talked about. Yet, this interpretation is ledged on the unsteady “apopha(n)sis” of Aristotle that we saw earlier. The primordially of logos is the *dis-* of the course that becomes discourse. The logos of Heraclitus neither lets entities be perceived nor reasons reason, it does not unconceal; rather it conceals as Nietzsche was the first to show. It does not punctuate Being to find beings nor does it define beings to trace Being. This logos is like the Oracle, (it) signals, (it) characterises.<sup>568</sup> Logos as a verb leaves trails, characterisings. Let us follow what has been characterised as the first passage of Heraclitus:

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἐόντος αἰεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον· **γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε** ἀπίροισιν εἰκόσασιν, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, **ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῖμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει.** τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσασιν ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσασιν εὐδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται.<sup>569</sup>

Although *this logos ever exists*, men are ignorant both before they hear and after they have once heard. ***For even though all things happen in accordance with this logos***, they are like men of no experience ***when they experience words and deeds such as these, when I distinguish each thing according to its nature and explain how it is.*** Other men

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<sup>566</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 56)

<sup>567</sup> (Ibid., 57.)

<sup>568</sup> (Fragment 93)

<sup>569</sup> (Fragment 1)

are as unaware of what they do when awake as they forget what they do when asleep.<sup>570</sup>

(Miller translation)

*The Word* proves those first hearing it as numb to understanding as the ones who have not heard Yet *all things follow from the Word*. Some, blundering with what I set before you, try in vain with empty talk *to separate the essences of things* and say how each thing truly is. And all the rest make no attempt. They no more see how they behave broad waking than remember clearly what they did asleep.<sup>571</sup>

The mimodrama of Plato-Aristotelian metaphysics writes itself in these translations. Instead of translating Heraclitus as saying ‘I am a natural distinguisher, or I distinguish by nature, I decide, I confer value, I punctuate things as they come under my principles, or as they resist me in my pursuits,’ as Nietzsche and Axelos did, we have opted translations following metaphysics: distinguishing each thing according to its nature and explain how it is – being *qua* being. Instead of translating the first sentence with a different punctuation as ‘people become inconsistent/fragmented/absurd when they talk about (this) being’ we have decided to translate logos as an eternal existence or presence reflected – re-presented – in language. Naturally, then, the debate for the proper translation of the fragment would revolve around ‘logos’ either as an account, a discourse, narrative, speech; or some cosmic principle, transcendental or divine that makes all beings possible including the being of logos.

Yet, there is nothing beyond logos or just a negative theo-logy. According to Aetius, Heraclitus considered that the being (*οὐσία*) of everything that is meant to be is (the) logos which imbues the universe. This (the being) is the ethereal body (*soma*), sperm of the genesis of the universe and measurement of the predetermined periodical movement (set in direction (*Ἡράκλειτος οὐσίαν εἰμαρμένης ἀπεφαίνετο λόγον τον διά*

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<sup>570</sup> (Miller 1981, 1; 3)

<sup>571</sup> (Haxton 2001, 1; 18)

οὐσίας τοῦ πάντος διηκόντα).<sup>572</sup> St. John remixed this thought into: “In the beginning there was the Logos (word) and the Logos was with respect to God and God was the Logos; such was the logos in principle with respect to God. Through him (God or Logos) everything happened” (*EN APXH ἦν ὁ Λόγος καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν καὶ Θεός ἦν ὁ Λόγος· οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο.*<sup>573</sup>

Whereas for Heraclitus logos is related to fate, destiny (*εἰμαρμένη*) as logos which orders everything and which is the character of each person, for St. John logos is related to God who rules everything, who has destined everything by the logos of creation, the divine word. But “logos” is not Word (*λέξις*). The word is something that has always already been said, has been flown from logos and dropped, like Nietzsche’s vomit not coming from his logicis but his being. Christian Logos, with a capital L, as Word, is a sense, we can say with Heidegger, which is not derived from “the basic propositions of ancient philosophy about beings,”<sup>574</sup> on which propositions St. John was trying to characterise the Christian worldview, promising a passage to salvation. The word (*λέξις*), coming from logos, has always been translated as name, onoma, category.

But for Heraclitus, no God and no human created what we call the world. No categories are transcendental. There is only logos, decision, a limitless line which divides and unites instantly, at the same time and place, like a river, a canal, a cutting through, a C-section that gives birth. Heraclitus’s logos is both bow and lyre. It is like the canal of SueZ-SaiD, like ZeuS-DiaS, like Mallarmé’s divided world of analogy. If we re-read Mallarmé’s “The demon of analogy” and unbracket the punctuation of property, the ‘of,’ then we can come up with a passage without being and its properties: **Lède/ Monde /Lan/ Alogie.**<sup>575</sup> In this path, the metaphysical logos, in the language of metaphysics, is alogical,

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<sup>572</sup> Fragment I 28, I. (Hράκλειτος 1999, 195). See the different editions of John Burnet’s translations of logos as Mark Johnstone foot-notes how logos becomes “The Word.” (Johnstone 2014).

<sup>573</sup> (John 1/α: 1-3, 14)

<sup>574</sup> (Heidegger 2012, 23)

<sup>575</sup> **Lède/ Monde /Lan/ Alogie**, literally means, cutting the world spontaneously without particular logic: Logos. This cutting is the first step before the representation of the cutting which in the language of being is the movement, the metaphor, the transport to, the analogy: In the *Cratylus* the analogy is what comes as the differentiating element from all the beasts which can see (399c). Analogy is also a metaphor as “connecting diverse matters” (Polanyi and Prosch 1975, 76). We cannot forget either that even in the

absurd as it has no ledge but creates it. As Axelos described, (the) logos (of Heraclitus) *creates* the phenomena, *sisting* the phenomenalising, *punctuating* and *connecting* them together as the phenomena of one universe, meaning-ising, making them be(ing) and threading them into a whole, a uni-verse. Logos trans-verses; logos futures like a promise. Logos connects, con-sists speech and phenomena, phenomena and speech to create thought to rest, to be.<sup>576</sup> Logos is not the frame of mind which it reveals nor a point of view – and certainly not the expression of a causal/transcendental connection which transports itself from the outside to the inside and then back to the outside (physical cause → bodily impression → translation/metaphor → speech). Logos frames, phrases the mind. Heidegger used enframing for this phenomenon. So let us re-phrase logos with the other Heidegger’s logos:

Enframing is the gathering together that belongs to that setting-upon which sets upon man and puts him in position to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. As the one who is challenged forth in this way, man stands within the essential realm of Enframing. He can never take up a relationship to it only subsequently.<sup>577</sup>

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strongest form of causal behaviorism it is the analogy that does the work of describing a sensation: when someone “describes his pain as a stabbing, a grinding or a burning pain, though he does not necessarily think that his pain is given to him by a stiletto, a drill or an ember, still he says what sort of pain it is by likening it to the sort of pain that would be given to anyone by such an instrument” (Hanfling 2002, 193). The metaphor comes after the analogy: The Demon (of) Analogy.

<sup>576</sup> (Aξελός 1974). When Heidegger talks about the structural function of logos, the issue of con-sisting comes forth in the “apophantical signification” which means “letting something be seen in its togetherness [*Beisammen*] with something – letting it be seen *as* something” (1962, 56). Once again, the apophasis of the apophansis is the apophansis of the apophansis. These primordial elements of logos come up again in his writings as enframing. Logos is this “queer connexion,” (Wittgenstein 1953, 199) con-sisting differential elements, sounds and phenomena into words and objects. It is only in the *Introduction to Metaphysics* that Heidegger moves away from the ‘letting be seen’ to talk about the gathering gatheredness of logos.

<sup>577</sup> (Heidegger 1977, 24)



This gathering comes about as clearing and phrasing. The gathering orders. Logos cannot reveal (apophansis) before gathering together the given (apophasis). Heidegger's enframing looks and takes after Heraclitus's logos:

What is said of logos [the first fragment that we cited of Heraclitus] here corresponds exactly to the authentic meaning of the word "gathering." But just as this word denotes both 1) to gather and 2) gatheredness, logos here means the gathering gatheredness, that which originally gathers. Logos here does not mean sense, or word, or doctrine, and certainly not "the sense of a doctrine," but instead, the originally gathering gatheredness that constantly holds sway in itself.<sup>578</sup>

But it is also only through this gathered that the logos can be traced. This lapse of time, this distance, "the inscription of the inscribable,"<sup>579</sup> this *différance* implies that the logos of Being does not amount to the Being of Logos. Logos of Being (is) always already *before & after* logos. Logos always keeps word. Logos promises, and if one wills, logos commands Being and can question it, like a will to power. It is not our being that claims what (there) is, it is our logos. Logos confers being on and, as such, "that which confers value does not have value."<sup>580</sup> Call it free will, but you will have already *called* it. Beyond being there is logic(al) as silence; beyond logos... absolute silence, inexistence.

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<sup>578</sup> (Heidegger 2000, 135)

<sup>579</sup> (Derrida 1993a, 45)

<sup>580</sup> (We are here following Kelley's translation of Vladimir Jankélévitch's *First Philosophy*). It is not *par hazard* that Jankélévitch described 'this' as the metalogical. Human reality is expressed through the empirical (being) and the metaempirical (the relations of being) and the ways it can bring these together. But the power to bring these together, to con-sist them, is an 'aspect' which is always left out. Andrew Kelley writes: "[A]ccording to Jankélévitch, there is still one more "aspect" that has been left out and this is "act" or "action" (154, 155, 179, 184). The act or action is what posits or creates both the empirical and the metaempirical, and he names this the "metalogical." As such, it neither exists, nor subsists, nor has the character of "relating" or "relationing," which is the nature of intellection" (Kelley 2013, 32). Logos is pure act, logos con-sists, 'hapax.' This ἄπαξ, does not relate to anything, it creates and posits says Kelley (34) – whether or not one takes 'it,' which is another way of saying, whether one questions in this or that way, transcendently, immanently or transcendently, logos tells.

*logos of Being always already ,(before & after), logos*

Our path so far: Being itself or being in-itself, or being *qua* being are all essentially about Being *per se; per c*, ampersand Being.

In Heraclitus, this *per se, per c*, this C-section looks like a bow, an arch or a lyre and is related to life and death: “τῷ οὖν τόξῳ ὄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος.” In the language of being this fragment is usually translated as “the bow is a name for life but its work is death;”<sup>581</sup> an allegory which follows the whole Heraclitean philosophy about harmony being born out of antitheses. After all, Heraclitus says many times that out of opposite forces comes harmony: what opposes unites, and the finest attunement stems from things bearing in opposite directions (τὸ ἀντίξουν συμφέρον καὶ ἐκ τῶν διαφερόντων καλλίστην ἀρμονίαν καὶ πάντα κατ' ἔριν γίνεσθαι) and that “all things come about by difference/strife just like in the bow and the lyre” (οὐ ξυνιαῖσιν ὄκως διαφερόμενον ἑαυτῷ ὁμολογέει παλίντροπος ἀρμονίη ὄκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης). This path which connects bow, lyre, name, function, instrument, life, and death is a path that is followed by Plato in *Cratylus*.<sup>582</sup>

The *Cratylus* of Plato, like the bow of Heraclitus, displays in its very structure a παλίντροπος ἀρμονίη (backward-turning construction, DK

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<sup>581</sup> (Hράκλειτος 1999). Haxton translates it as “The living, when the dead wood of the bow springs back to life, must die” (2001, 55)

<sup>582</sup> The traditional interpretations of this text render its essence as the relation between language and thought, or language and the world, or dialectics, or whether, as the title suggests, the names that we use are correct or not with respect to the nature of things; and, how we can know. Naming only a few: “There are three major divisions, which I have called respectively, “Names as ideal instruments,” “Names as imitations and manifestations of reality,” and “Names as practical semantic tools” (Levinson 1957, 29); “It had long been known – and well before Plato’s *Cratylus* – that signs can be either given by nature or established by man” (Foucault 1989, 68); “At the end of the *Cratylus* then, as in the *Meno*, we find that some kind of prior direct acquaintance with the nature of things is a necessary condition for inquiry and discovery” (Anagnostopoulos 1973, 344). “Two theories discussed in Plato’s *Cratylus* try in different ways to describe the relationship between word and thing” (Gadamer 2004, 406). Here we are closer to Sedley’s path and the possibility of the text being an attempt to go against the Heraclitean way of thinking overall. Yet, Sedley’s attempt seems to be exhausted in the way of thinking within metaphysics, thinking within the cadre, the frame, the banks of whether being is in flux or stable – being or be-coming.

B51). The bow bears witness to its double nature in its very name: βίος [bios], the bow, the bringer of death, is also βίος, life itself (DK B 48). The man who shoots the bow in his one action brings both death and life: death to his victim, an animal sought for food or an enemy himself intent upon inflicting death, and life to himself, in the form of life-sustaining food or the defeat of a mortal enemy. In the same way, in the *Cratylus*, the position at first upheld by Socrates, that names signify by nature (φύσει), both is and is not true (for though some words signify by nature, others signify only by convention, νόμῳ).<sup>583</sup>

Following Nancy Demand, the text is all about the PNC. David Sedley, has recently explained how we can read this platonic text as Plato's thinking aloud. Plato "is thinking aloud in a very particular way: he is sorting out the relation between two major components in his own intellectual make-up. That is, at any rate, how I shall be attempting to read the dialogue."<sup>584</sup> In this way, the text is the representation of Plato's inner voice; a discourse between Plato as self and as other of the same. As tradition has it, the two major components of his intellectual make-up are the Socratic and the pre-Socratic. The pre-Socratic is mainly the philosophy of Heraclitus, which, as the article of Demand demands, we can read as the PNC. It follows that this text is literally – characterises – *Plato's coming to terms* with the PNC and/or Plato's re-versing-a-version of the philosophy of Heraclitus. The apostrophe of Plato from Heraclitus and the acceptance of the logos of Socrates, the logic of being which is the logismos of true with good and false with bad.

Neither of these last propositions are off course since "no statement about the doctrine of the *Cratylus* can be truer than its contradiction, unless it is grounded in a recognition of this primary fact."<sup>585</sup> Similarly, in Derrida's interpretation, Plato's overall attempt has been a struggle to establish the justifiability of knowledge through binaries. Derrida's focus is the *pharmakon*, a concept without (being) a concept (with a determinate horizon), and which Plato is attempting to submit, to subject, to put under the Socratic

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<sup>583</sup> (Demand 1975, 106)

<sup>584</sup> (Sedley 2003, 3)

<sup>585</sup> (Levinson 1957, 28)

principles. To put ‘it’ under the principles of true/correct/good and false/incorrect/bad.<sup>586</sup> Going further, we can risk the hypothesis that Plato’s overall aim, and in the *Cratylus* in particular, is to subject the logos of Heraclitus – in all senses – to another logos, the logic of binaries. The logos of Heraclitus as punctuation, decision, creativity, that is to say, logos which makes things (come to) be(ing) is (mis)taken as language/discourse/speech and thought so that it can be put *under the principle* of being and the essence of things.<sup>587</sup>

The logos of Heraclitus is dark and associated with fire. It makes Socrates wonder (aporia).<sup>588</sup> And in this aporia or embarrassment, Socrates-Plato always machinate, concoct,<sup>589</sup> and conspire<sup>590</sup> instead of bringing a *deus ex machina* as the tragic poets do.<sup>591</sup> They machinate differently, either by deciding not to inspect head on (*deferring*)<sup>592</sup> or by associating whatever makes them wonder with something barbaric that needs to be enslaved (*differing*)<sup>593</sup> in order to be understood (*différance*). With respect to Derrida’s language-game, Derrida’s logos, Plato presences *différance par excellence*. Further still, and following the text, we can say that the logos of Heraclitus is pressed with Being, being suppressed<sup>594</sup> by the most familiar ‘thing,’ ‘category,’ ‘concept,’ ‘way of thinking,’ ‘way of understanding,’ and, thus, repressed rather than expressed as such. Logos becomes a being which is to be manipulated in order to achieve one’s ends.<sup>595</sup> But the text (of *Cratylus*) has no end. There is no solution to this dialectical struggle. No being is reached, just like existence. No matter how much it is characterised by a piercing

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<sup>586</sup> (Derrida 1981)

<sup>587</sup> This attempt to re-categorise logos and attempting to master it through other concepts is evident as early as in Proclus’s discussion of *Cratylus* (2007).

<sup>588</sup> (409); *Cratylus* citations come from the Daedalus edition (Πλάτων 2012) using the Stephanus system; translations are ours unless otherwise noted.

<sup>589</sup> (409d)

<sup>590</sup> (413a)

<sup>591</sup> (425e)

<sup>592</sup> (417; 422d)

<sup>593</sup> (410)

<sup>594</sup> (410b)

<sup>595</sup> (385 and 408)

questioning to come to an end, the appetite of eros,<sup>596</sup> a common end does not come, each inter-locutor flows away differently in the end.

But let us look at the text from the beginning, head on. The text starts with the following: “*Βούλει οὖν καὶ Σωκράτει τῶδε ἀνακοινωσόμεθα τον λόγον.*” This is the first line of the ancient Greek text of *Cratylus* as it has been passed down to us. The very first *arche* of the text. The very beginning. Hence, we do not need any reference, it is auto-referential; it is the arch(e), the royal entrance to Socrates’ intercourse with Hermogenes and Cratylus *after* passing time with *Euthyphro*. However, in this auto-referential sentence, *logos* is usually being translated (either in modern Greek or English) as discourse or debate, or the subject of debate or discussion, or conversation. And there is one sense in which it does make sense to have such a translation. After all, “Cratylus and Hermogenes have already been engaged in heated debate.”<sup>597</sup> and in the presence of Socrates’ coming toward them from the royal stoa,<sup>598</sup> they decide to stop. We could say that the course of their exchange was exhausted (fallowed) and stopped, and another questioning of the same *logos* came to be; exchange (f)allowed an other exchange. Hermogenes asks Cratylus if he wanted to announce their *logos* to Socrates who did not yet know it; it was between them two, the two (Hermogenes and Cratylus), a discourse dis-sed in its original course. If one admits that Hermogenes and Cratylus were dialoguing, then the *logos* to be announced is a representation of the dialogue.

This *logos*, then, is the announcement of the *logos* of a spoken dialogue having just taken place and time and reached an end. How was this announcement to take place? Obviously, a complete re-presentation of the prior course of exchange was impossible – or it would be a dramatic enactment. The announcement was to be made by representing the gist, the essence of the discussion, what the discourse was about, in one sense its (collective) intentionality, its noema, its meaning. In this way, the recourse to the discourse will be by removing the accidental, non-necessary parts of the discussion and

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<sup>596</sup> (Pickstock 2011)

<sup>597</sup> (Sedley 2003, 3)

<sup>598</sup> We should not forget that one of the senses of ‘stoa’ is (underground) passage, pathway, follow, and the like.

presenting its essence<sup>599</sup> through another discourse. Interpreting logos this way is what Derrida would call Western Metaphysics, of(f) course. But even in this course of understanding we can still trace a different path by following exactly what the text demands and going to and fro<sup>600</sup> as demanded by the text.<sup>601</sup>

There is a pretext for *Cratylus*. Hermogenes whines about not understanding what Cratylus means when he says that he is not named ‘Hermogenes’ correctly. The whole text becomes an attempt to give a final solution to the problem of the correctness of names by providing an answer to the frustration of Hermogenes:

«Οὐκουν σοί γε», ἧ δ’ ὄς, «ὄνομα Ἑρμογένης; οὐδε ἄν πάντες καλῶσιν ἄνθρωποι». Καί ἐμοῦ ερωτῶντος καί προθυμουμένου εἰδέναι ὅτι ποτέ λέγει, οὔτε ἀποσαφεῖ οὐδέν εἰρωνεύεται τε πρός με, προσποιούμενός τι αὐτός ἐν ἑαυτῷ διανοεῖσθαι ὡς εἰδώς περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὃ εἰ βούλοιο σαφῶς εἰπεῖν, ποιήσειεν ἄν καί ἐμέ ὁμολογεῖν καί λέγειν ἅπερ αὐτός λέγει. Εἰ οὖν πη ἔχεις συμβαλεῖν τήν Κρατύλου μαντείαν, ἡδέως ἀν ἀκούσαιμί. μᾶλλον δέ αὐτῷ σοι ὅπη δοκεῖ [ἔχειν] περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος ἔτι ἄν ἡδίων πυθοίμην, εἴ σοι βουλομένῳ {ἔστίν}.<sup>602</sup>

Your name isn’t ‘Hermogenes,’ not even if everyone calls you by it.” Eagerly, I ask him to tell me *what he means*. He responds sarcastically and *makes nothing clear*. He pretends to possess some private knowledge which would force me to agree with him and say the very things about names that he says himself, *were he to express it in plain terms*. So, if you can somehow interpret Cratylus’ *oracular utterances*, I’d gladly listen. Though I’d really rather find out what you yourself have to say about the correctness of names, if that’s all right with you.<sup>603</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> (386e)

<sup>600</sup> (428e)

<sup>601</sup> (428)

<sup>602</sup> (383-4)

<sup>603</sup> Following C.D.C. Reeve’s translation (Plato 1997, 383-4; 102).

Even with such a translation, it becomes clear from the very beginning that the logos has never been simply about an exchange, but about understanding and about understanding the logos of Heraclitus. A logos which *makes nothing clear*, which is dark, and which does not punctuate *what he means*. Expressed in *oracular utterances*, it just signals. A logos whose force is in the end kept through (the name) Cratylus, since the Socratic influence was *resisted*: “But I assure you, Socrates, that I have already investigated them and have taken a lot of trouble over the matter, and things seem to me to be very much more as Heraclitus says they are.”<sup>604</sup>

Cratylus is naturally named; he remains a follower of Heraclitus just as his name prescribes – he holds on to the matter of Heraclitean philosophy till the end. And Hermogenes? Poor Hermogenes is not only poor in not understanding Cratylus, as he laments in the opening of the dialogue, but, also poor in making money. He is not Hermogenes as his name suggests – Hermogenes either as belonging to the genus (clan) of Hermes or as the son of riches, or as a good rhetor:

Well, the name ‘Hermes’ seems to have something to do with speech: he is an interpreter (*hermēneus*), a messenger, a thief and a deceiver in words, a wheeler-dealer—and all these activities involve the power of speech. Now, as we mentioned before, ‘*eirein*’ means ‘to use words’, and the other part of the name says—as Homer often does—‘*emēsato*’ (‘he contrived’), which means ‘to devise’. And it was out of these two words that the rule-setter established the name of the god who devised speech (*legein*) and words, since ‘*eirein*’ means the same as ‘*legein*’ (‘to speak’).<sup>605</sup>

But as messenger of the Gods, the in-between the mortals and the Gods, he attempts to understand. This attempt to understand by following the divine words without questioning them and translating them to the mortal idiom, has been adverbially another characteristic of Hermes. And so *is* our Hermogenes. His whole attempt is an attempt to understand, he has the eros, the question, to learn about what Socrates thinks and learn

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<sup>604</sup> (440d)

<sup>605</sup> (Ibid., 408)

from him – transmitting from the philosopher, the holder of truth, the in-between the divine and the mortal, to the rest of the mortals.<sup>606</sup> Despite the conventionalism that might be suggested by his name, he seems to be living it, as being prescribed and pre-scribed by it. And so does Socrates.

Socrates is the solution, the path to truth and salvation just like his name suggests. When Socrates approaches our two heroes, he does not only come toward them but to ward them off the evil of non-decision. ‘Socrates’ could be read as saving the state or holding what is right/good/true. The debate between Hermogenes and Cratylus is undecided – there are antithetical forces at play – until Socrates comes along. Socrates is coming to ward these forces off, to bring good by resolving the “heated debate.” Coming from the royal stoa, the ultimate judge, after being enlightened by Euthyphro, the rational man – the man with upright, direct phronesis – Socrates is ready to save the day.

Plato’s etymological intoxication, borrowing a term from Gadamer, is not exhausted only in the words analysed by Socrates in the text but can be found everywhere. In this intoxicated path, can we resist asking if the text can be seen as a reactive force à la Nietzsche and/or a reaction formation à la Freud,<sup>607</sup> both of which suggest Plato’s attempt to lime or better to sublime his own being (as) named? Whether or not the name of Plato was<sup>608</sup> a nickname is of no relevance here. The fact that ‘Plato’ could be traced to mean, in one way or another, fat – as in wide substance or being extended beyond an ideal average, therefore also phat(ic) – then the question whether the name is correctly imitating, re-presenting the essence of the man naturally comes to haunt the text as a spectre.<sup>609</sup> In the same way that it could be possible to take Derrida as hiding naturally

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<sup>606</sup> In *Phaedro* and *Theaetetus* the in-between is always between the mortal and the divine (truth).

<sup>607</sup> A reactive force as the text whose subject stretches as wide as the writer’s name (Plato/wide) or a reactive formation as a sublimation of the resentment of being given a name which is not the subject’s proper. (Aristocles/Plato).

<sup>608</sup> There is evidence that the original name given to Plato was ‘Aristocles’ and ‘Plato’ a nickname, but a good case is made by James A. Notopoulos (1939) for ‘Plato’ being his original name.

<sup>609</sup> Two points:

*First*, when Nietzsche goes after Plato in *The Twilight of the Idols* he does so in all sorts of ways even those suggested by the meaning of his name: Wide in expression: “It seems to me that Plato mixes up all the forms of style which makes him a first-rate decadent of style” (2005b, 225) and wide in physiognomy and



behind the hymen of his name,<sup>610</sup> behind the curtains,<sup>611</sup> might it not be that Plato is expressing his coming to be what the name to which he re-ponds pre-scribes? Might his name be true: (a) as right because he answers to it,<sup>612</sup> he is interpellated by this name, and/or (b) because it reflects/imitates his essence correctly/adequately. That he has come to be keeping the promise of his name: to be wide in all senses. *After* all, the text is per c: *Per the Correctness of Names*. Even if...

Plato wants to demonstrate that no truth (aletheia ton onton) can be attained in language—in language's claim to correctness (orthotes ton onomaton)—and that without words (aneu ton onomaton) being must be known purely from itself (auta ex heauton).<sup>613</sup>

If Plato is to be *known purely from himself*, being (Plato) *qua* being (Plato) and everything relating to this being based on the principles of this being, by Plato himself, then the name 'being wide' must necessarily be inspected, it becomes an issue – wide in the aesthetical body, wide in intellectual acumen or wide in some other sense(s) entirely. The text starts with the frustration of Hermogenes of not understanding and reacting to Cratylus. Maybe this frustration is Plato's frustration not being able to come to terms with his name – in all senses, an existential struggle.

Plato is struggling with the essence of (his) existence through (his) naming. He is trying to find ways to explore (his) essence not head on and without foreign barbaric idioms, but by under-standing it, putting it under familiar principles (the principle of

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morality "there is nothing we envy less than the moral cow and the fat happiness of good conscience" (ibid.,173). The name is linked to personality.

*Second*, this link, this to-and-fro relationship between the name and the personality, this shadow cast between them, is something that carries over from the deep ends of time as Ernst Cassirer shows. Even today, the name as a legal, medical, forensic, and so on archive, is what constitutes the personality, what characterises the person. "Word [name] is of crucial importance in the development of human mentality" (Cassirer 1946, 62). The name is what holds the matter together, simply put: *Cratylus*.

<sup>610</sup> (Derrida 1985)

<sup>611</sup> In *Memoirs of the Blind*, one of Derrida's first names comes to haunt him in his dreams: "If I have recently discovered this double dolor or mourning of Eli (to be distinguished, if only by a bit, from Elijah, or Eliah, which turns out to be one of my first names), I must have read and then forgotten..." (1993a, 23).

<sup>612</sup> (Gadamer 2004, 406)

<sup>613</sup> (Ibid., 407)

Being) and through a dialogue – a dialogue with himself as proposed by Sedley. But this creates its own frustration. We will see shortly, after the detour of the proper names, that Plato is suggesting that truth comes *after* a name has been given and used to imitate the essence of a thing. The correctness of the proper names that Plato-represented-by-Socrates/Socrates-represented-by-Plato examine first are all of heroes-past, dead people. Their names are examined *after* their death. Plato will never be able to know the correctness of his name as long as he lives. For Socrates he knows – he held the true, the correct. This knowledge is always for Others. And this anxiety writes itself in the text.

Even if we take after his definition that logos is made up of names, thus discourse, the logos of the proper names of the living is in-between life and death, its truth cannot be judged until their death. Just like Aeschylus advises not to judge someone happy until you see both their death and their way of dying, one's proper name cannot properly be judged as correct until their death.<sup>614</sup> But even if we conjecture that proper names of dead heroes represent them adequately after their death, still, it could have been a contingent matter. Whoever baptized them (excepting the case of Gods) could have given them names either by the custom of assigning the name of the progeny, or by a wish<sup>615</sup> to become what the name sug/gests – a gest to be saturated by the phenomena the name calls for or seeks after. The name could be a commandment, a magical incantation, a spell or a curse. To know one's name, to spell (out) one's name is to cast a spell. In either case, proper naming becomes a baptism, a rigid designation, following one in all possible worlds, like a curse, a spell. Baptism, in the ancient voice, means to disable by flooding, or by fluid elements. The baptized is always followed, always characterised by a name no matter which world. The paths of name and essence merge. They have one flow – “Name and personality merge.”<sup>616</sup>

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<sup>614</sup> The name, as Derrida has shown, opens up the field of predication based on one's interactions with the Other. Death signals the cessation of such activities. As such, the only predication which can be added to the proper name for the dead person is that X is dead, which is true in all senses – true of the person (being qua being) and true for us as the opposite of what the person was before, alive. One could even say that existential philosophy is metaphysics proper – understanding (of) death.

<sup>615</sup> (397b)

<sup>616</sup> (Cassirer 1946, xx)

The magic of the proper name cuts/decides being both ways and cannot unshackle Plato from Heraclitus logos. If the baptism had been unintentional and the name ends up representing adequately the person after their death, then the logos of Heraclitus as destiny, the logos which makes the essence of beings would turn out to be true – as name, onoma. If not, if the baptism happened under the principle of knowing the essence of things ahead of time, then it cannot be from a mortal who is bound by death – as Cratylus suggests. It has to be someone who can have epistemic access before and after the life-death course of the person. Once again, the logos of Heraclitus comes true: only logos as tradition overcomes death or as a divine logos. Knowledge as episteme is following the logos of the one (human tradition or divine). Therefore, the existential question about the proper names of the living or the dead cannot be explored; it has to be deferred.

In my view, we must leave such names aside. We are most likely to find correctly given names among those concerned with the things that by nature always are, since it is proper for their names to be given with the greatest care, and some may even be the work of a more than human power.<sup>617</sup>

And these things that by nature always are, are the traditional material or ideal objects or things, *eide*/kinds.

The very first sentence of the text did not allow us to follow the traditional interpretations of the text. Now, we can make a U-turn (anastrophe), like a poetic lyre, and go back to follow the scholastic way head on. In this way, Plato begins with a classification: the name, being made by phonetic units, is part of the logos as language (discourse) which in turn is part of praxis of relating to things. The relations come to be based on the essence of the relata. Just as cutting iron with one's hand will never happen because the essences of these things do not allow it, analogously, so it is/(must be) the case with names:<sup>618</sup> there must be a proper name that allows for the proper distinction of things according to their essences. Besides the spurious analogy that grounds the whole discussion (between two things and logos versus logos and thing), it is all about truth as correctness; and, correctness being a good representation, and, a good representation

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<sup>617</sup> (Plato 1997, 397b)

<sup>618</sup> (387)

being conditioned on that difference which (f)allows the thing as sensible distinct presentation (presence) to be the name as intelligible distinct re-presentation (presence in the mind resembling adequately the original presence, *eidos*). In this schema, *logos* is reduced as the medium that allows the movement between the two worlds. The analogy of ‘cutting’ is not accidental. Cutting is all about making boundaries, differentiating one thing from another – categorising is literally cut-ego-rising – the speaker cuts Being and makes words/things rise. The cutting is associated with identity and unity. If names are to be naturally or conventionally given to things, these ‘things’ must be numerically distinct either naturally or conventionally – or be understood as distinct, *eidos*. Naming is all about boundaries, horizons; the name de-fines Being into being. It is all about what makes the sensible ‘the’ be what it is – “So just as a shuttle is a tool for dividing warp and woof, a name is a tool for giving instruction, that is to say, for dividing being.”<sup>619</sup> It is all about cutting and manipulability, calculus.

So how do names come about? The first candidate is the *nomothetis*; name-giver as lawgiver or legislator. Those who set up the language must have the expertise to do so with respect to knowing the things in the world based on their essence – in-themselves - being with respect to their own essence – “καθ’ αὐτά προς τήν αὐτῶν οὐσίαν.”<sup>620</sup> Naming then as representing is, of course, imitating adequately the essence of things.<sup>621</sup> The most interesting discussion now springs about what comes first: Does the *nomothetis* need to have prior knowledge of the thing prior to naming, or does naming itself represents at the

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<sup>619</sup> (Plato 1997, 388b; 107). This translation has omitted the word “fabric/textile” (e-pha-sma) (ὕφασματος). The text goes: “ὄνομα ἄρα διδασκαλικόν τί ἐστὶν ὄργανον καὶ διακριτικόν τῆς οὐσίας ὡσπερ κερκὶς ὑφάσματος.” On the one hand, this word, ‘textile,’ is, as Derrida has shown, complicitous with the *eidos* and the phenomenon and what makes the phenomenolising the phenomenon. One of Derrida’s critiques of phenomenology as the science of the ultimate principle demonstrating and defining the structures of the constitution of the object or the thing is this complicity with platonic presence, visual, sensible presence versus intelligible ideal presence. On the other hand, it eliminates the *analogy* of being (like) a text-ile.

<sup>620</sup> (386e.) “Therefore, Hermogenes, from all men, not all can give a name but some name-maker, creator of names. And from these creators the rarest defined by men is the legislator (Ὀὐκ ἄρα παντός ἀνδρός, ὦ Ἐρμόγενης, ὄνομα θέσθαι [ἐστίν] ἀλλὰ τίνος ὀνοματοργου· οὗτος δ’ ἐστίν, ὡς εἰκεν, ὁ νομοθέτης, ὃς δὴ τῶν δημιουργῶν σπανιότατος ἐν ἀνθρώποις γίγνεται)” (389a).

<sup>621</sup> (423c.)

same time this knowledge of the name giver with respect to the thing they name? This is an issue of the economy of the *after*.

In order for language to represent, it must take after, imitate adequately the essence of things. In all senses, language is set up *after* that which is to re-present. But this ‘after’ as resemblance can only take place *after* the time something has reached its end, that is, it has already ‘be-en/being’ decided as being an entity<sup>622</sup> – a distinct being; even if that distinctness is horizontal as an object in the mind. It is this spatio-temporal discrepancy which allows the name to be subjected to the modalities of truth and false – to verify the quality of the resemblance, or for the legislator to know which name is best, proper. The judgment for something being true or false with respect to a name requires a constant to-and-fro which must be stopped at some time and place for the judgement to take place and time; and this cessation requires *stasis*. The truth or falsity comes *after* the event.

We can borrow Alain Badiou’s apt expression that “truth is always-post eventual,”<sup>623</sup> and here in the case of *Cratylus*. Truth comes *after* a rupture or syncope of discoursing. When Cratylus, having being silently present in the margin, first engages in dialogue with Socrates, the previous discussion of Socrates with Hermogenes is interrupted. The truth of what was said in the discussion cannot be checked until the discussion is stopped. In order to check the truth of what had just been said, Socrates says, they should reverse and re-verse by going back to those things that they had been discussing thus far. They should follow, he says, the advice of the poet, that is, to look back and forth at the same time<sup>624</sup> - “backwards and forwards simultaneously,” though this time the truth will be checked with the logos of the margin, the silent Other presence. Truth comes only with an Other. Unless the names are given by a divine being, and necessarily correct, both being and its name are coming from the same creator, naming can always be held in check by the philosopher dialectician who necessarily comes *after* the naming process. ‘After’ is here translated as following, that is, re-tracing the legislator’s steps in/of the naming process.

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<sup>622</sup> (438)

<sup>623</sup> (Badiou 1991, 26)

<sup>624</sup> (428e)

Let us exemplify retracing the legislator's naming process with an example. Let us take 'Hercules entered the Parthenon.' This would be true iff (one – even one self-same – saw) Hercules climbing up the acropolis and getting inside the temple Parthenon. But, when we, who come *after* the legislator, use the names he has set, ('Hercules', 'entered', 'the', 'Parthenon') to represent some being in the world, truth or falsity is not immediately dependent on our re-presenting the things, but, first and foremost, dependent on our correctly using these names. Truth as platonic correspondence to things comes, as Nietzsche spotted, through intermediaries. There is never one correspondence at play in correspondence theories of truth. There is correspondence about whether each word has been used correctly by the legislator in order to refer to the thing (x); but, for us, there is also correspondence about whether we properly follow the principles of usage (y). In this way, when we use words which are supposed to re-present things, truth is following the path of the legislator who follows the path which reveals the nature of things – if we hold on to the principle, the logos (“κατά γάρ τόν αὐτόν λόγον”)<sup>625</sup> that a *nomothetis* has given the names, and properly so. Whatever the case, there can be no (nomo)logical entailment from x to y or y to x because we could represent as the *nomethitis* would by chance or represent correctly by chance by not following the *nomothetis*.

But now an *aporia* comes forth. As Cratylus maintains, flowing with this principle, this logos, keeping this variable fixed, 'that the legislator with his names has re-presented things adequately with respect to their essence,' it follows that, to know things, is exhausted in following the associations of the names made by the legislator – they will naturally reflect the things that there are (and what they are) essentially.<sup>626</sup> In this case truth is the logos of the one, in this case the logos of *nomothetis*, the one who first defined – as Heraclitus maintained.<sup>627</sup> It is the economy of the logos of the one, the *archon*, the lord. Naming comes *after* him.

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<sup>625</sup> (393d)

<sup>626</sup> (435) The logos which is held onto vehemently from Plato is that “copy and the original constitute the metaphysical model for everything with the noetic sphere” (Gadamer 2004, 409). Visual versus intelligible resemblance, not analogical resemblance.

<sup>627</sup> (Fragment 33)

If, however, we doubt that the legislator did this properly, then we cannot trust the names they have assigned to things. We do not know the first principle (the logos) on which they based the revelation of the essence of things. And the latter, if not correct, will affect all the rest of the naming.<sup>628</sup> They are not divine but human; they are like painters<sup>629</sup> and lyre producers,<sup>630</sup> the names express their own thoughts<sup>631</sup> and ironically they have been nominated, named, ordained, prescribed by us as being the rarest in kind in their ability to name! (“It follows that it isn’t every man who can give names, Hermogenes, but only a namemaker, and he, it seems, is a rule-setter—the kind of craftsman most rarely found[ed]<sup>632</sup> among human beings”). In either case, the product of the *nomothetis* need not necessarily be judged as good by themselves but by those for whom it is aimed. Just as the represented person will judge the adequacy of the represented in the representation,<sup>633</sup> the lyre player will judge the good functionality of the lyre, so the dialectician, who questions and responds<sup>634</sup> will judge the adequacy of the name-giving process.

The demon of analogy comes back to haunt the discussion and put it in an endless recurrence of the same: a vicious regress. A dream without a wake, without waking up as we saw earlier. An incessant cycle manifested in the process of holding the *nomothetis* in check. If we are to check the validity of the name giving process we either need to retrace the steps of the *nomothetis* from the beginning or we need to characterise things anew<sup>635</sup> from the beginning, based on how we perceive things, and then compare. And

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<sup>628</sup> (436d)

<sup>629</sup> (429)

<sup>630</sup> (390)

<sup>631</sup> (418a)

<sup>632</sup> (Plato 1997, 389a). The original ancient text plays on the equivocation on the difference between finding and founding in the past tense. In most translations, this play is lost. Nevertheless, if one questions about the use of the passive ‘found’ they will most likely end up in our discussion of intentionality with Husserl – the oscillation between found and founded, founded and found.

<sup>633</sup> The mannequin of the painter will judge whether the imitation of them is good, the Other, the represented, not the painter in a narcissistic jouissance.

<sup>634</sup> (390)

<sup>635</sup> (436)

now another aporia for both cases: Where should we begin? From where does the imitator start the imitation which is a way of cutting the sensible, of dividing it, making it distinct?<sup>636</sup> “But how are we to divide off the ones with which the imitator begins his imitation?”<sup>637</sup> We start from sensibility, the aesthesis. But now, how can we perceive the *essence of the distinctness* of things without their names (or other names) since the thing cannot be learnt without being distinct, a distinctness which is supposed to be represented in the unity of the word or the unity of each of its parts and their inter-relations/inter-animations – whether through natural or conventional resemblance?<sup>638</sup> Plato’s answer: with the principle (logos) of the body. Indexing and pointing with our hands and body just like the speechless: “If we hadn’t a voice or a tongue, and wanted to express things to one another, wouldn’t we try to make signs by moving our hands, head, and the rest of our body, just as dumb<sup>639</sup> people do at present?”<sup>640</sup> The dumb may lack reason and speech but not logos insofar as they attempt to signal to us what could go under the principle of their hands or their body, their under-taking, their essay, their (non Aristotelian) logical argument.

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<sup>636</sup> One cannot avoid making the connection here with ¶2 in early Heidegger when he asks, “From which entities is the disclosure of Being to take its departure?” (Heidegger 1962, 26). At the same time the text reveals the later Wittgenstein aporia: “One has already to know (or be able to do) something in order to be capable of asking a thing’s name. But what does one have to know?” (Wittgenstein 1953, 15).

<sup>637</sup> (Plato 1997, 424a)

<sup>638</sup> (438). Once again, epistemology goes to-and-fro with, passes into, ontology. Either by checking whether the nomothetis correctly names things according to their essence or by knowing how to correctly re-name things according to their essence brings us back to the tacit knowledge that one has to have in order to ask or investigate naming-theorising. Again with later Wittgenstein “We may say: only someone who already knows how to do something with it can significantly ask a name. And we can imagine the person who is asked replying: “Settle the name yourself”—and now the one who asked would have to manage everything for himself” (Ibid.).

<sup>639</sup> The word in the ancient text is *ἄφρονοι* which is either without voice or inexperienced, without reason, but not without logos as it seems since they can point to and index – they are intentional and intentionally extensional.

<sup>640</sup> The question will later on be taken by Hegel and the concept of *Aufhebung* as Derrida has shown – another mimodrama we cannot presently attend.



It must be clear by now what is happening in the *Cratylus*. Logos is being debased as language as a mere medium of re-presenting thought which becomes independent of it and subjected to it. The ancient multiplicity of logos is resisted. An attempt is being made to make understanding/thinking – all the variations of the noetic – distinct from language and speech; a Heideggerian acquaintance, participation, *methexis* with Being through beings and without the *is*.<sup>641</sup> As with the tradition of western metaphysics, so for father Plato, this understanding starts only through the aesthesis, sensibility. Hence the new aporia: how will the sensible affection, this acquaintance be lifted up and translated into the domain of language? Even if there is “prior direct acquaintance”<sup>642</sup> with things for Plato, there is still the issue of the affection coming to be transformed, expressed, re-presented translated linguistically. The logos of Heraclitus once again, the con-sisting of sensibility to the declarative voice comes to haunt the process of naming. Naming, *λέγειν*, that is, giving a word, is logos like is a promise, a command, an imperative – a power to in-stitute.

In our reading, Plato’s struggle with his new method of understanding, Being and dialectics, does not give any definite answer. Some philosophers argue for this or that intention of Plato by being inter-textual, by interanimating the platonic texts to express a thought about what he must have been ultimately doing in the text (what his wide genius intended). If elements, phonemes, morphemes, words and discourse can never be found if they constitute pure re-presentation or pure convention, then, the only alternative is to make any letter any sound, any word a sign:

Thus, in all discussion of language ever since, the concept of the image (eikon) has been replaced by that of the sign (semeion or semainon). This is not just a terminological change; it expresses an epoch-making decision about thought concerning language. That the true being of things is to be investigated “without names” [=the Aristotelian being of

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<sup>641</sup> Heidegger’s attempt is to illuminate this pre-noeticolinguistic acquaintance with Being. Presence is not a participation with some ideal forms but, still, an attunement with the world; this presence in the world requires some kind of *methexis* to be understood – if it is not a concept, or a category, or any kind of affectivity.

<sup>642</sup> (Anagnostopoulos 1973, 17)

*beings]* means that there is no access to truth in the proper being of words as such.<sup>643</sup>

Once again, whether recognizing the contours of (material or ideal) beings, their unity as distinct existents, or taking a particular direction for a course of interpretation, there is logos always already before and after.

And this has always been in virtue of an Other. Looking at the architectonics of the text, it is the Other locutor who is not yet an inter-locutor who must come into the fore to help with the truth. It is all about the arche-tectonics where representation passes into its other, the enactment. If we were to enact the dialogue, the silent aid of the Other *comes to be* the virtue with whom re-tracing the steps of the naming process can *become* possible. In the beginning of the dialogue of Hermogenes and Cratylus, it is Socrates who comes to the fore when their dialogue is about to stagnate, that heated debate. A discourse running idle with respect to an end is diss-ed to become another, a new discourse running another course. In this course, the logos of Cratylus is kept in silence, in the margin, until he is called out to participate in the discussion with Hermogenes and Socrates, at the moment when their discussion is becoming moribund. When Socrates's thought is exhausted, when his logos is about to falter,<sup>644</sup> it is the silent logos of the Other, the alter that re-fuels. The transcendently empirical principle which allows a re-newel, a new centre of the structure for the discussion to take place and time, is the Other, the logos of the Other. A pressing situation becomes ex-pressed through the logos of the Other, their very existence. With no ledge from the Other, without passing through the Other, there is no surpassing to knowledge. It is the logos of the Other *in virtū* which/witch re-vamps, re-phenomenalises,<sup>645</sup> re-presents itself and allows for being to be. Being comes to be from more than one. Otherwise, like “most of our wise men nowadays get so dizzy going around and around in their search for the nature of the things that are, that the things themselves appear to them to be turning around and moving every which way.”<sup>646</sup> An ecomony of the same, like a pirouette or Pierrot the mime, or like a dream:

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<sup>643</sup> (Gadamer 2004, 145)

<sup>644</sup> (427)

<sup>645</sup> (*ἀναθεασαίμην*, 411)

<sup>646</sup> (Plato 1997, 411)

fallen into a kind of vortex and are whirled around in it, dragging us with them. Consider, Cratylus, a question that I for my part often dream about: Are we or aren't we to say that there is a beautiful itself, and a good itself, and the same for each one of the things that are?<sup>647</sup>

Without another to pull us out of this flux, the logos of the other to characterise a wake, to awake us, there is no knowledge. The arrow does not hit its mark.

We have seen how Socrates analogises the bow with the beginning of knowledge.<sup>648</sup> The bow which appears in Heraclitus is the metaphor of both life and death as we saw in the beginning of this chapter.

For the bow to  
It is this C-section, this  
distancing, the dis, *th-is*:  
τόξον-toxon targets, creates  
'τό ον,' is a movement of an  
stopping, the ks, the x, 'τό ξ  
semelfactive element,<sup>649</sup> is



function, it has to form a C-section.  
division, decision, dehiscence,  
that logos (f)allows. The bow-  
being by targeting. To target being  
atelic to-and-fro, kinesis and  
ov' (to x on). The element 'ξ,' this  
the element of existence whose

essence comes through the Other. It is by the aid of a hand that a bow functions. A hand pulls its strings. It is through the logos of the Other that an attempt to find answers and

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<sup>647</sup> (Plato 1997, 439c)

<sup>648</sup> (420)

<sup>649</sup> Unfortunately, Plato does not investigate this element but we shall. This past modality signified by a sign or a symbol within a word is not a particularity of ancient Greek. Malinowski shows that in many "savage" or "primitive" languages there is an "adverbial particle... which put before a modified verb, gives it, in somewhat vague manner, the meaning either of a past or of a definite happening" (1923, 303). As Malinowski admits, only lost in the ways of doing things with another culture, only by resisting his own language and its structures could he come to understand how some forms "express the subtleness of temporal sequence" (304). Later, as we quote from Pericles there is a word meaning "all of all" and it starts with the sign we are dealing here 'ζόμπαντας'. To re-present "all of all" there is forcibly, a temporal movement to the future end (the all) back to the past where it all started so we can talk of the "all of all." The "all of all" is without reserve. We also witness it in Plato's *Republic* when he talks about giving one's soul without reserve, utterly and completely: ζῶν. When Jankélévitch talks about semelfactivity he talks about this platonic "hapax" as the ultimate singular one moment in time. It is the 'ξ' that writes existence and it is through the Other's hand that essence will be found(ed).

avoid regressive, idle talk, is effected. It is through the Other's existence that being will come about in the event of the dialogue.

But this dialogue in *Cratylus* is still in the order of the same. This time of the sexual same. It is written in an economy of the Other who is sexually the same – just like the modern Greek book of Heraclitus *Apanta*. It is the economy of the same in a hom(m)osexual exchange as Irigaray has described. In the text, the help of the Other is always of the same sex with an explicit rejection of the woman Other. The Heraclitean bow is kept and the lyre is dropped:

SOCRATES: Look at it this way. If you were asked who gives names more correctly, those who are wiser or those who are more foolish, what would you answer?

HERMOGENES: That it is clearly those who are wiser.

SOCRATES: And which class do you think is wiser on the whole, a city's women or its men?

HERMOGENES: Its men.

SOCRATES: Now you know, don't you, that Homer tells us that Hector's son was called 'Astyanax' by the men of Troy? But if the men called him 'Astyanax', isn't it clear that 'Skamandrios' must be what the women called him?

HERMOGENES: Probably so.

SOCRATES: And didn't Homer also think that the Trojans were wiser than their women?

HERMOGENES: I suppose he did.

SOCRATES: So mustn't he have thought that 'Astyanax' was a more correct name for the boy than 'Skamandrios'?

HERMOGENES: Evidently.

SOCRATES: Well, let's investigate why it is more correct. Doesn't Homer himself suggest a very good explanation when he says...<sup>650</sup>

Nowhere in the text is there an attempt to understand the logos of Skamandrios in the same way that we could have traced the steps of the nomothetis. A primordial rejection of the Other is contrary when the Other is required for knowledge, but not for Plato when the rejection is of the feminine logos. In this text, we can decipher "an even more archaic matricide," one "deeper than the murder of the father, at the origin of our culture."<sup>651</sup> Skamandros was the *river* of Troy which could turn red as mythology has it. Once again, we have the flow, the river, and the SocraticoPlatonic logos-decision to reject whatever is not able to be subjected to Being.

***logos as existence: death and the promise***

What has been referred to as logocentric Western metaphysics is a decisive moment of following the Plato-Aristotelian translation/characterisation of logos and putting it under the principle of Being. That is the struggle written in *Cratylus*. A struggle of principles, an existential struggle. A constant to and fro between the ontic and the ontological. A metaphysical movement with episteme as grounded on a radical idealism/materialism lived in semblance: the substantial, the ontic, in other words beings, haptic or abstract with an attempt to go to a beyond as a teleological *ens realissimum*, Being or God. Existence as logos or logos as existence has been put under the principle of Being (a reactive logos) ever since the *Cratylus*.<sup>652</sup>

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<sup>650</sup> (Plato 1997, 392-393)

<sup>651</sup> (Irigaray 2002, 257)

<sup>652</sup> Evidently, we cannot follow Derrida without reserve in what he refers to as logocentrism. The decision to follow and to idolise Plato and Aristotle, as Nietzsche made clear, does not follow nor exhaust the meaning of logos. The *trot-bébé* of western logic and metaphysics as calculation of binaries cannot be expanded to the Heraclitean way of thinking/logos – or the pre-socratic. Derrida never questioned the origins of logos beyond metaphysics. Even François Laruelle who talks about the non-philosophy of philosophy as the invisible path of a decision, the so-called secret, still follows logos and logic on a Plato-Aristotelian path (2010).

No special deconstruction is required for the meaning of this proposition. The textual evidence is on 423e when Socrates talks about “ἔστιν οὐσία τις ἑκατέρω αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν ὅσα ἠξίωται ταύτης τῆς προσρήσεως τοῦ εἶναι.” The usual translation for this sections is “a being or essence, just like every other thing that we say ‘is’.”<sup>653</sup> Yet, before ‘is,’ we say: and we say based on what we decide to (not) say: “ὅσα ἠξίωται ταύτης τῆς προσρήσεως τοῦ εἶναι” is a conditional. This conditional can have two interpretations. Either how many things can be put under the principle of being or if one decides to designate, accost, name (*προσρήσεως*) things based on the principle of Being. In both cases there is a decision: whether or not one decides to put *all* things under the principle of Being. If... Being does not come naturally or, with (later) Heidegger, there is no natural necessity of analogising everything with Being. There is decided historical necessity of not questioning, and following without stopping this unquestioned course of life interpretation, this unstopped (noetic) praxis. Accepting to equate understating with/through all the tropes of Being is still a decision, a putting something under a principle without resisting it – still logos, will to power though an a-versing-re-version of it, a silent promise.

And what is re-versed into being is an aversion of death. The existential logos of Heraclitus is re-versed into being. In an attempt (a reactive logos) to surpass death. To unravel this thread we need only to ask: Why did Plato decided to characterise the logos of Socrates in writing when Socrates did not think much of it as we know from *Phaidro*?<sup>654</sup> Whence this decision, this logos?

Back to the text again. Socrates spend the day since dawn with Euthyphro<sup>655</sup> in the supreme court. After his being announced the charges that had pressed on him, we found him again in dialogues. These charges could end up with severe penalties; even death – ironically as it happened. Yet Socrates, according to the documents we have, that is, Plato’s texts, his archives, Socrates ends up engaging in a rather lively – with *jouissance* – discussion with Hermogenes and Cratylus. Socrates might die but no big

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<sup>653</sup> (Plato 1997, 423e; 140)

<sup>654</sup> (Πλάτων, Φαίδρος 2001)

<sup>655</sup> (397a)

deal. Compared to the soulless monster Mersault in Camus's *The Stranger*,<sup>656</sup> Socrates manifests the absurd *par excellence*. No existential struggle, just pure apathy. Such stoicism and collectedness is dumbfounding, admirable, and, one could say, even heroic. No wonder why Nietzsche "envied him:" "there is nothing we envy less than the moral cow and the fat happiness of good conscience."<sup>657</sup> A good conscience which negates all life. Socrates keeps going and living as if no(thing) grave is happening; business as usual. Yet this business is oral. No matter how much truth there was in this signifying voice, this voice is still a sound. And yet, sound is a course to oblivion, it goes with the wind and perishes (*θανόν*). It is forgotten (*λήθη*), a "pure poetic flash that disappears without trace, leaving nothing behind it but a vibration suspended in the air for one brief moment."<sup>658</sup> It is not. Much like a course without reflection. To be then is to be remembered. Not to be forgotten (*ἀ-λήθεια/truth*), to renounce the course's oblivion (*ἀπο-θνήσκω*), that is, not to die:

Not only since the invention of writing has language pretended to pursue itself to infinity; but neither is it because of its fear of death that it decided one day to assume a body in the form of visible and permanent signs. Rather, somewhat before the invention of writing, a change had to occur to open the space in which writing could flow and establish itself, a change, symbolized for us in its most original figuration by Homer, that forms one of the most decisive ontological events of language: its mirrored reflection upon death.<sup>659</sup>

And who's mirrored reflection upon death is written in the Platonic dialogues if not the Socratic logos? Marking in letters is death's writing before these letters.

To mark "a finger and some sand suffice."<sup>660</sup> But with a summer breeze the mark is gone, gone back to what it was, no-thing, no trace. "In order to be memorable, the

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<sup>656</sup> (Camus 1946)

<sup>657</sup> (Nietzsche 2005b, 173)

<sup>658</sup> (Foucault 1989, 311)

<sup>659</sup> (Foucault 1998, 90)

<sup>660</sup> (Irigaray 2002, 122)

inscription must either be violent or supported by an adequate substance,”<sup>661</sup> characterised. But why need the trace, the mark to be memorable without desiring to be remembered? The violence does not initially come from the inscription. It is the violence of death that is attempted to be discharged in the representation. Writing is never material or ideal. The violence of the inscription remembers, represents without re-presenting without re-remembering the violent inscription of pending, imminent death. It is its expression; death as the imminent of the immanent and the immanent of the imminent. Logos comes from after the physical, metaphysical logos, and expresses itself in text while itself as pretext, an Other writing dies/dyes.

We know this already from Pericles. If the Parthenon were to be rebuilt in the pretext of having utility to protect from a potential future threat against the Persians, the monument is a documentation, a text whose pre-text does not signify the text itself but promises. Like Pericles, the document, the monument, the letter, the mark are not against death but beyond it:

ἦν καὶ νῦν ὑπενδῶμέν ποτε (πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι),  
μνήμη καταλείπεται, Ἑλλήνων τε ὅτι Ἕλληνες πλείστων δὴ  
ἤρξαμεν, καὶ πολέμοις μεγίστοις ἀντέσχομεν πρὸς τε ζύμπαντας καὶ  
καθ' ἑκάστους, πόλιν τε τοῖς πᾶσιν εὐπορωτάτην καὶ μεγίστην  
ᾠκήσαμεν. καίτοι ταῦτα ὁ μὲν ἀπράγμων μέμψαιτ' ἄν, ὁ δὲ δρᾶν τι καὶ  
αὐτὸς βουλόμενος ζηλώσει· εἰ δέ τις μὴ κέκτηται, φθονήσει.<sup>662</sup>

Even if we do give a little ground at some point in our time (and it is a law of nature that all things are subject to decline), posterity will remember that we had the widest empire of Greeks over Greeks, that we held firm in the greatest wars against their combined or separate forces, and that the city we inhabited was the most complete in every facility and the greatest of all. All this the disengaged may deplore, but

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<sup>661</sup> (Irigaray 2002, 122)

<sup>662</sup> (Thucydides 2009, Book II; 64; 105)



those with their own ambitions will want to emulate us, and those who have failed to gain power will envy us.<sup>663</sup>

It is the course of death that is dis-sed with (Platonic) logos in writing: Socrates's death.

The platonic texts document, attempt to remember those interactions with Socrates by re-membering them.<sup>664</sup> “Those dead who have not been able to be saved and transported to the boundaries of the concrete past of a survivor are not past; they along with their pasts are annihilated.”<sup>665</sup> This is another struggle written in the Platonic texts. To re-member Socrates's logos so that it can reverberate through eternity – instead of going down in infamy or oblivion, and thus contradicting his name/essence! Just like Shelley's elegy on Keats

To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: “With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!”<sup>666</sup>

Writing is always true as it promises. To give one's word, logos, comes to characterise a future, it writes it. Logos writes how things will come to be. It decides. And this decision, this promise, this writing is an inscription for the Other. To promise is to prescribe oneself toward inscribing the Other in the future – just like Plato and Shelley did.

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<sup>663</sup> (Thucydides 2009, Book II; 64; 105)

<sup>664</sup> We have decided to give emphasis to a particular existential thread with respect to the platonic motivation of being in bad faith with respect to writing. In this reconstitution of Socrates's fame, that is, his logos, one could also trace another logos of gratitude impelling to inscription. Derrida traces such a thread in the Biblical story of Tobit and Tobias. When Tobit following the logos of an angel re-sights his father Tobias, what comes about is an “order to write: in order to give thanks, the memory of the event must be inscribed” (29). Maybe Plato is thanking Socrates for being his teacher, his intro-con-duct-or to philosophy.

<sup>665</sup> (Sartre 1993, 112)

<sup>666</sup> (Shelley 2017, Verse 1; 2)

But the inscription of the Other in the future is at the same time the keeping of the promise. It is the Other's logos that is kept in the future. Writing as a technology is the way a promise is kept – the undertaking of a promise. A monument of death (written logos) becomes the document of life (logos as writing). That is why every document/monument lies<sup>667</sup> openly or to the open so that it can tell the truth of existence; it objects to death. Just like a promise, it stands in nothing, it is nothing. Logos is no thing, lies on itself. Logos makes the 'is' come to be. That is why logos tells itself prior to every signification (apopha(n)sis) and thus, is no-ledge. It can only be something, it can mean through the Other, in dialogue, in meaning. Every text characterises or is a character: a logos of dialogues past (passed) but not passed away. Every document represents without re-presenting a dialogue. There can be no representation if there has never been an Other to motivate it. Representation itself is a techno-logy going beyond the passing away, the dying present. Representation dies/dyes the present for a beyond. But this beyond can only take place in dialogue with an Other, in understanding and meaning. So long as another can tell (ledge): (t)here (w)here...

When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to th/ee.<sup>668</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> In both senses of 'lies:' either lying in not telling the truth, or lying as in laying on a surface (*κείμενον*, *text*).

<sup>668</sup> (Shakespeare 2002, Sonnet 18; 417; emphasis added)

# 7 PATHWAY FOUR: TOWARD UNDERSTANDING AND MEANING AS ALTRUISM: REQUESTING THE EYES/IS OF THE OTHER

*Such I take this important one to be, viz. that all the choir of heaven and **furniture of the earth**, in a word, all those **bodies** which compose **the mighty frame of the world**, have not any subsistence without a Mind; that **their being is to be perceived or known***

*Berkeley*

*Basically, **all ontology**, no matter how rich and firmly compacted a system of categories it has at its disposal, **remains blind** and perverted from its ownmost aim, if it has not first adequately clarified the meaning of Being, and **conceived** this clarification **as its fundamental task***

*Heidegger*

***How prayer gallops and light groans ... I see that clearly. It's too simple***

*Rimbaud*

*The **question** now arises: Could there be human beings lacking in the capacity **to see something as something—and what would that be like?** What sort of consequences would it have?—Would **this defect be comparable to colour-blindness** or to not having **absolute pitch?***

Wittgenstein

*I wish **the light** could shine now for it is closer, it is near... But it **will not present my present***

*And it makes my past and future painfully clear ...And I must examine my breath and look inside*

*Because **I feel blind***

*Hercules and Love Affair*

*Girls can wear jeans and cut their hair short, Wear shirts and boots 'cause it's okay to be a boy, But for a boy **to look like** a girl is degrading, 'Cause **you think that** being a girl is degrading*

*But **secretly** you'd love to know **what it's like** wouldn't you... What it **feels like** for a girl*

Madonna

*...dans les questions que vous me posez, c'est sans aucune provocation que j'ai **presque** envie de répondre que c'est vraiment celui qui pose la question qui seul a **les moyens d'y répondre***

Deleuze

*We have considered a **dead eye** in the midst of the world in order to account for **the visibility of this world***

Sartre<sup>669</sup>

In the beginning of our journey, we set out for altruism. Traditional philosophy was commanding us to argue about altruism but we resisted it by questioning it. We resisted it not only because to argue for altruism contra-the-dictum of the other constitutes a

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<sup>669</sup> (Berkeley 1901); (Heidegger 1962); (Rimbaud 2002); (Wittgenstein 1953); (Hercules and Love Affair 2008); (Madonna 2000); (Deleuze, Webdeleuze 1982); (Sartre 1993)

logical paradox; but also because, such an act risked becoming altruism's violent opposite. We had to change the perspective and understand how one comes to be altruistic which is also to live altruistically, to believing it in action: to be-li(e)ve in altruism. This believing in altruism is like following the Other, questing them. Following as a silent promise to be there. *Promising* is to give one's word. Giving one's word is to *mandate*, to *prescribe*. It is to future; to follow the present in order to allow a future for the Other. It is an imperative found(ed) on *decision*. Looking at decision, we were led back to *logos* as the 'first' principle: existence. Finally, our path shows, so far, that logos cannot come to be but through dialogue. It is the notion of dialogue that we feel compelled to investigate here. If one were to analogise logos with subjectivity it is dialogue as intersubjectivity that we shall explore in this path; the presence of the Other in the sense of granting the promise or by requesting it. To what extent does the Other participate in altruism? What would be the difference between following and stalking if the Other does not somehow wink, accept, or at least inspire the(ir) being followed? And at the same time, for an altruism that goes all the way in sacrificing oneself for the Other – irrespectively of whether the act is spontaneous, synchronic, or diachronic – how does it avoid degeneration into an unrequited act from either perspective? The one who sacrifices themselves completely will never know the outcome of the sacrifice and the one who is saved will be forever in debt in an intentionality without finitude, a course with no closure; a curse instead of a course. Finally, to what extent does altruism involve a witness as a third term between the giver and the receiver of the act? The third perspective as recognition of the act is paramount. The act could be translated as heroic or as stupid. How can the meaning of such an act be fixed in a common sense, in communication? How can we talk about altruism? Could it be that communication, understanding each other, meaning, intersubjectivity, and altruism constitute a tautology?

From an empirical and phenomenological standpoint dialogue is to be paramount to altruism. But so it is from a conceptual point of view. We italicised the words – *promising mandating, imperative, prescription, decision, logos* – to provide emphasis on them so as to make them stand out of the crowded passage, to give them extra visibility. The emphasis is given not with their being just present but with being irregularly distanced, or better, di-stanced with respect to the other words. The emphasis does not refer to the present but to a modification of it. Such a modification is an excess with respect to the present; and so it is, with the conceptual referents of these words. The

concepts that we have tracked down do not have an essence or a referent – either as denotatum or designatum, united or scattered – in the present world. The grammar of the present cannot conclude them. No thing can bring them to light if light is understood as the presence of the present. The grammar needed to illuminate these concepts requires tenses – future and/or past, temp(t), to-and-fro – and most importantly an Other. These concepts *spect* the Other. They are oriented toward and to ward the Other. Can we analyse dialogue with altruism? Ironically, what it is like to know these concepts requires an event of dialogue. But meaning which comes about in the event of a dialogue does not come to light. If meaning is produced in dialogue, this product is beyond sight – in all senses of the word.

In the history of philosophy, linking meaning to understanding and to knowledge has allowed our focusing on how one person understands, the conditions for understanding, where meaning and knowledge all blend into one concept: experience or consciousness. This movement to experience, however, has dispensed with the Other in the process of understanding understanding, knowing knowledge, meaning meaning. The eyes/Is of the Other have been plucked out from the philosophy of understanding (of) understanding.<sup>670</sup> The others become blind and wander/wonder around like a curse while we attempt to account for understanding alone in the Kantian sense of the conditions of experience as understanding alone. We are desperately trying to find those subjective conditions – philosophy is in despair of subjective conditions. Paradoxically, however, this background blind movement has always been one of our main metaphors for what it

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<sup>670</sup> Just like Sartre, Irigaray traces this plucking out the Eyes/Is of the Other as the main trend of Western philosophy. “The Other as such has not been sufficiently considered as an essential dimension of our belonging to the world” (2008, 75). Our belonging has been theorised as caring “about the relations of the subject to things, and about the relations between things and the world, but very seldom between two subjects, especially two different subjects – the only place where speaking is really indispensable” (6). Ultimately, this care takes care of its own private time disregarding the temporality of the Other. Intersubjectivity, as we shall explore, would mean to give back the eyes/Is to the Other which “shifts the concern regarding temporality” (xviii). It is not only what unfolds for me in the sense of what I perceive and know. The concern is not only my caring about me and my ultimate knowledge of my being towards death, but about a time and a time of our time for making this time meaningful, a time that *matters*. A time that matters without particular matter is one which has rhythm: an intersubjective ‘(k)now.’

is like to know, to understand, to mean. Knowledge, understanding, and meaning flow as a movement from blindness to I-ness/eye-ness.

*meaning like a reli(e)ving movement from dark to light: Kant and the blind intuition*

We shall start with Kant. To know what it is like to know, knowledge itself, Kant starts from experience. But just because knowledge starts from experience that does not mean that it arises out of experience. Knowledge is expressed through the concept of understanding and understanding through judgement; and judgement as a synthesis of intuitions and concepts, a spontaneous act. One of Kant's famous judgements is that "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind."<sup>671</sup> Let us begin.

This judgment is metaphorical. As we saw earlier, every metaphor is always already an analogy. Intuitions that do not have concepts, intuitions that are not subsumed by concepts are analogised with blindness. It has been suggested that concepts in Kant are what we commonly refer to as general terms and intuitions are singular representations relating to 'objects' by an immediate condition. What does this immediate condition mean? Kantian scholars, like Lisa Shabel and Charles Parsons, accept that Kant's intuition is related to the concept of 'immediacy' but, as Parsons underscores, Kant never unpacks his notion of 'immediate condition' adequately. His proposal, also A.C. Ewing's, is "direct phenomenological presence to the mind, as in perception."<sup>672</sup> But as W. H. Walsh explains, this presence cannot be an appearance as a (unified) physical object. This requires a synthesis of a "stream of uncoordinated sense data,"<sup>673</sup> thus an appearing. Walsh, as does Deleuze, suggests that the word 'object' is already too much for Kant. What is presented to, what affects the sensibility is "initially the phenomenon as sensible empirical diversity," a manifold; not "an appearance" but an "appearing."<sup>674</sup> Intuition, then, is an appearing as direct, immediate, phenomenological presence.

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<sup>671</sup> (Kant 1929, B75)

<sup>672</sup> (Parsons 1992, 66)

<sup>673</sup> (Walsh 1939, 436)

<sup>674</sup> (Deleuze 1984, 8)

What we should not forget is that (1) if it is intuitions that we are looking for and (2) if intuitions are always blind without concepts, then what we are essentially doing is trying to understand what it is for an intuition to be what it is; what it is to be blind. But we are not. So it is like trying to understand blind-folded. We need the schema of blind-folded otherwise what is our empirical imagination going to represent when bringing to mind blind intuitions – as when it brings heavy cinnabar to represent red colour? Granted that what we intuit is an appearing, that which is received by the *aesthesis*, then what is the appearing before being intuited as intuition? What is the appearing before being the intuition?

In the Transcendental Aesthetic, before anything, there is *the object*, the something; but is it “the” or “this”? If aesthesis is reception, as Kant says “nothing but receptivity,”<sup>675</sup> then what there is in the vestibule of sensibility is for Kant an object. Our questions: Is the given a diversity as Deleuze and Walsh interpret ‘it’ before becoming the intuition? If so, what is the difference between that diversity and what Kant calls empirical diversity? Let us go back to the passage. The given before it is being given is an object for Kant. The object *becomes* an empirical diversity *through* the sensibility. “*Objects are given to us by means of sensibility, and it alone yields us intuitions.*”<sup>676</sup> *It* yields: This ‘it’ must be referring to the sensibility as (passive) receptivity being causally linked to the object which acts upon it. Yet, ‘it’ is also active with respect to the understanding as it yields intuitions. The object seems to be in-itself as a causally efficacious unity for Kant before the sensibility breaks the unity, turns it, or destroys<sup>677</sup> it into an empirical diversity which is the object of the intuition as sensation. Here one could say that the empirical intuition is a horizontal appearing, or appearing multiplicity within the horizon, the lounge of sensibility. But originally, the object must be in-itself and has an effect on the sensibility which is the sensation:

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<sup>675</sup> (Kant 1929, B130)

<sup>676</sup> (Ibid., B34/A20)

<sup>677</sup> We use the term ‘destroy’ with no reference to valuations – just as we did earlier with Sartre. Beyond binaries, destroy takes its ontological meaning as catastrophe, as turning into something else.



*The effect of an object* upon the faculty of representation, so far as we are affected by it, is sensation. That intuition which *is in relation to the object through sensation*, is entitled empirical. The undetermined *object* of an empirical intuition is entitled appearance.<sup>678</sup>

We have to follow the objects and the relations here. What affects the sensibility, the first part of the medium of representation, is an immediate object. *That intuition which is in relation to the object through sensation, is entitled empirical.* From this, comes another object, which is undetermined, empirically diversified. To put it differently. **Step 1:** an object (A) has an effect on sensibility (B) (effect of A on B is sensation C) **Step 2:** Sensation relates A to C which is the empirical intuition. The object of this empirical intuition is undetermined. But how and what comes into the vestibule?

Just before the Transcendental Ideas we read again "... an objective perception is *knowledge (cognitio)*. This is either *intuition* or *concept (intuitus vel conceptus)*. The former relates immediately to the object and is *single*, the latter refers to it mediately by means of a feature which several things have in common."<sup>679</sup> Relations are not about unity-diversity but about (im)mediacy. It has already been decided whether there is diversity or unity. The immediate relation is the intuition, the single object, the particular. Can an object not be single? Can an object ever be understood without some form of unity even if that unity is just the boundaries of the perceptual horizon of an "undetermined" sensible manifold, a *this*, a *the*, a *that* or just *a*?

The *aesthesis* follows the logic of Plato-Aristotle, as Kant says in a more than telling footnote: "the language and sense of the ancients, in their far-famed division of knowledge into *αἰσθητά και νοητά*." Question: why are intuitions blind if for the ancients the *αἰσθητά* did provide knowledge and Kant agrees that "*an objective perception is knowledge (cognitio)*"? Is it not because sensibility destroys the object, as that platonically driven object in-itself, its formal nature, its essence? Only if sensibility, the

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<sup>678</sup> (Ibid., B34/A20; emphasis added). The singularity of the object which acts upon the sensibility is again explicitly mentioned in the Second Critique (2002, 45; 64) and a manifold of times in the *Anthropology* (2006). Charles Sanders Peirce seems to read Kant in a similar way since he comes to registering Kantian philosophy as a strand of nominalism (1933, CP I).

<sup>679</sup> (Kant 1929, A320/B377; second emphases added)

senses, the bodily senses, destroy the object (epistemically speaking) can we talk about representations which are intuitions – mediated by a schema: Concerning the object *per se*, we are still blind:

The manifold of representations can be given in an intuition which is purely sensible that is, nothing but receptivity; and the form of this intuition can lie a priori in our faculty of representation, without being anything more than the *mode* in which the subject is *affected*. *But the combination (conjunctio) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses, and cannot, therefore, be already contained in the pure form of sensible intuition.* For it is an act of spontaneity of the faculty of representation; and since this faculty, to distinguish it from sensibility, *must* be entitled understanding, all combination be we conscious of it or not, be it a combination of the manifold of intuition, empirical or non-empirical, or of various concepts is an act of the understanding.<sup>680</sup>

Let us read this passage again. The “manifold of representations” is a bundle of unsynthesised perceptions (sensible affections) of the object. The given as an intuition which is always purely sensible. That is another way of saying that *the object in-itself is not received in-itself* at once. The reception of “the purely sensible” as the intuited, the given manifold, has a reason for not being a unity but a manifold; the destruction of the unity is done by the senses. The form of this intuition, the form of sense is a priori; that means universal. Now, the universal can have two directions. Either universal, that is the same across all possible intuitions for the same subject, and/or universal across all other entities that can intuit. The clarification “*without being anything more than the mode in which the subject is affected*” leaves us blind with respect to which direction we shall read the a priori.<sup>681</sup> If it is in both directions, as the a priori should be, then how are we to understand the mode? We are provided with time as pure form of affection. But an a priori form, universal and necessary, cannot fall under the category of modality because

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<sup>680</sup> (Kant 1929, B130)

<sup>681</sup> That is also Husserl’s objection to Kantian thinking of the two senses of the ‘a priori’ in the *Logical Investigations*.

modality is not an aesthetic representation. Time as a priori form can cover the vertical direction (within the ‘same’ subject), and the horizontal direction (across different subjects) but not both at the same time unless we presuppose a normative dimension of sensibility, how sensibility *must be in order* for time as a priori form to cover both dimensions.

We read: “But the combination (conjunctio) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses.” If the manifold is to be combined then it is not unified. But insofar as it is a manifold it is delimited or determinable. Either case implies some sort of unity. The unity of the manifold is not the essential unity of the object which makes the object what it is in-itself. The sensible manifold is the ‘destroyed’ object in-itself which is going to be re-unified, or, to be exact, re-membered from the fracturing form of sensibility. It is not an original diversity from which the form of the sense makes a sensible object. Each form of sense in its empirical diversity mani-folds. Time as form of intuition destroys, keeps together and unifies the object, the one world which the understanding will have to put back into place as an intelligible one. That is why.... *the combination can never come to us through the senses and cannot be already be contained in the pure form.* The syntheses are always the business of the understanding.

Let us add another intriguing passage:

By synthesis, in its most general sense, I understand the act of putting different representations together, and of grasping what is manifold in them in one [act of] knowledge. ...Synthesis of a manifold (be it given empirically or a priori) is what first gives rise to knowledge.<sup>682</sup>

If aesthesis does not provide knowledge it is because it merely receives an appearance of an ‘object’ which is a thing in-itself. After all, we cannot sense a whole house singly, let alone the unity of the cosmos, the world. There is no object that has been given in its entirety. It is received spatio-temporally as an undetermined spatio-temporal unity but not received as *its* unity but as a sensible unity, a sensation, a presence. It goes through the fracturing sensibility. It is in this sense that understanding will have the burden of putting

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<sup>682</sup> (Kant 1929, B103)

together what the sensibility destroyed and retained (synthesis speciosa) (“*Imagination* is the faculty of representing in intuition an object that is *not itself present*,”<sup>683</sup>). The object that will be re-presented through the spontaneity of the understanding will always be a phenomenal object, an appearance, not as it is in-itself – but phenomenal and always bound to the manifoldness of the manifold. All the syntheses of the understanding are in a sense reactions to the passivity of the sensibility. A calling upon them which will take place in time. Time as the ultimate form of sensibility destroys the presentation of the object and creates a representation of it at the same time.

There is a possibility of reading the ‘object’ that affects the sensibility as diversity, appearing, only if the object becomes a difference of *emphasis* in the appearing relative to the ongoing operation of the senses. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche relied heavily on the philosophical illusion to which Kant seemed to remain blind: there is no switch on/off of sense and perception. Insofar as we live we sense. An effect of an object of sense can make sense only as a difference with respect to a constant appearing – not as a pure cessation of sense by an introduction of the received sensation. There is no introduction but a difference in *emphasis* of affectivity. But Kant has not allowed us any pathways to such reading precisely because of his metaphysical presupposition of causal efficacy<sup>684</sup> between the object in-itself and its phenomenal presence. Sensibility for Kant does not have the duplicity that we see in the spiritualist tradition culminating with Bergson where aesthesis is the *organe-obstacle* – that which both hinders and enables perception. For the intuitionists, intuition does not have an interval, a middle term which allows the distinguishing of subject and object. As Ravaisson liked to reiterate, in pure intuition there is no interval, subject and object are one. The object is created *in* an interval.<sup>685</sup> For Kant, in the beginning there is an object (pro)visionally. That is why the middle term for Kant is not aesthesis itself but the schema which mediates, which reverses the causal efficacy of the thing in-itself into a reactive presentation warding/wording an intelligible re-versal, that is, a representation.

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<sup>683</sup> (Kant 1929, B151; original emphases)

<sup>684</sup> (Apel 1998)

<sup>685</sup> (Ravaisson 2008)

The appearance, the Kantian phenomenon, can be traced, or better has to be traced, as a causal efficacy on the senses from the thing-in-itself, some kind of Aristotelian essence otherwise:

If cinnabar were sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes light, sometimes heavy, *if a man changed sometimes into this and sometimes into that animal form*, if the country on the longest day were sometimes covered with fruit, sometimes with ice and snow, my empirical imagination would never find opportunity when representing red colour to bring to mind heavy cinnabar.<sup>686</sup>

The nerve of this argument is about permanence of being, essence, which allows, conditions the passing of the objective to the subjective through causation.<sup>687</sup> While this is all good and well, we have forgotten already that since we started from experience, the conditions of experience which allow the passage from experience of the object (the particular) to the forms/conditions of experience (universal) which make the former possible are (causally) fallowed from the experience of someone whose sensibility is *grosso modo* like Kant's; a particular envisioned and not a blind Kant – nor even a man changing sometimes into envisioned and into blind. At the moment that Kant gives the aesthetic a privilege universally, this universality has (been) fallowed (from) a particular class of what the aesthetic, sensibility *is supposed to be*. To accept Kant's aesthetic theory reveals the ground of a democratic implicature, to use H.P. Grice's term,<sup>688</sup> of how normal sensibility is supposed to be – “those who have been diagnosed normal.”<sup>689</sup> Envisioned Kant would remain blind about what it is like to know that there is no red colour for the blind person. That intuition is indeed blind, one cannot opt to opt-ic-ally make it a manifold. The intuition of the blind person could only re-present ‘red’ through dialogue with an envisioned person. Subjective form of time cannot play the transcendental intersubjective condition that could trace a shared meaning of ‘red’ so that it could justify

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<sup>686</sup> (Kant 1929, A101; emphases added)

<sup>687</sup> Husserl elaborates in the *Logical Investigation* that “a sensuous schema belongs to the essence of a thing” (1970, 40).

<sup>688</sup> (Grice 1969)

<sup>689</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 227)

universality in the structures of sensibility since it defies the possibility of coming to indexing/intending ‘red.’

What would the intentionality of this dialogue be? What does the blind talk about? How, can the blind person talk about and “understand” ‘red’? G. W. Leibniz before Kant had written:

Thus we cannot explain what red is to a blind man, nor can we make such things clear to others *except by leading them into the presence of the thing and making them see*, smell, or taste *the same thing we do*, or, at very least, by reminding them of some past perception *that is similar*.<sup>690</sup>

What exactly does a blind man see? What is the analogy, the ‘similar,’ which should play the role of the Kantian schema in the case of reminding the blind of some past perception of ‘red’? Leibniz tells us that they understand, they see distinct notions – could we (f)allow here a Husserlian mental seeing? But these distinct notions are not coming from the(ir) senses, they are intelligible marks that everyone can see, or better, learn to see since “we are leading them into the presence of the thing and *making them see*.” Intelligibility, in its equivocality, is meaning as the achievement of some sort of communication and not some achievement of a functional process of subjective conditions and empirical content. Nothing will pass as ‘red’ to the blind unless we “make” them see, that is, understand. But there is nothing (in) common (being) understood between each other, no common sense. The sense of seeing is seeing. Seeing to find an end, an edging, a port, a word, an analogy toward meaning. In our attempt to communicate we are all blind.<sup>691</sup>

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<sup>690</sup> (Leibniz 1989, 24)

<sup>691</sup> Derrida writes: “One must always remember that the word, the vocable, is heard and understood, the sonorous phenomenon remaining invisible as such” (1993a, 4). This invisibility is not the interior of a glove as Merleau-Ponty thought that could pass into the visible under certain circumstances as in the case of losing one’s sight. This invisibility is blindness “addressed not only from blind to blind like a code for the nonseeing, but speaks to us, in truth, all the time of the blindness that constitutes it. Language is spoken to us *from/of blindness*. It always speaks to us *from/of the blindness* that constitutes it” (ibid). If perfect communication, absolute presence of meaning were possible, analogous to the perfect communication of

I remember that I know the meaning of those words, and *I decide that explanation is not necessary at this time*. I usually call such thinking, which is found both in algebra and in arithmetic and, indeed, almost everywhere, *blind* or *symbolic*.<sup>692</sup>

Such blind thinking is a *mathesis universalis* which deals with “notions *common to several senses*, like the notions of number, magnitude, shape [which] are usually of such a kind.”<sup>693</sup> Meaning is intelligibility even for the blind person. Yet, ironically, *scientia* is like passing from blindness to vision as intelligibility.<sup>694</sup> It is through the blind, or better, thanks to or in virtue of the blind that *episteme* is understood as the event of overcoming blindness, by supplementing it. “By a singular vocation, the blind man becomes a witness he must attest to the truth or the divine light. He is an archivist of visibility.”<sup>695</sup> This archiving, this audit trail, is required to reveal or de-veil the passage from dark to light, a performative schema for the intro-duce-ing of a logical category of the understanding on the intuition which is blind. But the blind is never understood. The otherness of the Other is used to understand oneself. There is a “specular isolation”<sup>696</sup> of the blind, an *abandonment* of the blind in solitude. The blind is used to reveal what it is like for the envisioned to know. “He seems the center around which stars glow/ While all earth’s ostentations surge below.”<sup>697</sup>

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oneself as another, as in telepathy, then, still, the perfect ideal point of the one shared meaning, the absolute unity of distinct ‘Is’, would, like a self-portrait, be a meaning involving blindness in its making – the eyes or the Cyclopean eye would have no place in this trans-action.

<sup>692</sup> (Leibniz 1989, 25)

<sup>693</sup> (Ibid., 24)

<sup>694</sup> *En passant*, this movement from darkness to the light, E/enlightenment, which is also an introduction to knowledge, can be traced back to the overcoming of the dark philosophy of Heraclitus as we saw earlier with Aristotle. Derrida has shown how *episteme* – Plato-Aristotelian philosophy – in art and science share this point of view with respect to knowing: “the master of truth is the one who sees and guides the other towards the spiritual light” (1993a, 6).

<sup>695</sup> (Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: Self-Portrait and Other Ruins* 1993a, 20)

<sup>696</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>697</sup> (Rilke 1918, 34). This is also evident in the advances of the so-called objective phenomenology. Thomas Nagel suggested that an objective phenomenology tries to “develop concepts that could be used to explain to a person blind from birth what is like to see” (1974, 449). Richard K. Atkins who follows him writes that

What it is like to know, as Plato writes in *The Republic*, is either following darkness to allow for forms to be revealed, like having the eyes of an owl, like Glaucon who can pierce darkness; or, to move out, to turn away from darkness, as if getting out of a dark cave:

But our present discussion, on the other hand, shows that the power to learn is present in everyone's soul and that the instrument with which each learns is like an eye that cannot be turned around from darkness to light without turning the whole body.<sup>698</sup>

The intellectual eye receives without pressure, no resistance. The eye must be free of resistance and thus free of effort. Knowledge amounts to a feeling of relief. To know as in to find the light is to be relieved from darkness, from being blind. To be relieved is a care-free business: inertia. If there is pressure or resistance the Glauconian eye becomes Glaucoma(tic). Too much light dazzles and blinds. The eye cannot foresee, predict, know what is ahead in full light. There is no truth in the absolute light. Such light hurts the eye/I and one prefers to be(come) blind – Oedipus plucked his eyes out. A hand is required to cast a bit of a shadow, an *aegis* to moderate, to adaw the absolute light. It is through the hand that folds, that contrasts light and dark, creating the shadow. Throwing a bit of silence onto the light. It is the hand that silences. Knowledge is felt in shadow, a to-and-fro between light and dark: the relief of the shadow. Would there be knowledge without the ledge of the blind to give us a hand? How would we know that we have knowledge if there were no blind shoulders on which to stand and see/sea further?

Still, what it is like to be blind is still not intuited – neither in Leibniz nor in Kant. As Wittgenstein would say, we remain meaning-blind with respect to what the blind

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“whether we actually succeed is a matter of indifference, so long as we can identify structural similarities between the two experiences. As Nagel says, the vocabulary could be used to describe to a man born blind what it is like to see colour. Whether we succeed or not is a different matter” (2013b, 838). The blind remains blind but is now also muted.

<sup>698</sup> (Plato 1997, 518c)



person sees. It is the “analogy” with the blind that aims “to throw light here.”<sup>699</sup> Yet, apart from the blind intuition of blindness, there is a decision of understanding through the object of the eyes’ as subjective conditions of objectively valid knowledge which is not through the counterpart of the blind’s eyes or through the understanding as that which is synthesised in the so called objective appearance of the blind. The blind has been decided as the counterpart to knowledge. We never asked the blind or walked blind folded *all the time*. The transcendental “Is” are always (structured with) eyes. The logic of vision has been imposed on the Other, here as blind, as a vision of logic just like we *saw* in the previous chapter. There is a reach to the Other only to come back to oneself and exclude the Other as improper/I’m-proper. Understanding understood as an Odys-sea of vision. A return to one’s being, to the same *is-land*; the ground of being and the being of ground after seeing/seeing. Understanding, making sense, achieving meaning has always been understood as seeing through an exappropriation of blindness.<sup>700</sup> But this seeing is an opening “to a future whose night is but the opacity produced by the density of the superimposed transparencies.”<sup>701</sup> One could risk the hypothesis that such a superimposed transparency is an implicature, in this case a democratic implicature which makes the normal, the proper, the canonical distribution, the curve, the *I/eye/eye*. And this democratic implicature is representational, not presentational, that is, not a presentational democracy where the blind speaks in their embodied presence.

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<sup>699</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 83). The analogy of ‘light’ with knowledge has been traced mythologically and theologically with respect to the Other as animal - by Derrida, Cixous, Haraway, and Braidotti. Animals have helped us in creating “the social grammar of virtues and moral distinctions for the benefit of humans” (Braidotti 2013, 69). But this is not for all but just the envisioned. For Plato, one either needs to have the eyes of an owl (Glaucon) that sees in the dark, following the dark, piercing the dark with rays, beams of light, or be able to turn to, move towards the light. These natural ways can also be technologically supplemented by throwing light. The distinctness of an object as ‘light’ comes out from the possibility of its manipulability, a ready-to-hand. In our reading, the animal support takes place through an invisible reference from the presence of the mythological Hephaistian owl represented by Glauco’s name and Glauco himself (turning almost 270 degrees and able to see in the dark).

<sup>700</sup> There is a slight difference in what we are trying to articulate here, and what Derrida traced as the exorbitance of vision (2005, 201). We are not only emphasising the decision to give primacy to vision. We question the possibility of knowledge if there had been a decision not to appropriate the Other.

<sup>701</sup> (Lévinas 1986, 345)

Another superimposed transparency is economic. Seeing clearly is simple. Simple as in thrifty but also cheap in investment. Not much effort is required in exchange but just a standing and seeing how things come to be, pure see-how, show, spectacle, *theory*. A distance from the object of sight. Don't touch! Leave the object itself as it is, pure and virgin, in-itself! The eyes can thus lie on it simply, as it is, safely.<sup>702</sup> But, at the same time, seeing is simple as requiring no effort spontaneously happening. There is no waiting for the world. It is given immediately when the *blinds* are lifted – when the lids of the eyes and the blinds are removed as obstacles. The eyelids are leads to knowledge until they are removed. Just as the Other Is/eyes who sea/see the world aimlessly, without direct(ed)ness, it is seeing that finds the world immediately, directly – see earlier citing/sighting of Husserl. Mental seeing supplements seeing blind, seaing. “No longer to see the objects in my room because I have closed my eyes is to see the curtain of my eyelids.”<sup>703</sup> I can still sea the world yet with more effort. Seeing sees itself as requiring no effort, and no effort means no sweat, avoiding the body's inundation, the rivers of the body overflowing and giving it superfluity of feeling, *biosis*. Seeing is not a heavy work but a light work. The light of knowledge comes simply, effortlessly, naturally, as a delight (*délit*), as a relief of the blinds – both as eyes/Is and as eyelids. It is the relief of opening one's eyes and getting out of bed (*délit*), waking up, or, as we saw in the beginning, flowing out of a dream. But this dream does not require sleeping but slipping into something else:

A skilled critic can enhance our appreciation of a work of art by pointing out features that lie open before us – aspects of the work to which we had not paid due attention, or the right kind of attention. He ‘opens our eyes’, we say – even though, of course, our eyes were open already. And here, as in philosophy, it is essential that we come to see for ourselves the significance of what has been pointed out.<sup>704</sup>

Sleeping does not require closing our eyes and snoring. Sleeping is inertia. The awake wakes as Heraclitus said, consciousness is change. Waking becomes seeing, seeing

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<sup>702</sup> The virginity of the given and the given woman as wife is a marriage which we shall not attempt here.

<sup>703</sup> (Sartre 1993, 319)

<sup>704</sup> (Hanfling 2002, 103)

becomes seing irrespective of eyes/Is if there is no Other, no change, no difference, no analogical emphasis, no slipping into something else. And this change is felt, or rather, this change is imponderable: a light change. The passage to understanding feels emphatically delightful. Just like when one calls our name and *italicises* our being from the crowd.

***knowledge as delight: Heidegger and the phenomenon***

Heidegger was the first to illuminate an inconsistency in Kant's equating phenomenon with appearance. Instead of the object of an empirical intuition, an entity, or a being-in-itself, Heidegger will use the term 'phenomenon,' distinctly from Kant's use. The famous ¶7 of *Being and Time* is all about destroying the scholastic object and giving primacy to the phenomenon as thing itself. The destruction will be done as a resistance to Kant's decision not to disambiguate between the different senses of appearance which lead Kant to equate appearances with phenomena – at the same time Heidegger's decision is a decision of following a Husserlian path: the conditions of meaning constitution are differentiated from the conditions of judgement, and the conditions of their validity. Nevertheless, following Heidegger, it seems that 'phenomenon' does not lose its objective boundaries completely; it still remains something indeterminately unified, still decided (quasi)transcendentally, horizonally.

Let us start with *The Concept of Phenomenon* where Heidegger traces the phenomenon through the *middle-voiced* ancient term 'phaino' and the root 'pha.' We shall consider the root of the phenomenon later; here we shall ask about its stems. How do the boundaries of the phenomenon-a phenomenalise themselves? Where does one phenomenon end for another to start? Our question is how the spatio-temporal boundaries of phenomena are self-punctuated in the sense of their "self-evidence,"<sup>705</sup> their givenness if one will, or the appearing as such. We must phrase the question more. To clarify this question we need a passage, a clearing:

"*Phenomenon*", the showing-itself-in-itself, signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered. "*Appearance*", on the other

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<sup>705</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 50)

hand, means a reference-relationship which is in an entity itself, and which is such that what *does the referring* (or the announcing) can fulfil its possible function only if it shows itself in itself and is thus a ‘phenomenon’. Both appearance and semblance are founded upon the phenomenon, though in different ways. The bewildering multiplicity of ‘phenomena’ designated by the words “phenomenon”, “semblance”, “appearance”, “mere appearance”, cannot be disentangled unless the concept of the phenomenon is understood from the beginning as that which shows itself in itself.<sup>706</sup>

From both a philological and a phenomenological standpoint, it is a bit difficult to associate the middle-voice with that *which shows itself in itself* precisely because the phenomenon is always a phenomenon for someone based on the access that they have. Otherwise, we run into a formal or performative paradox (how is the given given if there is no one to be given to? How can the given be given? It is given itself by being given).

Heidegger uses ‘phenomenon’ for that “which shows itself in itself, the manifest”<sup>707</sup> and ‘phenomena’ for what can be manifested, can be brought to light or what was in ancient times referred to as beings (entities). Indeed, Heidegger says that “an entity can show itself from itself in many ways, depending in each case on the kind of access we have to it.”<sup>708</sup> But while admitting the importance of the *kind of access* which legitimises the middle-voice phenomenon, Heidegger decides not to elaborate on what constitutes the *kind* and jumps straight into the access. We remain blind to *the kinds of access*.

Heidegger tells us that an entity may show itself differently – may seem otherwise – than it is itself. This modality of (seeming) otherwise is (a) phenomenon as semblance. But semblance, is always already founded on something (the phenomenon as manifest) that can manifest itself by referring to something (the semblance) that is not itself in that it refers *to something else* which, in turn, does not show itself in itself. This type of

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<sup>706</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 54).

<sup>707</sup> (Ibid., 51)

<sup>708</sup> (Ibid.)

phenomenon Heidegger calls “privative modification” of the phenomenon as manifest and leaves it aside. Insofar as it is formally related to the phenomenon<sup>709</sup> as manifest, Heidegger decides to leave the how of this appearing aside.<sup>710</sup> But on what grounds does this *something else*, this privative modification appear? What kind of access would we have of it? Is this an other intuition to which we are blind? Appearing always takes us back to *aesthesis*. Appearing is always related somehow to the *aesthesis*:

*Αἴσθησις* the sheer sensory perception of something, is ‘true’ in the Greek sense, and indeed more primordially than the *λόγος* which we have been discussing. Just as seeing aims at colours, any *αἴσθησις* aims at its *ἴδια* [the same/what is seen in private] (those entities which are genuinely accessible only *through* it and *for* it); and to that extent this perception is always true.<sup>711</sup>

If any *αἴσθησις* aims at its *ἴδια* and is always true, and if “the entities of which one is talking must be taken out of their hiddenness; one must let them be seen as unhidden (*ἀληθές* [true]),”<sup>712</sup> how can the ‘be seen as unhidden’ take place and time between beings with different aestheses which would allow us to talk about the privative and non-privative (public)?

This same question appears in Heidegger’s translation of the Anaximander fragment. While time orders what is going to be revealed and concealed, which aspects

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<sup>709</sup> This formal relation is of course the temporal unfolding of Being as the thing itself.

<sup>710</sup> One might think of of Macbeth’s illusory dagger. This illusory dagger (semblance) is founded on something that manifests itself – let us carefully use the word ‘cause’ here as a set of conditions – by referring to something (ie psychological distress) which is not itself (distress) in that it refers to something else (“heat-oppressed brain”) which in turn does not show itself in itself (but like the feeling of holding an actual dagger). In the A.R. Braunmuller edition of the Shakespearean play, there is an interesting quote about how this soliloquy was enacted and performed for Parisian audiences. Interestingly, this private phenomenon had to turn into a “semi-private performance of the dagger-scene as ‘une espèce de pantomime tragique’ (Hedgcock, p. 65).” (1997, 63). As with Mallarmé’s *Mimique*, we can never really enjoy an absolutely privative phenomenon, there must always be a passage even for a “pantomime tragique.” Heidegger’s absolutely *ἴδιον* sense makes no(n) sense as we shall see.

<sup>711</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 57)

<sup>712</sup> (Ibid., 56)

of being will pass into appearing or appearance, the distinctness of beings, their contours are analogised with a passing from night to day:

Appearance means emerging entrance into contours; this entrance-into is supposed to be out of order. Whence steps that which enters into contours? Out of a lack of contours. What holds itself in apparentness persists in contours over and against contourlessness. ...Seen this way, what then is disappearance? Let us remain within the *basic experience of the Greeks!* When day gives way to night and darkness falls over things, *then contours and delineated colours* disappear, the limits of things become indistinct and fade away, things lose their substantiality and individuality everything is concealed in the gaping void (χάος) of darkness.<sup>713</sup>

Heidegger's translation is compelling. This eye-paradigm of knowledge has been the predominant interpretation to the point of becoming a burlesque spectacle, a fulfilling temporality for one pair of eyes/Is. Richard Rorty writes:

Dewey sees the metaphor of the Eye of the Mind as the result of the prior notion that knowledge must be of the unchangeable: The theory of knowing is modeled after what was supposed to take place in the act of vision. The object refracts light and is seen; ... A spectator theory of knowledge is the inevitable outcome. (*The Quest for Certainty* [New York, 1960], p. 23).<sup>714</sup>

The primacy of the objectifying gaze is not a necessity, and not even a historical necessity. Rather, a follow created by Plato and Aristotle perpetuated and re-fall-owed in the West. Another translation of Anaximander's fragment could easily get us closer to Heraclitus's nose<sup>715</sup> as the sense which marks the contours of beings as a difference of *aesthesis*. What

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<sup>713</sup> (Heidegger 2012, 20)

<sup>714</sup> (Rorty 1979, 23)

<sup>715</sup> Fragment 37: "If everything were turned to smoke, the nose would be the seat of judgment." *Le sommelier*, an otherwise blind scientist, is an apt proof for that. While this requires an effort, the difference

Heidegger did notice, but decided to ignore, is the kind of access that allows following of Being for beings. There is no logos to give philosophical primacy to the logos of vision over the logos of touch.<sup>716</sup>

Any and all *aesthesis* aims at its privative sense. It can also be related directly with what Heidegger calls “phenomenal” encounter which is “that which is given and explicable in the way the phenomenon is encountered.”<sup>717</sup> Nietzsche describes the privative encounter as idiotic.<sup>718</sup> The absolutely private is an idiot, or better, appears as idiot to the public – just like having an absolutely private language.<sup>719</sup> It is always about a private property, a pro-property, a pro-fessional keeping a-part from the Other. Any aesthesis for the envisioned is not the same as this aesthesis for the blind. There is nothing that it is like to see yellow for the blind as it is for the envisioned. If a blind person were to give us a story of what they see “what would a journal of the blind be like?”<sup>720</sup> The given for the one is not the same as the given for the other and thus there is a difference in what counts as phenomena irrespective of the temporal unfolding of the phenomenon – a temporal unfolding which could be founding these givennesses. It is always about what is given and taken, an exchange. Universally, with respect to the given, we are still blind, no light piercing through. We need to bring the blind closer and bridge the distance of sight, the distance to which the eye/I extends. We need a blind touch. Could we at least

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of skill between the drunkard and the sommelier, to use Ravaisson’s example, makes the aesthetic, as the difference in *aesthesis* the seat of judgement.

<sup>716</sup> In his later works Heidegger tries to reveal an essential link between the hand and the logos – both in *What Is Called Thinking* (1968) and in *Parmenides* (1992). Resisting the logic of vision, “the essential correlation of the hand and the word as the essential distinguishing mark of man is revealed in the fact that the hand indicates and by indicating discloses what was concealed, and thereby marks off, and while marking off forms the indicating marks into formations” (1992, 84). This turn, as we saw in the previous chapter, takes us closer to another way of thinking but it is still within the contours of Being, in this case the being of the hand. Logos is freed from a signifying voice but it is cuffed in one particular part of the body, the hand. Even in his *Contributions*, the question is always a question of be-ing (1989) – thinking as quest(ion)ing with Being cannot escape nominalism, the particular, and the proper.

<sup>717</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 61)

<sup>718</sup> (Nietzsche 2005b, 27)

<sup>719</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 88)

<sup>720</sup> (Derrida 1993a, 33)

come to ask the blind directly, *donner la parole*, and see whether darkness can be pierced by light? Maybe the eyes/Is can be re-versed and darkness be Peirced?

### *Peirce's in-decision and phaneron*

In this meditation we have been writing – in the colloquial sense, pencil-writing and then computer-typing. Writing is not a dialogue with the Other, even if the Other is taken to be present as another within oneself – we saw this earlier with Plato. We cannot engage in dialogue with the Other through writing no less with the blind. We cannot ask the Other, in this case the blind, about their ‘blind’ intuitions directly. What we could do, here in writing, is to attempt to approximate the Other by questioning the universally given with respect to the eye/I. To take up the thread of our previous analysis, if there is such a given which is given universally and necessary, then what is given in its givenness must be able to be given to all to whom it can be given – the blind included. The *a priori* given is either the object, that which is objectively given irrespective of differences, meaning, or the gift. Charles Sanders Peirce deals with all three. We shall start with the objectively given.

The objectively given shall be able to recur to everyone who wishes to repeat the observation of what is given. Their report of what is given must be the same as anyone else's. This is Peirce's critical starting point. “Indeed, he [anyone] must actually repeat my observations for himself, or else I shall more utterly fail to convey my meaning than if I were to discourse of effects of chromatic decoration to a man congenitally blind.”<sup>721</sup> This decided (non)decision allows Peirce *to look for and look after* rather than *look at* the phenomenon as “the collective total of all that is in any way or in any sense present to the mind, quite regardless of whether it corresponds to any real thing or not.”<sup>722</sup> If we ask to whose mind this presence is taking place, where and when, Peirce says “I reply that I leave these questions unanswered, never having entertained a doubt that those features of the phaneron that I have found in my mind are present at all times and to all minds.”<sup>723</sup>

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<sup>721</sup> (Peirce, *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* 1955, 74-5) Peirce's *Collected Papers* will be cited according to the canonical referencing. Referencing with pages will refer to other collections.

<sup>722</sup> (Ibid., 75)

<sup>723</sup> (Ibid., 141)



This universality, this ‘phaneron’ makes no claim for the kind of being for whom (such) presence (it) is; be they blind or of different ethnicity, sex(uality), age *et cetera*. Peirce will describe what is present objectively through the *φανερών* (phaneron).

First, we have to dispense of the definite article. Phaneron is indefinite with respect to whom ‘it’ is present. Phaneron disregards our differences physiological, psychological or historical.<sup>724</sup> One might say that presence is so stretched to the point of being practically an absence since nothing could be found universally to be presented among so diverse a number of beings. This is precisely the question that André De Tienne poses in his analysis of phaneron.<sup>725</sup> Such an objection, however, reveals that we try to analogise phaneron with “phenomenon” of classical phenomenology, a privative phenomenon, an idiosyncratically lived phenomenon; or with “idea” or “representation” of post-Kantian philosophies. But Peirce does not talk about a presence *of, that which* is present, or an *object of* intuition, but presence to any mind whatever. For Peirce, there is no talk of intentionality; no talk of *of* or *about*. These are ways of using the old notion of “idea” (*eidos*) and Peirce thinks that idea is way too narrow a concept to impart the features of phaneron. Phaneron is not bound physiologically, psychologically or historically. The features of phaneron “are perfectly familiar to everybody.”<sup>726</sup> One could say they are *phanera* themselves. *Phaneroscopy*, the science of phaneron, “scrutinizes the direct appearances, and endeavours to combine minute accuracy with the broadest possible explanation.”<sup>727</sup> The question now is how we are to achieve the objectivity (of the features) of phaneron which is familiar to everybody – including the blind.

Most thinkers who reflect on Peirce’s writings start through Peirce’s hierarchy of sciences. In this hierarchy, mathematics is placed as the foundation giving its principles

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<sup>724</sup> The historical can be understood spatio-temporally. For instance, a pencil and a cassette next to each other could be construed for some as an index of how to reel back the cassette tape when it had been “chewed” by a boombox. Now, since cassettes and boomboxes are longer in use, some people might not be able to understand what is present as an index. Phaneron must be phaneron-obvious phenomenon to all, a priori.

<sup>725</sup> (De Tienne 2004)

<sup>726</sup> (Peirce 1955, 142)

<sup>727</sup> (Ibid., 75)

to *Phaneroscopy*. While this way of approaching phaneron has its merits, there are disclaimers that Peirce presents that makes it difficult to follow the hierarchy unquestionably. First,

This classification, which aims to base itself on the principal affinities of the objects classified, is concerned not with all possible sciences, nor with so many branches of knowledge, but with sciences *in their present condition*, as so many *businesses of groups of living men*. It borrows its *idea* from Comte's classification; namely, *the idea that one science depends upon another for fundamental principles*, but does not furnish such principles to that other.<sup>728</sup>

This hierarchy could not be taken as foundational precisely because it reflects the present condition, that is, the time of Peirce's writing. If it were to be taken as foundational and immutable, such a decision would clash with Peirce's strong adherence to the principle of fallibility according to which no established and eternal truths exist. For Peirce everything evolves, there is synechism in the world and thus such a hierarchy cannot be taken as absolutely foundational – it has pragmatic rather than ontological value.

Second, the sciences at the time, and to a critical extent today, are not carried out irrespective of one's self-preservation. To occupy oneself with the investigation of truth “for some ulterior purpose, such as to make money, or to amend his life, or to benefit his fellows, he may be ever so much better than a scientific man.”<sup>729</sup> Here Peirce's worries parallel those of Plato and Nietzsche with respect to the professionalisation of the sciences. To what extent can philosophy be a business for making a living without itself being compromised by that end? “Relatively,” says Peirce, “knowledge even of a purely scientific kind has a money value.”<sup>730</sup>

Finally, the third reason concerns the idea about whether a foundational science can provide its principles to other sciences without itself being dependent on the other sciences for its own. Now, this is an idea borrowed from Comte. Again, it is an *idea* and

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<sup>728</sup> (Peirce 1931, I.180; emphases added)

<sup>729</sup> (Ibid., CP I.45)

<sup>730</sup> (Ibid., CP I.120)

not a fact nor an established, no less an absolute truth – maybe an axiomatic principle but not absolute truth. But is the idea a proper fit for phaneron?

The role of an idea is impertinent for an investigation of phaneron. Peirce writes:

English philosophers have quite commonly used the word idea in a sense approaching to that which I give to phaneron. But in various ways they have restricted the meaning of it too much to cover my conception (if conception it can be called), besides giving a psychological connotation to their word which I am careful to exclude. The fact that they have the habit of saying that “there is no such idea” as this or that, in the very same breath in which they definitely describe the phaneron in question, renders their term fatally inapt for my purpose.<sup>731</sup>

To say “there is” or “there is not” is a habit. For Peirce ‘Being,’ feels an empty conception.<sup>732</sup> Thinking or conceiving is an act. Thinking is carried out through signs’ and signs are tools we use in order to do something. The habit of saying is an extension of a habit of doing. This is not just a Humean reiteration that thinking relies on a customary association of ideas. This thesis is much stronger. It is akin to Nietzsche’s thesis that thought is nothing more or less than habits or addictions of doing or making things. Does this mean that mathematical reasoning is also such a habitual thinking? To explore this question we shall go back to the hierarchy and to mathematics.

With few exceptions,<sup>733</sup> philosophers think that mathematics is considered as the foundation of all sciences by Peirce. “Peirce’s classification of the sciences stipulates that mathematics is the most fundamental of all sciences for the reason that it is the only one that is completely groundless, unsupported by any other science, and independent of worldly experience.”<sup>734</sup> Indeed, Peirce writes that mathematics is a rigorous, consistent thus groundless. But this groundlessness is also irresponsibility. The groundlessness and

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<sup>731</sup> (Ibid., CP I.285)

<sup>732</sup> (Ibid., CP I.548)

<sup>733</sup> For example, Peter Skagestad (2006) and Sandra Rosenthal (2006) seem to diverge from such ‘orthodox’ readings of Peirce.

<sup>734</sup> (De Tienne 2004, 1)

independence is not some ultra transcendental form of the book of the universe. “Mathematics studies what is and what is not logically possible, without making itself responsible for its actual existence.<sup>735</sup> It is a tool in the sense that “mathematical reasoning is a *logica utens* which it develops for itself, and has no need of an appeal to a *logica docens*.”<sup>736</sup> Mathematics is not a “closed book” as some “family of minds” take it to be.<sup>737</sup> It is very rigorous and consistent because it is utterly ideal. The principles of mathematics are not to be deliberated. Once set, everything follows from them objectively irrespective of idiosyncrasies. Mathematical thinking is a train of thought. But so is man’s reasoning overall, “a train of thought.”<sup>738</sup> Once the tracks are set, it goes by itself, like a train. But how are these tracks, these principles set? Are the principles phaneron? Who sets them? Are they objectively given? And who/what drives this train of thought?

To look for an answer to these questions let us go back to the beginning. Peirce himself writes that his whole work is but a mathematical treatise, it follows rigorously from some basic axioms. But when it comes to these axioms:

My book will have no instruction to impart to anybody. Like a mathematical treatise, it will suggest certain ideas and certain reasons for holding them true; but then, if you accept them, it must be because you like my reasons, and the responsibility lies with you.<sup>739</sup>

The responsibility lies with us. We can either decide to follow them or not – like in the *nomothetis* we encountered in *Cratylus*. And this is also the case for any mathematical reasoning. Peirce seems to be following Berkeley and Erasmus in that, when it comes to formulating axiomatic principles, there is no transcendentalism involved but just responsibility.<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>735</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.184)

<sup>736</sup> (Ibid., CP I.417)

<sup>737</sup> (Ibid., CP I. 570)

<sup>738</sup> (Peirce 1992, 54)

<sup>739</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.11)

<sup>740</sup> ...or is it folly? For Desiderius Erasmus only folly can approximate to this thinking when it comes to arithmetic mathematics. Mathematics just like sciences “crept into the world with other the [sic] pests of mankind, from the same head from whence all other mischiefs spring” (1913, 63). Berkeley’s admonition,

But of late mathematicians have fully agreed that the axioms of geometry (as they are wrongly called) are not by any means evidently true. Euclid, be it observed, never pretended they were evident; he does not reckon them among his *κοιναί έννοιαι* [common concepts/concerns], or things everybody knows, but among the *αίτήματα* postulates, or things the author must beg you to admit, because he is unable to prove them<sup>741</sup>.

There seems little room to think phaneron according to arithmetic mathematics or the hierarchy. But before listing another possible objection to Peirce's mathematics, let us scope, observe carefully, what this passage suggests. Those things that the author must beg you to admit reveal an ontology which is distinct from that of the common things. As we saw earlier, there are two 'ontologies,' the apophantic and the apophatic (the imperative). Peirce acknowledges that which Aristotle did not question; there is decision on whether one wants to admit to something or not. Responsibility precedes action.

Yet, the most important reason for which Peirce cannot accept traditional mathematics as a foundation for analysing phaneron is his attitude to the PNC and the principle of excluded middle that is derived from it. In the formula  $1+1=2$  the relations '+' and '=' both partake and do not partake in the result of '2.' There are three relations that are not accounted for but are responsible for this truth: unity, equity/equation, addition/prosthesis. Ideally, this formula can be taken as fact. It is a fact that if you accept the axiomatic principles then, necessarily, you will end up with this formula. But in everyday experience, such a fact cannot take place. Nothing can be given in the world to compel us to admit that this formula is a fact. We are responsible for making this happen. Setting the principles of science is an event. And for Peirce, as Sandra Rosenthal aptly put it, "the independently real as a continuum of events is precisely that to which neither

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however, is closer to Peirce. Mathematics though producing statements with rare clarity and consistency according to its own rules and principles, and though "their way of deduction from those principles clear and incontestable... there may be certain *erroneous maxims* of greater extent than the object of Mathematics, and for that reason not expressly mentioned, though tacitly supposed, throughout the whole progress of that science" (1901, 324; emphases added).

<sup>741</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.130)

the law of noncontradiction nor the law of excluded middle is perfectly applicable.”<sup>742</sup> A phaneroscopist “will be sure sooner or later to become entangled in a quarrel with the principle of excluded middle.”<sup>743</sup> Mathematical reasoning in the modern sense excludes the middle. We, as phaneroscopists, shall quarrel with it, and with logical entailment, we shall quarrel with such mathematics.

Perhaps, Peirce’s mathematics can be conceived as rigorous and consistent reasoning in another sense. Nearly all Peirce scholars talk about the primacy of Peirce’s logical reasoning and they point to his logical analysis as looking at the laws or structures according to which inferences are made.<sup>744</sup> The kinds of reasoning that Peirce talks about are classical deduction, induction, and abduction. While being critical of the Greek Aristotelian logic in the sense of syllogistic inferences, Peirce did acknowledge the role of Analogy as a combination of induction and retroduction. But these kinds of reasoning rely on a “habit-taking faculty.”<sup>745</sup> They are “inferential habits.”<sup>746</sup> “There are still other operations of the mind to which the name “reasoning” is especially appropriate, although it is not the prevailing habit of speech to call them so.”<sup>747</sup> Maybe this other sense of mathematical reasoning which could be the foundation of phaneroscopy implies operations of the mind for which we do not have *the prevailing habit of speech*. In this sense, mathematical reasoning might be consistency and rigorousness as responsibility and justice. *Let mathematics be* in the ancient habit of semeiosis, that is, of *mathesis*, that is learning. If we disentangle mathematical reasoning from arithmetic, from numbers,

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<sup>742</sup> (Rosenthal 2006, 205) It is thus very difficult to follow Houser’s (1989) and Bellucci’s (2015) conclusion that there is an isomorphism between experience and arithmetic mathematics. We could conclude that experience actualises a mathematical structure with the proviso that we are responsible for this actualisation. As Husserl admits in the *Ideas I* if we had not learn to count in (particular) numbers, it is highly unlikely that the world would reveal itself arithmetically.

<sup>743</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.434)

<sup>744</sup> As Joseph Ransdell (1989) carefully observes, what we refer to today as logic would be classified as logic in the narrow sense in Peirce. The broad sense would be reasoning including logos as analogised in this journal.

<sup>745</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.351)

<sup>746</sup> (Ibid., CP II.64)

<sup>747</sup> (Ibid., CP I.608)

which are our creation, then *mathesis*, that is learning, will be animated by our desire as “the true scientific *Eros*.”<sup>748</sup> *Eros* is not love, but what precedes the materialised/realised questioning. Peirce calls it the first principle of reason: *desire to learn*.<sup>749</sup> The desire to learn starts with questioning. This is authentic *mathesis*/mathematical reasoning. Untainted by any authorities this *eros/ἔρωσ* takes its authentic meaning of a continuous rhythm of questioning (*ἔρώ-τησις*) which is not *arhythmic*. *Mathesis* questions the rhythm of life. Numbers are a system with a determinate rhythm asynchronous to life:

Numbers are merely a system of names devised by men for the purpose of counting. It is a matter of real fact to say that in a certain room there are two persons. It is a matter of fact to say that each person has two eyes. It is a matter of fact to say that there are four eyes in the room. But to say that if there are two persons and each person has two eyes there will be four eyes is not a statement of fact, but a statement about the system of numbers which is our own creation.<sup>750</sup>

This creation is a technology based on a *logica utens*. But this technology belies a “*science of the eye*.”<sup>751</sup> Mathematical reasoning as reasoning with numbers is, as all thinking, notational; it is a system of names, signs, revealing a tool requiring eyes and hands in order to. Mathematical reasoning with numbers, like algebra and geometry, is indeed a powerful instrument – one could even say magical. As Skagestad mentions, Peirce has shown how “the specific material quality of a sign enables the precise kind of reasoning it makes possible.”<sup>752</sup> Any instrument, any tool requires a particular manipulation. But this particularity is not consistent with the generality of *phaneron*. If mathematics is first foundational, then it cannot be the kind of mathematics which is restricted to numbers with a particular aim. The aim must be universal. Reasoning is an

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<sup>748</sup> (Ibid., CP I.620)

<sup>749</sup> (Ibid., CP I.135)

<sup>750</sup> (Ibid., CP I.149)

<sup>751</sup> (Ibid., CP I.34)

<sup>752</sup> (Skagestad 2006, 252 )

“uncommon gift,”<sup>753</sup> “something that can never have been completely embodied.”<sup>754</sup> The mathematics of Peirce are a mathematics of responsibility and justice. This mathematical reasoning is *just* as ethics (is). There is almost an exact parallelism between them. They bear the same logic; they are homo-logous, analogous to each other, each being the counterpart to the Other; two sides of one shield. Neither *symphonious* nor equal, nor identical, but the same in sense, in common, synchronous. The “ideals of good logic are truly of the same general nature as ideals of fine conduct.”<sup>755</sup> Almost *exact* parallelism – one with, alongside, the other, on the same path. Therefore, *let* mathematical reasoning *be* foundational not as applying numbers to life to calculate it, but by applying the responsibility and justice that they presuppose as rigour and consistency to make sense of it. Hence,

[i]f there are really any such necessary characteristics of mathematical hypotheses as I have just declared in advance that we shall find that there [are], this necessity must spring from some truth so broad as to hold not only for the universe we know but for every world that poet could create. And this truth like every truth must come to us by the way of experience.<sup>756</sup>

After all is said and done, “nothing is truer than true poetry.”<sup>757</sup> The poet is rhythmic mathematician rather than an *arithmetic* one. Peirce talks about mathematics without numbers: “The common definition, among such people as ordinary schoolmasters, still is that mathematics is the science of quantity. As this is inevitably understood in English, it seems to be a misunderstanding of a definition which may be very old.”<sup>758</sup> Mathematical reasoning is rhythmic, it is just about universal life and experience. Peirce appears as the first *bio-logist* – with the concept of *bios* explored in the first steps of this journey. So, let us *go by way of experience*.

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<sup>753</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 657)

<sup>754</sup> (Ibid., CP I. 614)

<sup>755</sup> (Ibid., CP I. 333)

<sup>756</sup> (Ibid., CP I.417).

<sup>757</sup> (Ibid., CP I.315).

<sup>758</sup> (Ibid., CP IV. 231)



So far, we have seen that we could not rely or re-lie on the traditional mathematical reasoning to approach the universality of the givenness; those elements which Peirce takes to make up phaneron and which are present to everyone with no exception. Objectivity is justice, as Nietzsche claims during the same period in an untimely manner: something common to all. This objectivity is not an object thought nominalistically. It is universal in the sense of being reported by all, by being uni-versed. There is always some previous private habit, private thought, some ex-ception which might derail us from the uni-verse for which we are looking. The rigorousness that we need is the responsibility in being just to all. Therefore, we cannot any longer rely on the hierarchy of knowledge as the “present condition of the sciences.” With the utmost rigour, we cannot rely on any hierarchy because any such classification compromises justice, a just classification (ac)cording (to) all – in all senses of according. Therefore, we need another passage to *Phaneroscopy*, an other Peircian passage to follow:

The student’s great effort is not to be influenced by any tradition, any authority, any reasons for supposing that such and such ought to be the facts, or any fancies of any kind, and to confine himself to honest, single minded observation of the appearances. The reader, upon his side, must repeat the author’s observations for himself, and decide from his own observations whether the author’s account of the appearances is correct or not.<sup>759</sup>

At this point, Peirce sounds as if he is proposing some kind of Cartesian or Husserlian reduction. Peirce says “every reader can control the accuracy of what I am going to say about them.”<sup>760</sup> Ransdell who identifies Peirce as a kind of phenomenologist argues that we cannot consider Peirce inviting us to a reduction because reduction implies doubting and for Peirce that is sham reasoning. Peirce did not dismiss doubt and skepticism. His problem with the reduction of Cartesian and Husserlian phenomenology is its negativity and violence against existence. Starting with experience, or rather, life, is pure positivity. Why doubt this? We do not have to seclude, isolate, and reduce ourselves in order to do justice to the phenomena. Rather than a reduction, Peirce invites us to directly engage with the appearances: to be honest with what we are observing, scoping with care,

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<sup>759</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 286)

<sup>760</sup> (Ibid., CP I.286-7)

carefully. What we scope, we report. As Randsell reports, with Peirce, such scientific inquiry does not refer to “any special type of property of the subject-matter of the science ...or by reference to some special “scientific method” (in the sense in which that would usually be understood), but rather by reference to the communicational relationships of its practitioners, considered as members of a potentially infinite community of shared cognitive concern.”<sup>761</sup> The mathematics of science in Peirce is looking for and reporting, logging *bios*, a *bio-logicis*: justly and responsibly. And the reporting is engaging in communication with Others.

Let us scope Peirce’s report then. Peirce starts with an analogy to chemistry and what counts as the most fundamental elements in this science. De Tienne advises to “bear in mind the importance of the chemical analogy, which explains why Peirce was for a while tempted to call his new science by the name of “phanerochemistry.” It was with the eyes of the trained chemist and mathematician that he wanted to observe the phaneron.”<sup>762</sup> We have *seen* how the eyes cannot be taken as the logic of vision or the spectacle theory of knowledge for Peirce – this is the case for the pragmatists as we show earlier with Rorty and Dewey. We shall question it again later. For the moment, let us lift the punctuation<sup>763</sup> of De Tienne’s quotation about the importance of chemical elements and their valences and see how Peirce’s writing f(ol)lows:

Why do I seem to see my reader draw back? Does he fear to be compromised by my bias, due to preconceived views? Oh, very well; yes, I do bring some convictions to the inquiry. But let us begin by subjecting these to criticism, postponing actual observation until all preconceptions are disposed of, one way or the other.<sup>764</sup>

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<sup>761</sup> (Randsell 1989, 6)

<sup>762</sup> (De Tienne 2004, 13)

<sup>763</sup> There is much to be said about how much Peirce understood the importance of punctuation. To punctuate is to decide where to put a sign, a mark. The principle of continuity and synechism which held firmly, and which reveals true evolution, is never punctuated in itself. Desire creates classes he tells us; what we think of as natural kinds or classes depends on our punctuation. Even if one were to decide that there are natural classes then they must admit some evolving passage from one into another.

<sup>764</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 289-90)

Peirce never denies that we all have presuppositions and that there is no objective presuppositionless way of knowing or doing science. The only thing that allows us to pursue the authentically scientific reasoning is by questioning those presuppositions and preconceptions – even those that we are accustomed to think or have been brought up to believe that are definitely true, like  $1+1=2$ , or, to use his favourite example, that  $2 \times 2=4$ . So how can we account for the importance of this analogy? Does Peirce talk in random?

I fear I may be producing the impression of talking at random. It is that I wish the reader to “catch on” to my conception, my point of view; and just as one cannot make a man see that a thing is red, or is beautiful, or is touching, by describing redness, beauty, or pathos, but can only point to something else that is red, beautiful, or pathetic, and say, “Look here too for something like that there,” so if the reader has not been in the habit of conceiving ideas as I conceive them, I can only cast a sort of dragnet into his experience and hope that it may fish up some instance in which he shall have had a similar conception.<sup>765</sup>

By casting “a sort of dragnet” in order to find a similar conception, an analogy, Peirce questions his habitual ways of thinking. One could even say that for Peirce “habitual” and “thinking” are tautologous. Thinking, that is using signs, consists in habits of use. It is these habits that the questioning disturbs. And this questioning within his writing is not reducing the Other in order to try to find them afterwards in a particular schema of what is supposed to be there according to what he takes it to be the common sense in which he, himself, partakes. The Other is always already there as a question, and the Other questions through Peirce. The Other is there in the form of questioning. The presence of the Other is not felt with the eyes of a chemist or a mathematician in the arithmetic way. The Other becomes a critical blind eye on the self, he is trying to “duplicate himself and observe himself with a critical eye.”<sup>766</sup> To allow for phaneron, Peirce (f)allows critically. The constant presence of the blind re-presentation attests to that. Peirce *attempts* (to) the blind who pierces Charles Sanders’ thinking, the envisioned writer. He creates shocks for himself with self-criticism, he is letting-speak his Other:

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<sup>765</sup> (Ibid., CP I.217)

<sup>766</sup> (Ibid., CP I. 626)

Unfortunately, to be cocksure that one is an infallible reasoner is to furnish conclusive evidence either that one does not reason at all, or that one reasons very badly, since that deluded state of mind prevents the constant self-criticism which is, as we shall see, the very life of reasoning. Congratulations, then, from my heart go out to you, my dear Reader, whom I assume to have a sincere desire to learn, not merely the *dicta* of common sense, but what good reasoning, scientifically examined, shall prove to be. You are already an unusually good logician.<sup>767</sup>

The very life of reasoning is constant self-criticism. To follow and question, to-and-fro, questioning and *looking for and looking after* reasons *for* rather than looking *at* reasons *that* explain in the modern (common) sense. This is another mathematical reasoning through justice and responsibility in doing justice to the Other through self-criticism. In the end, “nothing can be more precious to a sincere student than frank and sincere objection.” The scientific spirit is always questioning, “demands reasons” echoing Nietzsche, while “the rest demand faith.”<sup>768</sup>

Before we proceed, we cannot but allow another observation to be noted. Keeping the rhythm, the flow of questions coming to being, we are compelled to see “family resemblances”<sup>769</sup> with some feminist reasoning which “continues to interrogate,”<sup>770</sup> to keep questioning itself. Luce Irigaray writes according to her point of view, writing (as) woman, just like Peirce’s writing (as) man of vision. A passage is written and immediately *after*, another passage comes to pass a question on it as a whole inspired by the Other. The order is not of expropriating the Other. The Other is not grasped and asphyxiated. The Other is not categorised according to what seems evident to oneself. The Other is neither seen nor gazed, not captured by an eye/I. The Other is not re-garded. It is the Other who regards the self. The Other is not looked at, the Other is

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<sup>767</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP II.123)

<sup>768</sup> (Nietzsche 1996, 108)

<sup>769</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.29)

<sup>770</sup> (Irigaray 1977, 119)

*looked for* through an extension of (the one of the) self; there is a quest for the Other through questioning oneself. This is an extension of oneself, a quest(ion). The question is an attempt to reach the Other and touch them before falling back to what one will say about the(ir) being that is. It is an effort of resisting oneself in being blind toward the Other. It is a move toward the tempo of the Other, an *attempt* to touch their course of experience, their tempo.<sup>771</sup> An “effort – for one cannot simply leap outside that discourse – to situate myself at borders and to move continuously from the inside to the outside.”<sup>772</sup> And since the properly Other is missing in writing, it is writing that invites the Other as an interlocutor who questions at the borders.<sup>773</sup> As Margaret Whitford notices, in the writings of Irigaray, there is a dual purpose; “she wishes to occupy the position of analyst and analysand simultaneously.”<sup>774</sup> Just like Peirce who states and questions in order to verify or question a statement further. The quest starts with *what there is* according to one’s logic and continues as a dia-logic, a dialogue through questioning. It is not only finding the universal elements of phaneron. It is to be able to have them versed-by-all, uni-vers-all-y. The Other as questioning takes the role of a verification principle in Peirce’s writing. To use Merleau-Ponty’s phrase, questioning as we try to reach the Other provides a “second openness”<sup>775</sup> to the world. At the same time that it limits my own view of the world; it enlarges it with another possibility – with extra eyes/Is. Without quarrelling with the PNC we cannot see how to limit a subjective view is at the same time to enlarge it. If we keep the schema of what the world is, the schema of Being and knowledge, the Other follows my limited schema to allow for an enhancement. With only myself, one I, I can only look at what is only for me. With questioning myself, I can

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<sup>771</sup> When Husserl decides to set Phenomenology as the Critique of Knowledge, the possibility of the knowledge of the possibility of knowledge, it is the Other as deaf and blind who comes to help him – the possibility of knowing how music is possible requires silence just like the seeing as knowing needs blindness (Husserl 1999, 30; 46).

<sup>772</sup> (Irigaray 1977, 122)

<sup>773</sup> An anastrophe: “to turn back on our path to question ourselves about where we are already situated” (Irigaray 2002, 7).

<sup>774</sup> (Whitford 1986, 8)

<sup>775</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 59)

extend this looking by looking for the Other, another I. And with the Other present I can look for more and look at more. It is a logos of letting-tell rather than letting-be: a dialogue.

Now, let us follow Peirce and try to find the *a priori* elements of phaneron. Peirce sometimes calls them categories and as such *Phaneroscopy* could be called the “doctrine of categories.”<sup>776</sup> For Peirce these consist of three indecomposable elements which he calls firstness, secondness and thirdness. Peirce uses various words to describe these three hypothesised categories. Firstness: feeling, presence, quality, possibility, chance, life. Secondness: (brute) fact, reaction, (brute) force, absolute last, haecceity, existence. Thirdness: thought, law, learning, habit, representation, idea. Peirce also talks about degenerate forms of these elements or categories. Why degenerate? One could say that if these are the universal categories then they should also be found within each individually. Yet that would violate the principle of indecomposability that Peirce uses to characterise them. The degeneracy then must take on a different principle. If we take the principle of synechism and continuity, then the categories, while being indecomposable, must have a way of being connected, that is, there must be a pathway from one category to the other. One will not generate the Other as in a type of hierarchical ordering but one will degenerate (into) the Other. Each category departs from its race and its kind and touches the other. Let us keep this hypothesis in reserve and start engaging with Peirce’s report.

To begin, we will report on an experiment that we repeated according to his instructions. We put our shoulder against the door. There is a two-sided consciousness of resistance and effort. This is secondness, the being of actual fact. However, secondness is not the above proposition “The brute fact....” . The proposition about a brute fact, an actual fact of experience as felt, is a representation of it, not a re-presentation. The medium of representation, a thought about a brute fact, is thirdness. It is the course itself as (having been) felt which is the brute fact, it is what it is, “it *just* is.”<sup>777</sup> The justness, the exactitude of fact *is* past/passed as having been felt. This ‘is’ is plural; forces (having been) felt as compulsion. “Force is compulsion; and compulsion is *hic et nunc*.”<sup>778</sup> Thus, secondness is all about tensed presence. Firstness consists of qualities and possibilities of

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<sup>776</sup> (Ransdell 1989, 1)

<sup>777</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.145)

<sup>778</sup> (Ibid., CP I.212)

feeling forces. The possibility of coming to presence which is always passed through thirdness; the ways to represent the just passed/past. Secondness is a junction of forces and so an event: “The event is the existential junction of *states* (that is, of that which in existence corresponds to a *statement* about a given subject in representation) whose combination in one subject would violate the logical law of contradiction.”<sup>779</sup> Let us scope out these categories further.

Richard Atkins has argued that the three Cenopythagorean/Kainopythagorean categories (firstness, secondness, and thirdness) do not exhaust the scope of *Phaneroscopy*. In providing textual evidence from Peirce’s writings he concludes that *Phaneroscopy* aims also at uncovering a “second set of categories”<sup>780</sup> distinct from the Cenopythagorean ones and qualitative in nature. This second set is supposed to explain what the first set has left unaccounted. Apart from the textual evidence, Atkins gives us the example of a perception to motivate this concomitant phaneroscopic programme: the example of perceiving a black phone. But before analysing this example let us briefly mention that, as Atkins underscores, secondness is a dyadic relation, firstness is a monadic, and thirdness is triadic. The monad is not identity. Identity implies negation, thus secondness. For something to have an identity there must be something else which it is not – either particular or universal in the classical sense. Peirce attempts to show that any further or polyadic relations can be built up through dyads or triads. We should not think of thirdness as composed of a dyad and a monad, nor a dyad as two monads. Thirdness makes the connection and involves the elements. It is involution. It is what weaves, what unifies by creating a plexus, what com-plexes. Thirdness is “a conception of complexity.”<sup>781</sup> This observation comes back to verify the fact that arithmetic mathematics is not the kind of reasoning apt for dealing with the phaneron since the relations and forces which make the results possible are non-accountable. It could neither

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<sup>779</sup> (Ibid., CP I.494; emphases in original)

<sup>780</sup> (Atkins 2012, 10)

<sup>781</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 526)

be related exclusively with chemistry as in chemistry there are indecomposable elements whose valency extends the triad.<sup>782</sup>

Let us go back to Atkins's example and the perception of a black phone: "When it comes to a feeling of some thing, say, my black phone. First, we have a feeling of my black phone, namely the black itself. Second, we have the brute fact of the black phone. The black phone and I stand in a dyadic relationship of ego and non-ego."<sup>783</sup> For Atkins qualities like 'red' are first. He also insists that "it was precisely among the different colours – their vividness and the quantities of their qualities – that Peirce had managed to glimpse the second set of categories."<sup>784</sup> Let us proceed with what Peirce has advised us, that is, that we "must *analyze* the phaneron by separating the decomposable from the indecomposable elements"<sup>785</sup> and question them. Atkins starts the second part of his paper by underscoring the importance of "separating the decomposable from indecomposable elements of the phaneron."<sup>786</sup>

The perception of the black phone. This perception of the black phone presupposes vision. Can it be an obvious phenomenon,<sup>787</sup> phaneron for the blind? No. For the blind *there is not* a black phone, for the envisioned *there is*. To take colour sensations as first featuring phaneron would belie a democratic implicature of vision. Atkins's statement would be true, universal, phaneron, only insofar as one starts with the brute fact of the envisioned; only if the indefinite community of phaneroscopists as community of scientists had eyes like ours. This is not universalisable nor does it conform to minute accuracy.

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<sup>782</sup> The philosophical importance of the indecomposability of the triad will be inspected later as it is analogous to the possibility of the gift. Donald W. Mertz has argued that not all logical polyadic relations can be reduced to the triad and, echoing Derrida along another path, they both cast serious doubt on the possibility of the possibility of the gift or the formula 'A gives B to C' (1979).

<sup>783</sup> (Atkins 2012, 13)

<sup>784</sup> (Ibid., 14)

<sup>785</sup> (Ibid., 7)

<sup>786</sup> (Atkins 2013a, 97)

<sup>787</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.127)



Peirce gives a great many examples with colour sensations. But he is very careful to say that the sensation is not feeling and thus not quality, not firstness. A sensation of blackness is not part of the indecomposable elements of phaneron but supersedes it. Sensation is a combination of feeling (firstness) and medium (organ of perception). “That quality is dependent upon sense is the great error of the conceptualists.”<sup>788</sup> Sensations are idiosyncratic because they depend on the particularity of each sensation. Feeling as part of phaneron cannot be a particular sensation, a modality of sense which implies a (prior) classification of sense. “The blind man from birth has no such feelings as red, blue, or any other colour; and without any body at all, it is probable we should have no feelings at all.”<sup>789</sup> Even if one forgets about the imaginary blind fellow who is always there (and follows) to question (by fallowing) Peirce, the following passage seems defining:

That mere *quality*, or suchness, is not in itself an occurrence, as seeing a red object is; it is a mere may-be. Its only being consists in the fact that there *might be* such a peculiar, positive, suchness in a phaneron. When I say it is a quality, I do not mean that it “inheres” in [a] subject. That is a phaneron peculiar to metaphysical thought, not involved in the sensation itself, and therefore not in the quality of feeling, which is entirely contained, or superseded, in the actual sensation.<sup>790</sup>

Atkins’s statement that “qualities like *red* are Firsts”<sup>791</sup> becomes true only if the standard of the analysis is the principle of the majority. We could call redness a phenomenon in the classical sense but not an indecomposable element of phaneron. Christopher Hookway, for instance, appreciates that colour perception is not universalisable nor does it conform to minute accuracy. “Unless we think that all inquirers must possess visual apparatus like ours or that they will inevitably encounter creatures that possess such visual apparatus, ...colour propositions cannot be true and that their objects are not real.”<sup>792</sup>

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<sup>788</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.422)

<sup>789</sup> (Ibid., CP VII.586)

<sup>790</sup> (Ibid., CP. I.304)

<sup>791</sup> (Atkins 2012, 7; emphasis in original)

<sup>792</sup> (Hookway 2006, 131). To be fair, in the second part of his essay, and in a very insightful essay on the role of prescinding and abstracting in phaneroscopic analysis, Atkins acknowledges that we start our inquiry

Phaneroscopically there cannot be the black phone, neither black nor phone nor black phone. Phaneroscopically, *there is* and *there is not* a black phone on the table. The presuppositions of sensing through vision or through *particular* parts of the body as organs of perception linked to distinct senses presuppose distinctions that cannot be universalisable not even *prima facie*. De Tienne writes that “L’*esse* du phanéron est son *percipi*...et le *perceptum* ne se détache pas du percipiens.”<sup>793</sup> Let us combine this Berkeleyan thesis that Peirce follows with the axiom of phaneron being present to any mind whatever. Since there are percipiens with no vision, does it not follow with strict logical entailment that the feeling as firstness, as indecomposable element of phaneron cannot be a colour sensation? And if one wants to start with colour phenomena would that not be mean that colour must be decomposed based on those who do not feel it?

In addition, thinking colour sensations as first belies a nominalistic habit. Peirce says: “If we say “The stove is black,” the stove is the *substance*, from which its blackness has not been differentiated, and the *is*, while it leaves the substance just as it was seen, explains its confusedness, by the application to it of *blackness* as a predicate.”<sup>794</sup> The perception of the phone as that of the stove already includes the colour quality, it is part of the experience. Once again, Peirce seems to be following Berkeley. A substance is the

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“in the thick of language and laden with presuppositions” (2012, 107). Our aporia is why Atkins does not question these presuppositions as Peirce constantly does by performing on his observation the required “pre-scissive abstraction” rather than being entangled in some sort of hypostatisation. It is unsurprising that he concludes that there is a paradox in Peircean about qualities being described (putatively) as both decomposable and indecomposable. Similarly, Hookway, while identifying that truth for Peirce is convergence he never questions how this convergence comes to be. Entangled in nominalism and representationalism he looks instead at true propositions forgetting that propositions are a modality of representation – thirdness – and thus neglects that truth as convergence might reside in some sort of communication of feeling. He does appreciate a quote where Peirce talks about it as force that we feel (2006, 141) but as he is working only with propositions he cannot appreciate the quality of truth as feeling. Truth “(if there be any truth) shall be part of the existential fact and not merely of thought” (CP I.489). If he did, as De Tienne does, he would have ended into a paradox of whether the phaneron and its truth needs expression as description or judgment.

<sup>793</sup> (De Tienne 2000, 99)

<sup>794</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP. I.548 )

sum total of its qualities. Nominalists (following Aristotle) divide a substance into essential (primary) and accidental (secondary) qualities through some (techno)logical medium. For instance, John Locke<sup>795</sup> talked about the microscope. But Berkeley said that what we see through the microscope could still be said to have phenomenal qualities. What would be the difference? The microscope or the telescope do not change the qualities of the *percipium*, they only enhance the quantity of the quality – we still use our eyes. Colour is indeed a quality but not a phaneroscopic quality. Colour quality refers to the experience of the envisioned. In *one sense* it is accidental and not essential.<sup>796</sup> In *another* sense, the blind sense, it is neither, it simply *is* not. What it would be, where it would ‘inhere’ would be in the subjective discourse of a definite, particular group of envisioned scientists of the particular/particle.<sup>797</sup> Or, to create another parallel with Irigaray, a hom(m)osensual exchange.

“That quality is dependent upon sense is the great error of the conceptualists.” Let us explore this anew. Quality is not dependent upon sense. De Tienne, for instance, agrees that “le phaneron ne se limite pas à ce qui apparait à nos sens.”<sup>798</sup> But following this, he takes sensations such as pleasure or pain as indecomposable elements, thus feeling. With the thesis that feeling is not limited in sensations Peirce continues: “as for pleasure and pain, which Kant and others have represented to be of the essence of feeling... we certainly do not think that unadulterated feeling”<sup>799</sup> ...“no feeling could be common to all pleasures and none to all pains”<sup>800</sup> These are theses of hedonism which involve negation and negativity. Pain is explained as privation of pleasure. Feeling, however, is

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<sup>795</sup> (Locke 2013)

<sup>796</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.527)

<sup>797</sup> This is another instance where Peirce comes approximates Nietzsche. Our physics he says, “is one way of interpretation, an interpretation driven by sensualism Eyes and fingers speak in its favor, visual evidence and palpableness do, too: this strikes an age with fundamentally plebeian tastes as fascinating, persuasive, and *convincing* - *after* all, it follows instinctively the canon of truth of eternally popular sensualism. What is clear, what is “explained”? Only what can be seen and felt-every problem has to be pursued to that point (Nietzsche 1966, 22).

<sup>798</sup> (De Tienne 2000, 98)

<sup>799</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP. I. 333)

<sup>800</sup> (Ibid.)

pure positivity. Feeling is not sensations. We can phrase this rather awkwardly, that is, in a novel and non-habituated way, saying ‘feeling presences qualities;’ and if the domain of reference, the vestibule of presentation is sense, then they come to be sensations. Feelings do not become sensations but they come to be (as) being sensed. Qualities are presented to us through feeling and are not sensation “which is entirely contained, or superseded, in the actual sensation.”<sup>801</sup> Qualities “are mere may-bes, not necessarily realised.”<sup>802</sup> Through sensations we can come to “know/make sense” qualities. That is why Peirce makes the title of his description “Qualities of Feeling” – “the quality of what we are immediately conscious of.”<sup>803</sup> But being felt is not being sensed. Qualities can be realised in ways other than sense. Peirce’s example is telling:

I can imagine a consciousness whose whole life, alike when wide awake and when drowsy or dreaming, should consist in nothing at all but a violet colour or a stink of rotten cabbage.<sup>804</sup>

We can also add that we can feel pain in the sense of being heart broken. When one hears from their partner that their relationship is over, nothing is felt in the ear which senses the vibrations of the air. The feeling which overwhelms the body and becomes untranslatable and un-locatable is not a sensation, it does not involve the functional body immediately. The abysmal pain of heartbreak is not a sensation but a quality of feeling.<sup>805</sup> Whereas qualities can be realised/actualised as sensations, *in the broadest possible explanation* qualities are realised, they pass from their own mode of being in themselves as possibility – firstness – into a secondness as qualities of feeling *for us*. Therefore, feelings are “the quality of immediate consciousness,”<sup>806</sup> only if they are not interrupted, that is felt, passed into the possibility of being talked about.

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<sup>801</sup> (Peirce 1955, 81)

<sup>802</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>803</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.343)

<sup>804</sup> (Peirce 1955, 81)

<sup>805</sup> Like Wittgenstein’s ‘imponderable feeling’ where everything is blurred in the sense of unusual (1953).

<sup>806</sup> (Peirce 1955, 82)

[f]or example, this or that red is a feeling; and it is perfectly conceivable that a being should have that colour for its entire consciousness, throughout a lapse of time, and therefore at every instant of that time. But such a being could never know anything about its own consciousness. It could not think anything that is expressible as a proposition.<sup>807</sup>

For instance, redness is a possibility for the blind person just as blindness is a possibility for the envisioned – should their eyes function differently or they wear a blindfold. What is before something being sensed is a possibility of sense, a quality that can be sensed according to the sense for which it becomes a sensation. But to say that red is quality or possibility of sense comes *after* having being affected with similar ‘red’ or ‘colour’ experiences otherwise we *could never know anything about it. We could not think anything that is expressible as a proposition.* Here we can see how Peirce follows Hegel in a strange costume as he said. A quality of feeling is what it is not. It has to be resisted somehow in order to be able to come into consciousness and thus be talked about.

Things may perhaps come into relations with others but they may not. For instance, there is no sense to a congenitally blind person to talk about something being yellow. Colour perception is idiosyncratic – as is being colour blind. Firstness is quality, or, better, firstness is all about qualities, pure multiplicity. But these qualities as a mode of being (firstness) are not sensations and attributes. Phenomena phenomenalise themselves with respect and in relation to a plethora of subjects according to their idio-synchratic being – the private grasping, the aiming at *ἴδιον* that we saw we Heidegger. We need always to retain the main thesis of Peirce’s phaneroscopy marking the difference with all other nominalistic philosophies: it “scrutinizes the direct appearances, and endeavors to combine minute accuracy with the broadest possible explanation.”<sup>808</sup> There is never a direct appearance of ‘x’ to a blind person, a deaf person, a person on a wheelchair, a woman, a man, a bourgeois, a farmer or a princess; what there is, is ‘manifold of sense.’

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<sup>807</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.310)

<sup>808</sup> (Peirce 1955, 75)

The way Peirce understands the “manifold of sense,”<sup>809</sup> is “marvelous and infinite diversity.”<sup>810</sup>

The manifold for Peirce is what each (hu)man folds based on their idiosyncratic way so as to synthesise a manifold of sense. And this manifold of sense would also be related to what they desire to do. Rosenthal has an apt phrase to capture this thought: what “enters the structure of human awareness is not an absolute given but a taken.”<sup>811</sup> Firstness is plenum, possibility, quality, which when related to a being to which it can relate is then felt in their particular way of being so related. There is no phenomenon of, or phenomenon, or phenomena; these expressions presuppose some kind of thematisation or objectification, a particular point of view coming from “the idea of being” – nominalism. This leading idea is a regulating idea, a modality of thought thus thirdness. “The first is predominant in feeling, as distinct from objective perception, will, and thought.” It is not that there are qualities: just Qualities.

To talk about qualities of feeling comes *after* creating some sort of rupture in feeling. We should explore this further and observe how it correlates with Peirce’s statement of the “Manifestation of Firstness:”

The idea of First is predominant in the ideas of freshness, life, freedom. The free is that which has not another behind it, determining its actions; but so far as the idea of the negation of another enters, the idea of another enters; and such negative idea must be put in the background, or else we cannot say that the Firstness is predominant. Freedom can only manifest itself in unlimited and uncontrolled variety and multiplicity; and thus the first becomes predominant in the ideas of measureless variety and multiplicity. It is the leading idea of Kant's “manifold of sense”. But in Kant's synthetic unity the idea of Thirdness is predominant. It is an attained unity; and would better have been called totality; for that

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<sup>809</sup> (Peirce 1955, 79)

<sup>810</sup> (Ibid., 66)

<sup>811</sup> (Rosenthal 2006, 197)

is the one of his categories in which it finds a home. In the idea of being, Firstness is predominant, ... in being something peculiar and idiosyncratic. The first is predominant in feeling, as distinct from objective perception, will, and thought.<sup>812</sup>

Let us read this description closely. Peirce talks about freedom and the “idea of” freedom. The idea or a concept of something includes its having been negated not its opposite-negative as in modern logic. “To love and to be loved are regarded as the same concept, and not to love is also to be considered as the same concept.”<sup>813</sup> We cannot talk about freedom unless there is that which resists it. To talk about freedom as firstness we include the negative, the idea in the background *or else we cannot say that the Firstness is predominant*. Therefore, absolute firstness is not only unthinkable, but it does not make any sense in any senses.

Absolute firstness would be a purely monadic state unrelated to anything else, “a suchness *sui generis*.”<sup>814</sup> If firstness is freedom and no otherness is to be found to negate it, then firstness is no thing in particular, thus everything. That is why *freedom can only manifest itself in unlimited and uncontrolled variety and multiplicity*. It is pure *measureless* positivity. An object cannot be firstness as it is contained in a relation with a subject. No unity is in firstness even if it is a determinable concept-less and unschematised appearing as a Kantian intuition. Unity implies otherness as secondness. To give us an idea to which we might approximate absolute firstness Peirce attempts an analogy: it would be like being in a “confused dream,”<sup>815</sup> or a pure quality like a state of feeling in a slumberous condition.<sup>816</sup> An absolute firstness then is sense-less possibility:

For as long as things *do not act upon one another* there is no sense or meaning in saying that they have any being, unless it be that they are *such in themselves that they may perhaps come into relation with others*.<sup>817</sup>

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<sup>812</sup> (Peirce 1955, 79; 1931, CP I.302)

<sup>813</sup> (Ibid., CP I.294)

<sup>814</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.303)

<sup>815</sup> (Ibid., CP. I.175)

<sup>816</sup> (Ibid., CP. I.303)

<sup>817</sup> (Peirce 1955, 76; emphasis added)

Therefore, in talking about freedom negation of life, of freshness, of freedom is implied. Such negation can be taken as reaction, resistance or relation, thus secondness. Not being in any relation is being free. But then Peirce qualifies that and says that *it is not in being separated from qualities that Firstness is most predominant, but in being something peculiar and idiosyncratic*. Because Peirce talks of the manifestation of firstness, firstness can be construed as non-mediated, that is immediate and uninterrupted. It could be a “manifold” of sense without beginning/end: Life – or as we called it earlier *biosis*. Not a Kantian intuition but a constant intuiting. Peirce again meets Nietzsche when he talks about his chaos as multiplicity of forces as “formless unformulable world of the chaos of sensations – another kind of phenomenal world, a kind “unknowable” for us.<sup>818</sup> This formless unformulable is not that there is no feeling. There is *no particular* feeling. We constantly feel while alive as Berkeley underscored. There is a continuous contact, an uninterrupted course, and that is the course of life:

all that is immediately present to a man is what is in his mind in the present instant. His whole life is in the present. But when he asks what is the content of the present instant, his question always comes too late. The present has gone by, and what remains of it is greatly metamorphosed.<sup>819</sup>

Interestingly, what creates a rupture in presence is the question. The question that enables the beginning of knowledge always comes too late. The question signals both a beginning and an end; the end of an uninterrupted course of presence. This uninterrupted course, this chaotic, formless unformulable feeling is not a phaneric flow or, as De Tienne calls it, “courant phanéronique”<sup>820</sup> or “phanéron vécu.”<sup>821</sup> That would be imposing a Kantian and Husserlian view on phaneron as some kind of *subjectiveness*. This peculiar and idiosyncratic flow is firstness *composing* phaneron not phaneron itself. The only possible way to talk of firstness as lived is to resort to the Husserlian and Heideggerian notion of mineness – what we called *biosis*. This is the only way that firstness with respect to each

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<sup>818</sup> (Nietzsche 1968, 307)

<sup>819</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.306)

<sup>820</sup> (De Tienne 2000, 121)

<sup>821</sup> (Ibid., 108)



individual person can be approximated with a thin recourse to secondness and thirdness. If the peculiar and idiosyncratic is taken in such a subjective Kantian way, as absolutely private, then that absolutely private could not be analogised with a private property which has a door to public view, but just private, a purely idiotic feeling about which nothing could be said. A being within a private property with no doors, a Leibnizian windowless monad is an ideal limit. It is a case with no frame. For Peirce, first is always in contact with the second and the third since everything is continuous. There is always a door to allow a passing from private to public. There is never absolute private because there is nothing to be said about it.

Second, not only can we not talk of feeling *per se* but we cannot feel feeling in its entirety but qualities of feeling. This is important because Peirce avoids talking about a genesis of feeling. From our previous quotation:

It is not in being separated from qualities that Firstness is most predominant, but in being something peculiar and idiosyncratic. The first is predominant in feeling, as distinct from objective perception, will, and thought.

Logically speaking, since the issue is not being separated from qualities, feeling, as course of life can be a relation without the dominance of *relata*. We can use De Tienne's expression of "le flux de la manifestation"<sup>822</sup> as an ideal limit of nothing becoming manifested, singled out or taking (pre)dominance. If that is exact, feeling is a constant acting upon one another without either of the *relata* becoming (pre)dominant. It echoes the always already being-with of Heidegger but it diverges from it since the non-predominance would be a result of forces as harmony and fragmentation and not some ontological bond with something transcendental. To make this observation clearer let us follow Peirce's door.

This experiment is conducted in two ways. First, opening a door with a hand, and then with a shoulder. Why the change? This change is important phaneroscopically. Obviously, the hand, the shoulder, the foot, the tongue are all parts of a living body. We could push the door left ajar with any of these parts. The universal is the living body. There is no need to privilege the hand that grasps the knob – or a particular masculine

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<sup>822</sup> (De Tienne 2000, 120)

part of the body which becomes the head of the interpretation. Peirce immediately escapes a possible psychoanalytic charge where his hand is grasping and turning a knob in order to come to his end of opening the door. Knowledge as grasping is overcome and left behind:

Standing on the outside of a door that is slightly ajar, you put your hand upon the knob to open and enter it. You experience an unseen, silent resistance. You put your shoulder against the door and, gathering your forces, put forth a tremendous effort.<sup>823</sup>

And also

You get this kind of consciousness in some approach to purity when you put your shoulder against a door and try to force it open. You have a sense of resistance and at the same time a sense of effort. There can be no resistance without effort; there can be no effort without resistance. They are only two ways of describing the same experience. It is a double consciousness.<sup>824</sup>

Notice ‘in the end’ hand, fingers are questioned; no fingering the door, no grasping a knob for a particular end. There is another justice here which is not sexual. By not privileging any part of the body Peirce invites women in the indefinite community of phaneroscopists as scientists.<sup>825</sup> Phaneroscopy goes beyond sexual differences, because it is living justice: just shoulder and door. (My/Our/Your/His/Her/Any-body’s) shoulder against the door to open it reveals a “two-side consciousness”<sup>826</sup> of effort and resistance. It does not matter how much the resistance is or how much effort is put. The brute fact is that any-living-

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<sup>823</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.320)

<sup>824</sup> (Ibid., CP I.324)

<sup>825</sup> There is no particular body implied in Peirce’s thinking. Peirce touches on Simone De Beauvoir’s critique: “there are conditions without which the very fact of existence itself would seem to be impossible. To be present in the world implies strictly that there exists a body which is at once a material thing in the world and a point of view towards this world; but nothing requires that this body have this or that particular structure (1956, 36).

<sup>826</sup> (Peirce 1955, 76)

body found in this experiential setting would have such an experience. Why? Because it is logical. A logic which is not a logic of the hand or a logic of the head – or the I/eye. It is a logic of embracing, of hugging, of inviting everyone in dialogue. Peirce has pierced his vision and possibly his sex. We could easily say about Peirce what Derrida says about Lévinas. A “masculine point” of view but “a point of view that goes blindly (with no view) into this place of non-light.”<sup>827</sup> And this non-light we have called the no ledge of the blind and the feminine that Peirce does not have but requests it. He he looks for it with questioning himself as the Other that he is not. The no ledge is knowledge away from any particular being. A different kind of knowledge. Peirce’s philosophy draws together pure science with pure justice both of which are implicated in the human business of coming into communication with the Other, of making sense; meaning/intersubjectivity.

But let’s go back to the door opening to a uni-versal logic. Logically speaking, ‘Shoulder to door’ is analogous to ‘living body to material body,’ and the objective fact, as in just fact, as in what is happening exactly, is what is lived by any kind of living body that forces itself upon a non living body: a two-sided consciousness of effort and resistance. Atkins is right to end up talking about forces for his second set of categories but these forces are the indecomposable elements of phaneron revealed for all living bodies in secondness. Hence, the firstness is all about forces with the possibility of becoming manifest through communication with other forces.<sup>828</sup>

What we have to question now is this two-sidedness. Peirce says that effort and resistance are only two ways of describing the same experience. This experience has come *in handy* and has been used plenty of times to describe consciousness as two-sided in classical phenomenology. But can it do justice to all experience without *shouldering* life? From Husserl all the way to Merleau-Ponty there is a hand ‘touching and being touched’ – with the exception of the quest(ion)ing caress of Sartre.<sup>829</sup> For Husserl, the hand

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<sup>827</sup> (Derrida 1997a, 39)

<sup>828</sup> One of Peirce’s favourite examples is the inkstand: “There is a blind force about the inkstand by which it crowds its way into our universe in spite of all we can do” (1931, CP VIII.153).

<sup>829</sup> Unjustifiably missed in Derrida’s profound analysis of touching and the caress, Sartre was the first to notice that “to touch and to be touched, to feel that one is touching and to feel that one is touched – these are two species of phenomena which is useless to try to reunite by the term “double sensations.” (1993,

touching and being touched, the two-way directionality of consciousness is instantaneous. There is no interval between the hand touching and the hand being touched. Merleau-Ponty changes a bit, displaces as Derrida put it, this Husserlian example. The hand touches *passes into* a hand being touched depending on the direct(ed)ness of the constituting conscious body, its attention. For Peirce, the two-sided consciousness seems to lack this *passing into* since we have a sense of resistance *and at the same time* a sense of effort. These are supposed to be two ways of describing the same phenomenon. Let us explore further.

Let's start with the obvious phenomena. It is obvious that the reversibility from effort to resistance requires thought to be represented. While secondness, it requires reversing, and this reversal is a re-versal which can only be attained by thought as a medium. That means, simply, that we are within the world of representation if we reflect on it. As such, it would be a thirdness in secondness precisely because the forces are being evaluated, reflected upon during the act.<sup>830</sup> The reversal would be a thought on feeling not the feeling as being felt in the course of its uninterrupted course of action – its firstness. And it cannot only be secondness since secondness is absolute final. Therefore, if it is in any way singled out it would involve thirdness. But to what extent is this thirdness involved? How far extends its juris-diction? Does it also mean that the very possibility of feeling the reaction requires some kind of thirdness too?

While I am seated calmly in the dark, the lights are suddenly turned on, and at that instant I am conscious, not of a process of change, but yet of something more than can be contained in an instant. I have a sense of a saltus, of there being two sides to that instant. A consciousness of polarity would be a tolerably good phrase to describe what occurs. For will, then, as one of the great types of consciousness, we ought to substitute the polar sense.<sup>831</sup>

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304). For Sartre, even in the case of touching myself, I am “curing myself” – I cannot caress myself, precisely because I cannot reveal myself to myself. The caress which unravels the body and attends to transcend it toward consciousness to reveal it can only come from another consciousness.

<sup>830</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.530).

<sup>831</sup> (Ibid., CP I.381)

Let us keep the ‘saltus’ in reserve as something more that can be contained in an instant; and that the two sides of an instant cannot be conceived without an invisible third dimension to allow for the connection of the two sides. That is what is meant by polarity.

A second experiment:

Today, while I was putting my mare into her stable, in the dusk of the evening, I noticed a black streak upon the floor, which I at first took for a shadow. But upon closer inspection (for my eyes are not as good as they once were) I saw that it was a large black snake. I experienced a certain shock strong enough to enable me to perceive what that shock consisted in, namely, in a sense that the snake was there in spite of me. Now, even if I had anticipated seeing the snake, and even if, anticipating it, I had wished to see it, still, when I did come to see it, I should have experienced something of that same sense of being compelled to see it. Such a sense of compulsion, of a struggle between something within and something without, accompanies every experience whatever.<sup>832</sup>

Peirce is consistent with his descriptions. The two-sided consciousness, the polar sense, the two sides of the shield, the shock, the compulsion, action-reaction, effort-resistance are all attempts to describe the consistency of secondness. While seated calmly in the dark, when the lights are suddenly turned on, there is feeling not only of the new state of affairs in sensing the light but, also, of the change which connects the just passed with what is ‘now.’ If A is the dark and C is the light states of Peirce respectively, there is a saltus, an abrupt transition or a breach of continuity.

In the second example, there is initially a black streak which Peirce *takes to be* a shadow. Rosenthal’s phrasing is again apt. The initial taking does not come to be undifferentiated as a shadow. What is taken, the streak, was within the continuity – we could even say of the community here – of what is to be expected in a stable in the dusk of the evening. The streak *comes to be* a shadow. Does this involve a shock? Not according to the text. A shadow is not a force. For it to have been taken as a shadow will only come about *after* the close inspection and *after* the shock. What that shock consisted

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<sup>832</sup> (Peirce 1931b, CP II.22)

in was *in a sense that the snake was there in spite of me*. What is there in spite of Peirce is an other existence – in this case that of a snake. Existence surprises, it shocks, it resists.

The shock as secondness is Peirce's coming into contact with another existence, another force.<sup>833</sup> Now, in the first example Peirce is alone and there is no other existence in the proximity to justify this reading. Is there an inconsistency with the example of the *saltus*? No. We could appreciate existence in the light either as an extended force or think logically how it could be that *the lights are suddenly turned on* and then we can understand that another existence is manifested there under the principle of continuity – from afar. Does this passive voice not imply some kind of passed/past will be passing 'behind' the lights – even if we conceived an automatism behind the operation of lighting?

Existence is manifested in secondness through shocking resistance upon our determination, our will, our existence. Something compels us by clashing with us, with our course of life. This interpretation aligns well with the experience of the blind who get shocked through their stick and uncover existence:

“The blind man's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight. In the exploration of things, the length of the stick does not enter expressly as a middle term: ... The position of things is immediately given through the extent of the reach which carries him to it, which comprises besides the arm's own reach the stick's range of action.”<sup>834</sup>

It is through shocks and vibrations that the extended touch of the blind, analogous to sight provides information about what there is. “Secondness, strictly speaking is just when and where it takes place and has no other being.”<sup>835</sup> What is, *there and then*, for whatever living body is just force. Indeterminate, indefinite force that compels, that is, felt as shock, a blind force. The blind intuition is not an object but force.

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<sup>833</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 328-9)

<sup>834</sup> (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 166)

<sup>835</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.532)

What is left to scope is the *saltus*, the break itself. If the instant has two sides, the polarity that allows it to be connected to the past and the future to create a junction, then there is a passage not as process of change but of change itself, of difference. Yet for there to be a change, there must be a possibility of change, a firstness. The *saltus* or the shocking stick is not exactly a middle term but comes to be an allowance of feeling differently. But this difference requires some ‘thing,’ some sort (of being) able to pass from the before and the after in the sense of connecting them together, in re-membering them, in sorting them as continuous. The *saltus* is a shock, some kind of disturbance, an interruption – but just that *just*. Here Peirce could be anticipating Husserl in the sense that this interruption is a crisis, *krisis*; a crack in the continuum, a *dis-* of the course of one’s activity. The question is whether the very possibility of this interruption requires thirdness. Here lies all the controversy about whether phaneron includes some kind of representation or not; whether some sort of thirdness is involved in *enabling*, in allowing for the two-sided consciousness. Since thirdness or thought is also habit one could say with the spiritualists whom Peirce knew well, that only in virtue of a previous habituated sense, some kind of previous inertia, could a crisis, a shock, a breaking of the habit occur. We can call this a phaneroscopic observation from Ravaisson: “habit remains for a change which is not longer or is not yet.”<sup>836</sup> Peirce may agree since consciousness would never be possible without the possibility of representation. What would just secondness be? It would be just pure existence, like constant explosions.<sup>837</sup>

Let us bring up another example from Peirce about the shock.

The long whistle of the approaching locomotive, however disagreeable it may be, has set up in me a certain inertia, so that the sudden lowering of the note meets with a certain resistance. That must be the fact; because if there were no resistance there could be no shock when the change of note occurs. Now this shock is quite unmistakable. It is more particularly to changes

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<sup>836</sup> (Ravaisson 2008, 25)

<sup>837</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.532)

and contrasts of perception that we apply the word “experience”.

We experience vicissitudes, especially.<sup>838</sup>

Experience is difference. The changes and contrasts are the dis-ings, going off (an inert) course. There is no experience without a shock, or a *choc* as Nietzsche called (t)his ‘secondness.’<sup>839</sup> But this dis-ing, this rupture, this *choc* does not seem to be a digital change from zero to one and vice versa. In this example the dis-ing seems analogical. It is a difference in emphasis that is shocking, out of which the awareness of the approaching locomotive is appreciated. There is what the architects call *entasis*, a change of quantity within stretched, continuous, habituated quality. This entasis creates an emphasis which shocks, which resists by inflecting the continuity. Without resistance or reaction to the flow of the qualities we could never have a manifold, not even as mood. Moods presuppose some emphasis in the feeling, some folding, some differentiability, some “perversity,”<sup>840</sup> to be felt as moods, thus some secondness. This secondness is not a break, or a lack, or some kind of negation. It is surplus, overflow, *entasis*.

We can analogise this perversity with the so-called ambiguous images. Some people initially perceive one version of the image – they read it in one way. They perceive the image in a certain way, there is only one course of perception, a continuous seeing as Wittgenstein said. This continuous seeing as perception implies feeling. Now, there is *effort* put in-to make that perception switch to perceive an alternative one which is another(’s) course of perception and which switching is at the same time to *resist* the

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<sup>838</sup> (Peirce 1955, 88)

<sup>839</sup> Ciano Aydin and Rosella Fabbrichessi have explored many points of contact, touch-points, between Nietzsche and Peirce. Let us briefly mention that they are also close in the way they conceive *emphasis* as a shock/*choc* to inertia. Nietzsche called it a reactive force: “The really specific thing in pain is always the protracted shock, the lingering vibrations of a terrifying *choc* in the cerebral center of the nervous system: - one does not really suffer from the cause of pain (any sort of injury, for example), but from the protracted disturbance of equilibrium that occurs as a result of the *choc*” (Aydin 2006, 371-2). “One must understand that the same objections can be made to the passions as are made to sickness: nonetheless-we cannot do without sickness, and even less without the passions. We *need* the abnormal, we give life a tremendous *choc* by these great sicknesses” (Nietzsche 1968, 408).

<sup>840</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.335 )



(one's) initial course, to dis- it. And when both have been perceived, there is equally effort/resistance to maintain one over the other. But sticking to one or the other means to have different discourses.

With this analogy we can prescind even further. This time through perspectives. From our perspective the effort to see one image differently is at the same time resistance to the previous one. With a bit of help from Wittgenstein we can say that the picture is the same and at the same time different, yet with respect to itself it is identical. "But what is different: my impression? my point of view?—Can I say? I *describe* the alteration like a perception; quite as if the object had altered before my eyes."<sup>841</sup> But the picture has not altered. But have we? In what sense have we changed? We are still in contact with the 'same' physical object. When it comes to what changes we are blind to it. No thing changes. We are surprised by the new as if it were magically changed. We just feel the change as a surprise. The shock here is a surprise; a surprise we feel which cannot come from us but from an Other existence. An existence which could impart to us a different way of relating to things. But this existence is not the picture. It is another's use of the picture, another's discourse of the picture, another force which surprises when we come in contact with it.

In my use of words, when an ear-splitting, soul-bursting locomotive whistle starts, there is a sensation, which ceases when the screech has been going on for any considerable fraction of a minute; and at the instant it stops there is a second sensation. Between them there is a state of feeling.<sup>842</sup>

Once again, feeling is an uninterrupted course which qualifies (itself) through sensations; sensations which are not caused by something in particular. Rather, they are the manifestations of the inter-action between Peirce and the driver of the locomotive through various media. That is what the principle of continuity and synechism essentially means. The reaction to another's determination is sensed by Peirce. The shock felt is a clash with an Other will to power, an Other determining force, a force that puts things/signs into use for an end; an Other will that determines forces for what it wills. The Other as another

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<sup>841</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 195)

<sup>842</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I. 332)

force mediated by signs imposes itself, manifests itself in our situation. The Other's will conflicts with ours as in a duel. Deleuze described it thus:

L'action, qu'est-ce que c'est que l'action ? C'est le duel. L'action implique au moins le rapport entre deux forces : effort-résistance, action-réaction, que ces forces soient réparties entre deux personnes, entre une personne et une chose, toutes sortes de combinaisons sont possibles, mais on acceptera - très grossièrement - pour le début de notre analyse, la formule : l'action c'est le duel. Et c'est ça la vraie secondéité."<sup>843</sup>

Secondness is *a struggle between something within and something without*.<sup>844</sup> And the struggle is a conflict of forces in their different usage of signs for their ends. The locomotive becomes an unpleasant experience in Peirce's *use of the words*. That is, in the way that Peirce represents it – in all senses. He means it as such. In this sense the driver is mean to him – to his body, to his ears that split. For the driver the locomotive is used for another reason. He means it differently. The clash and the duel is between forces in their manipulation of signs, between what each one means to do with the signs-objects they employ. While the clash may not be intentional, that is, directed particularly towards Peirce, it still affects Peirce. One's actions have universal effects, not particular.<sup>845</sup>

We could not appreciate the situation as such unless we resist thinking through the distinction of material/immaterial; once we do, we could see that everything is a sign in Peirce's *use of words*. There are no objects as distinct things just signs. No objects but objectives. In this way the contro-versy regarding whether *there is* thirdness in secondness revolves around different levels of phaneroscopic analysis, that is, different levels of logical observation.

Let's now turn to thirdness to explore further in what sense secondness comes only *after* some mediation, some form of thirdness.

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<sup>843</sup> (Deleuze, Webdeleuze 1982)

<sup>844</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP II.22)

<sup>845</sup> It is a sort of "trespassing" as Arendt describes. "But trespassing is an everyday occurrence which is in the very nature of action's constant establishment of new relationships within a web of relations" (1958, 240).

Overall, thirdness is “the medium or connecting bond between the absolute first and last.” Peirce does not leave room to talk about thirdness as a particular medium. We cannot say thirdness is this or that. There can only be “Examples of Thirdness” as the title suggests.

This mode of being which *consists*, mind my word if you please, the mode of being which *consists* in the fact that future facts of Secondness will take on a determinate general character, I call a Thirdness.<sup>846</sup>

Let us attempt some readings of what thirdness ‘*consists*.’

Authentic thirdness consists in the judgment, the ‘I think.’ The judgement, the “I think”, is grounded in laws. To think means to apply laws (nomos, νόμος, νομίζω). A judgment cannot be passed without laws as *means* that will ground this judgment. These laws are “the means”<sup>847</sup> through which secondness will acquire a *determinate character*. In other words, how that which has been felt will be interpreted, represented. Thirdness is the in-between of firstness and secondness – a “conceptual mediation with the intuitively given phenomena with understanding or, respectively, reason.”<sup>848</sup> The means are themselves grounded in desire, what one desires – the pragmatic principle. In the example of the cook who makes an apple pie for a guest, the desire (of being) ‘pleasurable’ is traced through its being represented as cooking a tasty apple pie. The desire is represented through means: the cook-book, the apples, the cooking appliances and so on. All these ‘things’ are in reality signs that are manipulated for the representation of the force, the desire to be presented pleasurable to the guest. In simple words, to make the guest *feel* nice – desires coming into contact, secondness. This is what the cook is *meaning* to do with the apple pie – the logos of the cook. No means can be applied without desire. The end indeed justifies the means as the end is a representation of the beginning, the desire, which hides, which is be-hindng the representation. “Law without force to

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<sup>846</sup> (Peirce 1955, 76; emphasis in original)

<sup>847</sup> (Peirce 1955, 80)

<sup>848</sup> (Ibid.. 154)

carry it out would be a court without a sheriff.”<sup>849</sup> The cook thinks that in order to give pleasure to a guest an apple pie must be produced. In this sense, every time a cook desires to produce this quality to others, s/he might go on and make an apple pie. This is one sense in which future facts of Secondness will take on a determinate general character. They grow from the present into the future. Thirdness as law “determines how facts that *may be*, but *all* of which never can have happened, shall be characterised.”<sup>850</sup> The law does not only predict as a theory, but it commands as well, it governs.<sup>851</sup> Unless the cook quests other ways, pleasure for the guest will *consist* in making an apple pie.

What we have to ask is how these laws are set up. How are the means come to be chosen for a judgment? Here we have two options. Peirce acknowledges that tradition is imposed on us as we grow up. We are introduced into ways of doing things and these ways include the manipulation of signs. Thus, we are introduced into a particular way of thinking. This is the very meaning of custom. Thinking is customary doing. We learn how to do/think things based on the culture to which we belong – largely construed. The student who learns axiomatic principles resists them says Peirce. They question them. But this resistance is overdetermined by the teachers’ and the parents’ force. Phaneroscopically, we are forced into ways of doing/thinking. That is meant by being introduced into something. Yet, the question comes *after* some kind of thought, some kind of habit has been established. Rosenthal writes that “interpretive activity begins at the primordial level of the formation of repeatable content which can activate habits of anticipation.”<sup>852</sup> In one sense this true. But the primordial habits are those we learn from Others. We are already within a recipe of doing things, already within a system of meanings, a language-game. The habits are appreciated as habits only after some rupture, some questioning. This questioning comes when we quest alone. In one sense, secondness cannot take place if there is no thirdness but that does not mean that thirdness *causes* secondness.

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<sup>849</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.212)

<sup>850</sup> (Peirce 1955, 78)

<sup>851</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.537)

<sup>852</sup> (Rosenthal 2006, 200)

Yet, there is another way of introduction. Thoughts “can be produced and grow,”<sup>853</sup> in dialogue. For instance, an innovation is a new way of doing something. A new way of thinking about something. Innovations include rearrangement of sign relations. Sometimes this rearrangement might involve creating a new name. Apel uses Peirce’s words to explain this phenomenon in the contemporary scientific community with respect to scientific discoveries. To name something, someone (interpreter) needs to collect, that is, decide which phenomenal qualities (object/resistance) will be hooked up with a sign (name). The sign as an index, whether new or old, must be meaningfully linked to other things/signs, it must somehow be *involved*, interwoven, so that it can supplement the rupture – created by the interpreter’s embodied presence – the secondness in the customary community of signs. This process is what Apel calls the baptism protocol.<sup>854</sup> But for the intellectual *hook up* to work it needs to come in dialogue, in communication with others. The new assortment in signs must be communicated. It must be agreed and followed by others. This dialogue does not necessarily need the presence of original resistances to take place, so, it does not have to rain at the time one is to proliferate the link of ‘rain’ to rain, insofar it can be supplemented with analoga, that is, with a virtual context analogous to the present context of communication which could contribute to its proliferation. That is why a claim to an objective knowledge is a claim about discursivity, a passing on, a tradition. So on the one hand, as Apel explains

[T]he indexical definition of the extension of the name [to what it actually corresponds in real space and time] must not only contain phrases like “identical in structure” and “causing this visual experience, whatever that structure is”, but it must be supplemented by a picture or a description of the structure of the visual (or, for that matter, nonvisual but sensual) experience, say by a list of qualities (and relations of qualities) that appear to make up the structure of the causally effective entity that is pointed by “this.”<sup>855</sup>

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<sup>853</sup> (Peirce 1955, 78)

<sup>854</sup> (Apel 1998, 150)

<sup>855</sup> (Ibid., 149)

And then, in order for the ‘name’ to supplement the ‘this’ and be proliferated, it will have to be supplemented in dialogue by analogous qualities and relations of qualities, so that others can come to know what the ‘name’ *means* – what is supposed to do.

In a Wittgensteinian vein one could say: The “original baptism” has already to be performed along the lines of a public rule of identifying that can be *followed* in a sense by the first discoverer as well as by all potential reidentifiers.<sup>856</sup>

With respect to the original context of the *first discoverer* we may always remain “cognitive[ly] blind”<sup>857</sup> as there will always be “pragmatic difference between intensions and extensions,”<sup>858</sup> but we may still have, through analogies, a competence with respect to its meaning. If we decide to follow the protocol it will always be done through analogising anew. Once again, one can decide not to follow, to resist the effort of the lawgiver, of the nomo/onoma-thetis. In such classical epistemological terms, the Other becomes the principle of verification.

With Apel’s account we could reveal altruism effortlessly in epistemic-epistemological terms as the path to truth. The world does not really reveal itself to me without you. The world is revealed in a me-with-you relation where we all converge, an intersubjective convergence. With Apel, such intersubjective agreement, convergence or consensus, is even more important when we reflect to see whether our epistemological quest, our path to truth, is epistemically on track, according to the standards that we may have tacitly or explicitly accepted. In simple terms, to know the world, I need you and you need me, the world as truth is revealed to a *we*. It is never a singular ‘I know that.’ It is ‘*we* know that.’ What it is like to know is a *we*-experience, an intersubjective experience. Knowledge is itself an indefinite dialogue as negotiation, a collective deliberation. There is no objective truth without an Other. Truth is a collaborative undertaking; One needs to connect with the Other to-get-there, together.

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<sup>856</sup> (Apel 1998., 150)

<sup>857</sup> (Ibid., 147)

<sup>858</sup> (Ibid., 146)

However, what if someone were blind to the possibility of truth interpreted as valid judgements set by a particular community? Apel defines truth according to Peirce as the agreement of an “indefinite community of interpretation...as the transcendental subject of valid cognition.”<sup>859</sup> Truth comes to be an intersubjective relation manifested in a community “as the dialogue of all rational beings” with the possibility “in principle of coming to consensus about meaning and truth within the frame of the infinite dialogue of the indefinite community of interpretation.”<sup>860</sup> A dialogue not only about truth but about the truth of truth as well. Two questions come immediately to mind: How is this consensus felt? What is its secondness like? Furthermore, an indefinite community cannot be bound by a horizon. What would happen if we extended the community really indefinitely? What would we end up with? Phaneron as meaning as making sense of each other. Understanding each other as well as the understanding of the understanding of each other: meaning. There is absolutely no regress here no matter how high the order of understanding or meaning – understanding of understanding of.... goes back to meaning and understanding. The understanding of meaning is the meaning of understanding: and that is phaneron.

If we follow Peirce, the indefinite community *means* every other; every other matters. Who is this other? Anyone who has the possibility (first, force) to question us (come into relation with, secondness) with their ways of doing things (thirdness).

We are too apt to think that what one *means* to do and the *meaning* of a word are quite unrelated meanings of the word “meaning,” or that they are only connected by both referring to some actual operation of the mind... In truth the only difference is that when a person *means* to do anything he is in some state in consequence of which the brute reactions between things will be moulded [in] to conformity to the form to which the man’s mind is itself moulded, while the meaning of a word really lies in the way in which it might, in a proper position in a proposition believed, tend to mould the conduct of a person into conformity to that to which it is itself moulded.<sup>861</sup>

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<sup>859</sup> (Apel 1994, 127)

<sup>860</sup> (Ibid., 128)

<sup>861</sup> (Peirce 1931, CP I.343)

Our thoughts are habits. We are always already moulded – already introduced into a particular existential modality. Phaneron would be *meaning* as intersubjectivity, as noema, as the creating new moulds, new ways of doing indefinitely. If the force that we are is a questioning force, then we need an other equal force to come in contact with if meaning is to emerge, is to be created. And this meaning seems to have the structure of the gift for Peirce. Meaning, communication, intersubjectivity, phaneron are all ways to convey the gift.



# 8 PATHWAY FIVE: MEANING AS A PASSAGE FROM THE OTHER: AN UNBRACKETING

*The German word sein signifies both “to be there” and “to belong to Him”*

*Kafka*

*Got a secret, **Can you keep it?** Swear this one you'll save, Better lock it, in your pocket,  
Taking this one to the grave. **If I show you then I know you, Won't tell what I said,**  
**'Cause two can keep a secret If one of them is dead***

*The Pierces*

*Silence et parole **adviennent** ensemble dans une **complicité** essentielle et dans leur  
relation réciproque*

*Nicolas Monseu*

*There is something **calling** me...Everything happens **beyond the horizon***

*Eugene O'Neill*

*But **piece by piece**, he **collected** me up, Off the ground, where you **abandoned** things.  
Piece by piece he filled the holes that you burned in me. Six years old and you know. He  
never walks away. He never asks for money. He takes care of me. He loves me. Piece  
by piece, he restores my faith. That a man can be kind and the **father could, stay***

*Kelly Clarkson*

*As he lay in bed one night thinking of this, and turning and tossing, he sighed heavily, and said to his wife, "What will **become** of us? We cannot even feed our children; there is nothing left for ourselves." "I will tell you **what**, husband," answered the wife; "we will take the children early in the morning into the forest, where it is thickest; we will make them a fire, and we will **give** each of them a **piece** of bread, then we will go to our work and leave them alone;*

*Brothers Grimm (Hansel and Gretel)*

*"There are **orphanages**," he exclaimed to himself, "for children who have **lost** their **parents**--oh! why, why, why, are there no harbours of refuge for grown men who have not yet **lost them**?"*

*Samuel Butler*

*Once born, they **decide** to live and go through death, but more likely they decide to rest, and leave behind them **kids** so they can as well go **through death***

*Heraclitus*

*I will not leave you **as orphans**; I will come to you*

*(οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς· ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς)*

*John*<sup>862</sup>

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<sup>862</sup> (Kafka 2006); (The Pierces 2007); (Monseu 2016); (O'Neill 1960); (Clarkson 2015); (The Brothers Grimm 1971); (S. Butler 1916); (Ηράκλειτος 1999); (John 14:18)

*to-words and toward meaning out of nothing*

Meaning has been primarily associated with something other than the Other. Hanfling remarks that the “Cartesian view, that a human being is essentially a mind, has its counterpart in recent writings, where a similar status is given to the brain.”<sup>863</sup> This observation is exact. The difference in contemporary philosophical writings is whether the brain (philosophy of mind) or the whole body ([neuro]phenomenology) as organon of meaning produces its meanings. Both modalities of thinking meaning presuppose the in-itself. Furthermore, in the discourse of meaning intentions, the criterion of achieving meaning has been approached antagonistically. Ultimately, meaning will be realised in a circuit of exchange when a master voice intends a slave audience to act as the masterly voice intends through the signs it employs; thus, the slave’s obedience which becomes the enactment of the master’s voice intention, becomes, in turn, the epistemic criterion of verification for the achievement of meaning.<sup>864</sup>

Some philosophers, like Polanyi,<sup>865</sup> show us that understanding meaning through various means of transport and such dialectics become meaning-less. The metaphors of mechanical containment, capital exchange, and antagonism are inadequate with respect to understanding how meaning comes about. Meaning is an event taking place as a movement whose structure is a *from-to*. Meaning is the end, the focal target of a (subjective) synthesis taking place in one’s imagination; a synthesis of subsidiary clues that culminates in a focal target, the meaningful particular, meaning *simpliciter*. Taking inspiration from stereoscopic image viewing and Gestalt psychology, Polanyi traces this *from-to* relation to all types of knowing – functional, phenomenal and semantic. “The subsidiaries of from-to knowing bear on a focal target, and whatever a thing bears on may be called its meaning. Thus the focal target on which they bear is the meaning of the subsidiaries.”<sup>866</sup> These subsidiaries are always tacit and idiosyncratic; they make up each person’s personal knowledge which Polanyi calls “indwelling.”<sup>867</sup>

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<sup>863</sup> (Hanfling 2002, 97)

<sup>864</sup> This Hegelian dialectic is evident in the debate between Grice (1957; 1969; 1975), Strawson (1964), Searle (1983) and Apel (1994).

<sup>865</sup> (Polanyi and Prosch 1975)

<sup>866</sup> (Ibid., 35)

<sup>867</sup> (Ibid., 44)

There is a multiplicity of subjective conditions the synthesis of which can be tacit and unconscious, or it can be rendered a focal target itself; the indwelling can be dwelled upon and thus become a *from-at* movement of meaning – where the subsidiaries, the personal knowledge, the noetic/noematic act itself becomes the focal target. This *from-at* movement would constitute an explanation, that is, meaning as an integration, an articulation of what we want to do based on what puzzles us. Just as in Husserl where knowledge and meaning come about in taking something in relief out of the lifeworld, similarly, the *from-at* movement is a *from-to* meaning targeting those subsidiaries which allow *from-to* movements. The rules of the synthesis are of course learnt; they constitute a skill, an ability. But ultimately, reminiscent of Kant and Quine, Polanyi would say that we could never fully uncover or specify these rules and subsidiary clues completely. “They are not specifiable.... We cannot look *at* them since we are looking *with* them.”<sup>868</sup> In Peircian terms, this whole account could be an explanation of what a person *means (to do)*. But what about the Sartrean question whereby two people come together with respect to what they mean to do? How is meaning with an Other achieved in this encounter?

We shall dwell on the *from-to* movement in semantics, that is, in the meaning achieved in language. A word has a meaning, Polanyi tells us, insofar as the imagination traverses the letters of a word and synthesises them into a particular, a unity. Dwelling on the individual clues paralyses the meaning of the word; there is no word at all just haphazard signs. So for instance, if one looks at the letters ‘p,a,s,s,a,g,e’ individually, nothing will come about as the meaning of the word ‘passage’ which requires a synthesis, a movement from these subsidiary clues to the meaningful word ‘passage.’ *Mutatis mutandis*, the meaning of a phrase or a sentence, a proposition, a paragraph, a text, a book and so on, is a movement whose structure is a ‘from’ of an undetermined determinable set of auxiliary clues into a determined particular end which is the meaning of the synthesis of those clues.

In Polanyi’s words, “If we focus our attention on a spoken word and thus see it as a sequence of sounds, the word loses the meaning to which we had attended before.”<sup>869</sup>

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<sup>868</sup> (Polanyi and Prosch 1975, 61)

<sup>869</sup> (Ibid., 38)

This linear movement of *from-at* which is also *from* a ‘from’ to a ‘to,’ even as a synthesis, takes letters and words as signs which “point not to themselves but to what is not present.”<sup>870</sup> If meaning is related to a synthesis of the various elements in order to arrive at the meaning of ‘passage,’ then, there seems to be a predetermined destination, an end. No matter how one treads the path of the signs ‘p,a,s,s,a,g,e,’ the meaning becomes the end of the synthesis of the word ‘passage’ – unified as word *after* a particular end.

However, when we bring the Other into a meaningful dialogue such subjective accounts seem lacking in meaning. If we attempt to understand a person talking a foreign language, the problem of meaning which in this instance means to understand what they mean, starts not at the moment of not being able to go behind their words or to synthesise the sounds into meaningful words – and much less uncover the intention with which they use a word. The first thing is to *punctuate* their words as words out of their being sounds, or better, out of an undifferentiated sounding sequence. In speaking, either in the case of a person who speaks a foreign language or in the case of one’s speaking our mother tongue incoherently or in the speed of light, or with an accent, then, for meaning to emerge the first requirement seems to be to find *them* words.<sup>871</sup> From the undifferentiated whole of sounds or noise to the *this* of the thematised part of the whole as a word. Thus, to understand what is said or being said with words a word must already be finished somehow so we can *go back after the elements of the word and synthesise them into a meaningful word*. If we want to use the category of synthesis we shall say that meaning does not come about from a synthesis as a linear movement, but by a to-and-fro. But the focal target of this synthesis is not a presupposed word but a sounding Other who *words*. This means that the first condition of meaning is to follow the Other in their vocal paths, under-stand, what *they word*. *After all*, what we do is to follow their punctuation.

Heidegger writes that “what we “first” hear is never noises or complexes of sounds, but the creaking waggon, the motor-cycle. We hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the fire crackling.”<sup>872</sup> In this way, even when “the

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<sup>870</sup> (Gadamer 2004, 146)

<sup>871</sup> And this is prior-to-and-after the *a priori* implication of “the “we” – the “we as a sharing of the idiom” (Blanchot and Derrida 2000, 35).

<sup>872</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 207)

speech is indistinct or in a foreign language, what we proximally hear is unintelligible words, and not a multiplicity of tone-data.”<sup>873</sup> But how do we hear *them* unintelligible words? This slang phrasing is philosophically revealing. We cannot hear unintelligible words before we hear *them* words.

For there to be a word, it must be differentiated from other words. It must be guarded, warded from the other words. Spoken words, like breaths, need a stillness in-between, a bit of apnea for *them* words to come to be; a little bit of change which is a little bit of nothing, a bit/beat, a *saltus*. *After* all, one needs to catch one’s breath before one speaks words. Words do not come out of a panting voice. There must be a *saltus* from one word to the other, a leap.<sup>874</sup> Some such interval or spacing is required. In speech, this spacing is perceived as breaks of silence. Logos characterises that silent folding of the breath which becomes a voice (voix) and ultimately a vocal f(ol)low (voie) as a compilation of words and breaks.

But just some silence that breaks a voice is not enough to allow for the distinctness of a word. The silence that precedes and follows the *phonē* must pass into the surrounding sounds which will allow the *phonē* to be heard as a word. This spacing is a *diastemic* relation as Derrida called it.<sup>875</sup> With no spacing we will not be able to differentiate a voice from any other sound; otherwise, words, voice, and sound would become psychedelically indistinguishable like Jimmy Hendrix’s wah-wah guitar pedal. The coming to being of words involves creating differences in the sense of emphasis. This *diastemic* relation is analogous to what Lévinas calls “retentissement.” As Monseu explains, the unique sound of a word “réside dans la rupture qu’il provoque.”<sup>876</sup> This rupture can be read as an emphasis and can indeed be analogised with a scandal, a c-rime from the o-rdinary flow of always sensing. And as is the case with all crimes, some perversity is required. The intonation and the so-called prosodic elements that have been deemed parasitic to meaning are essentially related allowing for such perversity or emphasis to occur. It is in virtue of these ‘parasites,’ this perversity, that a spoken word comes to be. It is a logos

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<sup>873</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 207)

<sup>874</sup> Earlier we mentioned the importance of the shadow for seeing in the light. We said a bit of silence so we can see. Once again, to understand the Other, to make sense starts with silence.

<sup>875</sup> (Derrida 1982)

<sup>876</sup> (Monseu 2016, 90)

that gives emphasis to a *phonē* (voix) by dividing and decorating it, inflecting it, making it vibrate, and wording it into a speech as a vocal path (voie) in the world.

Similarly, in the written text, before any synthesis takes place, before any rule is followed, we have to fall in-and-out of the blanks; in-between these spaces, these cracks of white, flowing in-between the lines and following their curves, their schemata, while being moderated by the punctuation – in the colloquial sense. This is what will give us the rhythm for the synthetic movement of the imagination. This diastemic relation allows for emphasis for words to come to be. No meaning can be *trans*-mitted, *trans*-ported, *trans*-lated unless there are blanks and spaces, intervals, margins, in-and-out, of which there will be signs, words, texts, books ... . With Plato and Derrida we followed the possibility of meaning to the line – the gramme. Meaning could be traced to the inflected gramme, the crease, the rhythm of the line as character. Even in calligraphy where there are no blanks between the letters of the word, there must be some silent uninflected line that repeats itself along with the repeated blanks between the words to allow for the emphasis required for a word to emerge. Meaning starts from scribbling a line that can change into something other. Without this change as emphasis, this spacing and this tempo, no rules could be applied. Rule following comes *after* – if it ever comes at all.<sup>877</sup> Even when the ‘containers’ of meaning are gestures, as Searle proposes,<sup>878</sup> we would not be able to wonder where one’s gestures have meaning intentions behind them unless they are first understood as gestures – the distinctness of the gesture as an analogously repeatable pattern emphasised from the before-and-after. For meaning to come about there has to be such rhythm, a diastemic organization of the body with the world where an *emphasis* is created. This diastemic relation in the language of being is that to which we have been referring generally as punctuation or de-cision: the enactment of logos as a

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<sup>877</sup> Hanfling following Wittgenstein makes an even stronger claim that language is not a rule-based activity at all. Meaning is for him just knowing how most people normally use words (2002, 54). This knowing is neither inferential nor theoretical but an embodied skill. To speak is like riding a bicycle or like making coffee. This skill is ultimately a habit or addiction of doing something. Speaking is not like taking a manual and following instructions.

<sup>878</sup> (Searle 1983)

force which characterises; breaks-through, cuts through,<sup>879</sup> punctuates the wor(l)d. In Peirce's terms, a force which quests, undertakes, and sur-prises.<sup>880</sup>

In any case of meaning, it is a path that we are after, that we follow. A path created by the logos of the Other as it words, as it characterises the world. The tools for this wording, this writing of words are contingent. The physiology of discourse is contingent. One can create aerial writing, a speech by using their lungs, thorax *et cetera* along with their lips and their tongue. Or, aerial writing could be characterised by the hands in the case of sign language. It is not the material organ that makes words but the logos that makes words by dividing, inflecting its own body.

Signs, in whatever form, are characters, inscriptions that trample (on) Being *in order to*. There are no beings in themselves whose distinctness is a property or feature of themselves. Features come as we future. Similarly, words as signs have no meaning in themselves; and neither do symbols. Peirce is exact; everything can be taken as a sign which refers to some other sign and so on *ad infinitum*. The marketers have shown us how a word, as in a sign, can become a symbol and vice versa. For them, signs and symbols, everything, becomes a tool to motivate purchase. Words are as much symbols as are signs; they are logo-types, paths to meaning, technologies *in order to*. Meaning as the end of human expression is a logo-type or an art of logos, a techno-logy. Making sense is like making way, an art of creating paths to a destination. Even neuroscientists understand each other along neural pathways and circuits.

Everything is put into use like any tool *in order to*. Initially, we learn to use these tools, to follow these paths. These paths are the ways we are introduced to life. By the time we understand that we are understanding, we have always already been walking in/on certain paths, towards; we have been living through, (a) modality of existence, (a)

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<sup>879</sup> (Cixous 1976)

<sup>880</sup> This *sur-prise* can also be read as over-taking. Monseu writes: "... l'acte de parler est ainsi une action du corps et le travail de la signification se fraye un chemin à partir de cette vie organique" (2016, 63). The bringing together of all the material conditions of a corporeal being in order to speak and signify is an act of characterizing a path de-parting from this organic life by bringing together its potential. But this overtaking is a *fraying* that needs a rhythm to come to be a phrasing otherwise it would turn into a *sparagmos* – overtaken, torn apart by the (organic) forces that it over-takes in its meaning-mizing process.



form of life. We have been taught, tutored on how to do things; thinking is a way of doing. Initially we are offered pathways that ward/word us, that is, prescribe to us how to live—with a particular destination. We are given a *logica utens* – in order to survive, to self-preserve, to go to heaven or to hell, to become dust to..... They constitute rites to life as anthropologists call them.

These paths which presuppose their horizon provide us with a gift. “What has to be accepted, the given, is—so one could *say—forms of life.*”<sup>881</sup> If forms of life could be analogised to paths then it is not the paths that constitute the gift, but the passage which is given along with them. A particular path gives its universal possibility as it draws our attention *towards*.<sup>882</sup> The passage is this drawing then, this writing on Being, on our being if one wills, in order to exist. It is an attitude towards. Can existence be without an attitude, an orientation towards? Within a mode of existence, a particular path, a *logica utens* comes a *logica docens* as its universal possibility. This possibility of possibility which (f)allows it is the gift.

Through a particular path the Other gives us the universal. A universe of possibilities and the possibilities of a uni-verse, meaning. The possibility of *bios* as choosing or creating a life with a particular meaning is a gift from an Other. To exist begins with such promise of the Other. The beginning of existence is the Other’s giving their word – not a word as *lexis* but their *logos*; not their being but their existence as transcendence towards and to word/ward us. This beginning, this *arche*, is the gift as a passage, an opening, an overture to a beyond being, *au-délà*, a metaphysical opening. It is a *logica do-c-ens*. Just to agitate some etymological threads, the latin ‘do’ means to give. What is given is an *ens*, something. But this something is given through an opening which looks *after* a c-section; a bow or a lyre. This opening is a door-*δῶρον*, literally gift, created on us from the Other. It is coming from the Other’s *logos* who gives it to us by characterising a body that we never were but promised to come to be through this body. If the Other’s promise is altruism, then altruism is the essence of coming to existence. As Peirce put it exactly, meaning is a gift. And if making sense is the essence of existence then the Other comes to be the essence of existence.

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<sup>881</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, 226)

<sup>882</sup> (Wittgenstein 1967)

Philosophers cast doubt on the possibility of the gift. They have followed every possible way and they cannot allow the gift without some reference to a transcendental beyond (nature, infinite exchange, or God). If the gift is not possible could it be because it is itself possibility? Let us explore.

*the gift(ing logos) of the Other*

The gift has always been attempted through the logos of Being where it can be represented with the formulae ‘A gives B to C’ or ‘someone gives something to some other.’ Some philosophers have casted doubt as to whether the gift as gift is possible. The main worry about the gift is how it can escape a system of exchange or a system of the infinite: How would it be possible to have ‘A gives B to C’ without reference to anything else as its own universal particularity or particular universality? This constitutes an aporia. (Thinking/Doing/Philosophising/Living) with(in) Being, and all its parent-theses makes the gift to be impossible. But, then, as Derrida wonders, how is ‘it’ possible to talk about what is at the same time the impossible?<sup>883</sup> How do we come to (re)present, talk about the impossible – the gift? And this ‘it’?

Before we explore this (im)possibility, let us apply what we learnt from Peirce. ‘A gives B to C’ involves representation by abstraction as does ‘someone gives something to some other.’ Obviously they are not identical. But are they adequately the same? Could we say that they have the same reference or correspondence in the language of being? Are they (transcendentally) analogous in their logical abstraction/formalisation? In the first formula we can classify a cash machine that gives money to me. In the second we cannot, *prima facie*. But if we used the principle of continuity and synechism as Peirce does, then indeed we could say that the machine as a sign represents someone or some people who put it together for that end. By all means, things change, as Donna Haraway notices,<sup>884</sup> and they might of course go off course when machines start re-producing each other with no human aid at all. But even then, the beginning, the arche which would also

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<sup>883</sup> As Robert Bernasconi notes, the early Derrida thinks the gift to be impossible. But, in his later works, Derrida converges with Lévinas’s thought (1997). We shall see that their logic of supplementarity and trace is still within the contours of Being and violates the gift.

<sup>884</sup> (Haraway 1991)

signal the telos of the human, would have been coming from human reality – and could be traced just like in the movie *Blade Runner*. But this infinite relation does not have the meaning of gift that we are looking for. The gift, if it is possible, has to be exhausted in *just* ‘A gives B to C.’ The principle of continuity does not seem to protect the gift from falling into an infinite referral to something other.

Moreover, A can give an argument to C, in the sense of knowledge or in the sense of a kick or a blow – as we saw in our introduction. ‘A’ and ‘C’ can be my supervisor, myself, or my imaginary friend Toby from Mars. Such promiscuous abstraction will fail to prescind justly the givenness of what we mean with the gift. If the gift is registered with positive evaluations, if it is given for the well-being of the Other, the logical precission fails us. Promiscuous abstraction or precission will universalise the gift to the point of rendering it neutral and beyond subjective evaluations – a disgusting kiss or a loving kick would be equally a gift.

In all these examples, there is no absolute beginning, and hence, there is no absolute ‘A’ that initiates the gesture of the gift, and, as such, neither absolute ‘C’ as a terminal receiver of the given. Nor the magic of the justness/suchness/thatness of what is given which must pass from one to the other with no history, no genealogy, no future and (positive) value. Can we quest(ion) the gift anew, afresh, untimely?

Let us consider what other philosophers have *given* us for the gift. We need their philosophical paths to think further. For Derrida, for there to be a gift it must be given without having been given by someone or received by someone *as* a gift, otherwise there is always the risk of the gift falling into a circle of exchange. For the gift not to degenerate into something other, then it must be unconditioned or unconditional as given. If the gift is given with the expectation of being given back or given away in some form, then the gift is cancelled. With respect to the receiver, if the gift is recognised as gift, then the gratitude of the gift becomes its symbolic restitution and falls back to the circle of exchange. “Gratitude would in fact be the *return* of the movement to its origin.”<sup>885</sup> For the gift to be a gift, it must not be in any way perceived as a gift by the person who receives it. There cannot be any reciprocity for the gift from the receiver. The gift must stay given with ingratitude.

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<sup>885</sup> (Lévinas 1986, 349)

But this “staying” given must be out of space and time otherwise it could take the form of debt. When someone sacrifices their life for an other, the ultimate gift one could say, the other is indebted for the spontaneous act of courage which defied everything for their sake. The full being of the one who sacrifices themselves with no remainder, with no reserve becomes a gift. But this gift, insofar as it is remembered as a gift, makes one (in)grateful, (in)debted in (in)gratitude. Such spontaneity, unrequested and unrequited negates the possibility of being resisted. It can turn into an imposition rather than a given. The sacrifice decides to include the Other by excluding their response. The Other becomes mute, fallowed, without being allowed to say anything in this movement. The given can be given only through the possibility of being resisted as gift. But such a possibility itself, the possibility of being resisted, would cancel the gift as absolutely given – were the resistance to be realised. To resist the given is not for the given to be what it is, given. Resisting or negating the gift destroys it because it will never be given, it will never leap the net of the intentionality to be given; it will stay forever intended – as psychoanalysts would say, it would be a frustrated intention. The gift, then, requires the possibility of being resisted but not actually or virtually become resisted.

The paradox of the gift runs its course from the perspective of the donor as well. A gift is always guided by an intention to give by the giver. To intend to give something to someone as a gift is saturated with an intention to give. Even a suggestion is saturated with intentionality, it is a suggested gesture. This intention(ality) is what destroys the gift as pure given. The gift must not at all be driven by a back thought, an *arrière-pensée* as Jankélévitch put it,<sup>886</sup> that the gift is (to be/being) given. In the purity of the gift, in its blankness, authenticity, and innocence, just one speck, one hue, one idea, one infinitesimal shade of intentionality is enough to grey the gift and make it other than it is, different from a gift:

But the one who gives it must not see it or know it either; otherwise he begins, at the threshold, as soon as he intends to give, to pay himself, to gratify himself, to congratulate himself, to give back to himself symbolically the value of what he thinks he has given or what he is preparing to give.<sup>887</sup>

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<sup>886</sup> (Jankélévitch 1981)

<sup>887</sup> (Derrida 1997a, 130)

This is a Hegelian thought coming from the dialectic of master-slave/donor-receiver. It is in this sense that Hegel did not like to give pity. Because pity makes the Other a slave of one's superiority. Pity or mercy border with contempt which elevate one in reducing the Other. Even if the Other refuses our pity we rest with the gesture of intentionality of having offered. And this, as Derrida underscores can start way back when one *is preparing to give*. The gift cannot fall into an economy of preparation which means essentially that it cannot take place in time.

In a similar vein, Jankélévitch writes that for the gift to happen “that which gives, gives what it is not” and “that which gives, does not have what it gives.”<sup>888</sup> This seems the impossible because the gift or what is to become given *must be* thought/intended and unthought/unintended at the same time and space lest it falls into a circle of exchange and representation. This means that for there to be a gift, it must be radically forgotten. The gift, if it is to be a gift, must be deleted from memory. It cannot be repressed, suppressed, or depressed in the abyss of an unconscious. The unconscious, “that other limitless country, is the place where the repressed manage to survive.”<sup>889</sup> Any kind of (im)pressing can ultimately be relieved; it can be reversed and thus re-versed, that is expressed, relived differently and, thus, destroy the originally given. The intentionality of retention of the given must be uprooted or exhausted in the gesture of giving. The gesture must be unsuspending; it must fly with *no re-serve*. It cannot be served again. No pathway, no memento can be retained for the gift as gesture of givenness. It cannot be served with anything else either. A gift card that follows the gift supplements the given and destroys it; the gift is not enough as given if it is to be served with something else which divides its uniqueness. In this sense, it must not be linked to any other path either. There can be no association for the gift with anything else, no trace of it. The gesture of the given as such must have *no res-erve*, that is, it must be *res orbus*. Something akin to no thing, bereft of kinship, like an orphan. If there is a linking or likening pathway to the given, it will only make it a matter of time for the gift to be neutralised as gift – even in the Freudian sense of neutralisation. The gift must be without analogy, without apopha(n)sis. Otherwise, the gift will fall into an economy, a system of rules, a language game of being which could illuminate it, characterise it, give it emphasis and thus meaning and

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<sup>888</sup> Cited in Kelley (2013, 29)

<sup>889</sup> (Cixous 1976, 880)

recognition. If it is not exhausted, ousted from time and space, if it is in any way pressed, then there is always a time and place of its release and expression, its relief, its exhalation. The given would expire, it would become a product of a labour with an expiration date. As long as it is retained, conserved in memory, it will always be a matter of time to be outdated. The gift cannot be dated if it is to be a gift. The gift cannot have an expiration date. It cannot be outdated but be out of date, unhinged from temporality, outside of any kind of phenomenality, pure or-phan, blind light.

This out of date presses the gift out of time and space yet be given in time. Derrida appeals to the gift as *restance*, a kind of forgetting which is not forgetfulness, but a trace:

Et cet oubli se portant au-delà de tout présent, il y va du don comme de la restance sans mémoire, sans permanence et sans consistance, sans substance ni subsistance; il y va de ce reste qui est, sans l'être, au-delà de l'être, *epekeina tes ousias*.<sup>890</sup>

This *oubli*; this *λήθη* which is at the same time its opposite goes beyond being and thus becomes truth (*ἀ-λήθεια*). Truth is the gift. A blind truth beyond being and remembrance.

This beyond being, that which rests without being in the frame of time, what remains without memory, is remaining only in the receiver. Yet, the forgetting as the *after-math* of the given must be equally, or better yet, equa(nomica)lly-isonomically appearing, remaining or, in this discourse traced, to both donor and receiver. But it cannot be the same at the same time because that would be shared – which implies remembrance – not given. For any given, there must be a *divortium* that allows for a directed movement, a pathway from one to an other. What is moved, or passed, just like the meaning of *a from-to*, must be *partibus ad totum*. One speck of more or less would, again, destroy the given as given or as intended to be received and received as intended. But there must be something more in the gift if someone is to give something to someone – if not an intention, there must be a movement *towards* which is not given. What could this surplus be?

The trace does not help us talk about the gift since the given of the gift as trace must be equa(nomica)lly-isonomically a trace in the possibility of the given. Where is

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<sup>890</sup> (Derrida 1991a, 187)

this trace to be found, the donor or the receiver? Also, who traces it? What makes the trace a trace? Would we not have to talk about trace of intention and trace of reception in order to be just to the gift that is given? The trace must be present even as *restance* to both (t)here. We fall back to the intersection of past and future making the gift some kind of presence. There is difficulty dis-engaging ourselves of and from being, precisely because the trace has to overcome one's being and then reach an other (being? trace? traced being?). The event of the gift articulated as trace will leave us with a binary of possible-impossible. It is possible to trace it here, impossible to trace it there, with the risk of culminating tracing the gift as absolute negation or absolute presence. As the presence of the present, the plenitude of the present, the gift would be a gift as an absolute present, the permanence of being always already there. A path with no beginning or end, a path deadened or a deadened path:

Not a particular path leading here or there, but on *the* path, on the *Weg* or *Bewegen* (path, to move along a path, to cut a path), which, leading nowhere, marks the step that Heidegger does not distinguish from thought. The thought on whose path we are, the thought as path or as movement along a path is precisely what is related to that *forgetting* Heidegger does not name as a psychological or psychoanalytic category but as the condition of Being and of the truth of Being.<sup>891</sup>

Here, it is not only that the gift is the present but the gift becomes the present. But how does it become? Or, a more difficult question, how does it come to be? The gift must always already be there with no beginning or end, just absolute permanence. But in this aisle-less/I-less/eye-less path, the given falls into another economy, an economy of being-with, which is the economy of the bond. A permanent holding with Being. The stakes of the given would be cashed out, articulated or explained in Being. A board of shareholders in the Bank of Being – a corporation or intercorporeality as in Merleau-Ponty – shareholding in Being. And the coming to be of this intercorporeality or being-with will be thrown to some unintelligible 'with' – into which we are found, thrown, or fallen; or

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<sup>891</sup> (Derrida 1997a, 133)

out of an explosion as in Merleau-Ponty.<sup>892</sup> In Heidegger it is called out in thrownness,<sup>893</sup> the facticity of being delivered over. But it is precisely the delivery, the towards, the movement of the gift, the gesture that we are missing either in the language of Being or of *Différance*. As Derrida realised in his later writings, what we are looking for is a “promise of a path.”<sup>894</sup> But does this promise not need de/live/rance?<sup>895</sup> If the given is out of time and space should the deliverance not be beyond these transcendental parent-theses of Being and Trace-of-Being?

If it does, does this mean that the delivery must also be out of time and space? But can the delivery happen out of place and time? If the gift is out of date, then it is also beyond a particular movement. All movement is related to change, and change to time or duration. Jankélévitch explains that the gesture of the giver cannot be met by the gesture of the receiver in the gesture of the gift. A simple gesture towards implies its return and this return can happen at any time like in the time of one’s changing one’s mind to give what one had prepared. It is not only the given – that which leaves one’s hands to be given – that must be out of date, but also the delivery as a whole must be beyond time and space. The hand that stretches to give and the hand that stretches to receive go back to their bodies. Can a person with no hands or arms not give or receive? How does an arm-less and/or leg-less person feel, enjoy and enjoin a gift? If the gift is to be possible it must be beyond any-body. The given must be without medium. It cannot be immediate, that is presence, precisely because we need the movement towards. But this movement must be a movement out of time. An impossible movement. Or, a surplus in movement which shall work as an unmediating medium.

Back to the surplus. Before the surplus, in the *divortium* between the donor and the receiver to be created in the act of givenness, the event of the act of the given can not be witnessed either. The given must create a sight out of sight, a site which cannot be cited or recited/resighted; beyond vision. The beyond, must be beyond all eyes/Is that

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<sup>892</sup> “I call the evolutionist perspective in question... I replace it with a cosmology of the visible in the sense that, considering endotime and endospace, for me it is no longer a question of origins, nor limits, nor of a series of events going to a first cause, but one sole explosion of Being which is forever” (1968, 265)

<sup>893</sup> (Heidegger 1962, 174; 219)

<sup>894</sup> (Derrida 1997a, 24)

<sup>895</sup> Literally, the door of life, or a support for life.



could see it and recognise it as something. The gift cannot be talked about or commented on. There can be no spectator, nor auditor, nor accountant of the given. No account(ing) could be inspired by an other Other who could witness the given as given and (de)base it through some kind of grammar, some kind of representation – which is to say to read/rid it: read it other-wise and rid its being what it is. An infant must be dropped at the steps of the institute with no witnessing of the body that places it on the stairs. There can be no message, no writing that could be traced. The trace works as a witness and a witness works as a trace. The delivery cannot be furtive which belies an intentionality of stealthy being waiting to be disclosed in the metrics of a posology of sense; in forensics.

For the gift to be pure(ly) given, a silent passage must be created. A passage to which we are all blind and deaf. The gift comes to be an enactment of a universal blindness-and-deafness which comes from beyond traditional justice. The given requests a silent, blind, invisible and unheard of labor. The enactment of the given comes to be a passage as a *surplus* to a path and/which passes incognito. “The passing passes on with the passing.”<sup>896</sup> The given comes as a silent and invisible passage in time like a pathway backwards – as Monseu describes silence.<sup>897</sup> But this back which wards is the clock which never appears and backs, as in cloaks, the pathway. The gift comes to be a passage from beyond time into time, a passage-in(to)an-a-warded-time, a warding/wording. The gift is given through the wording of an Other, in the act of their characterising. In other words, the gift comes to be through the act of giving one’s word/logos: through promise.

### ***the givenness of the orphan and the orphanity of the gift***

The gift is indeed impossible in the language of Being or in the logic of supplementarity – trace (of Being). Thinking with such parent-theses, the gift becomes an aporia. Being dispenses the gift as much as it dispenses *bios*. The gift is lived and we cannot represent it. But we can enact the gift by telling how we come to be-li(e)ve what we have been given. Here, in writing, we could just enact the gift by creating an analogy. And a promising analogy that we have already touched upon has come to be the orphan.

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<sup>896</sup> (Noudelmann 2009, 45)

<sup>897</sup> (Monseu 2016)

Could the orphan tell the gift – in re(-)verse: could the gift let the orphan be? According to the Oxford Dictionary, the orphan is “A person, *esp.* a child, both of whose parents are dead (or, rarely, one of whose parents has died). In extended use: an abandoned or neglected child.”<sup>898</sup> It is the extended use that we shall take, especially the abandonment of the child. To abandon a child means essentially that one does not want it. The child is a burden, a hurdle in one’s projects, in one’s course of life. It is something extra to one’s own embodied existence. To abandon is to dispense with something someone does not want. The intentionality of abandoning a child is not on a par with the intentionality of giving it. The abandoned child is dumped with the prospect of releasing the one who has been encumbered by it. Thus, with respect to meeting the requirement of not wanting to give, of not intending to give something to someone, the child that is dumped is not given. It is left to its own destiny: *just* as it is. The intention is to dump, to excrete what is not required – we do not desire what we dump. There is no intentionality to give something to someone.

Let us extend this analogy with the dumping of an infant. The course of the infant which has been dumped no matter where, no matter how, no matter by whom, has a nomological course: The child will not last as it is. It does not have space or time but just is finite space and time – *just* that. Suppose that the child is dumped outside the steps of an orphanage. Someone, somehow dumps a baby at the steps of an orphanage with no traces. No knock on the door and furtive escape; no writing, no letters, no signs. No intentionality of giving – there is no assignment for this body; no inscription or prescription along with it. There are no witnesses either. It could have been anyone dumping a baby. Time passes and when the door of the orphanage opens, someone beholds the spectacle of a dumped baby in spite of what their original intention was in opening that door. The intentionality of opening the door in order to... is interrupted by a body. This interruption creates a call. And it is clearly a call which disses-courses. Two courses of two bodies meet in the prospect of death. A death as a destruction of courses, not death as the end of life. In this particular case it is also a call to/of conscience. As a

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<sup>898</sup> (OED, <http://www.oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=orphan&searchBtn=Search>)

member of the institution I am called<sup>899</sup> to action. Do I take it in or leave it there? Do I resolve by myself or by the frame-work of the *polis*? Do I call for or appeal to a polic-y, do I call the polic-e or appeal to my superior about what I should do? Do I engage in tracing the actor of this drama, of this action?

The dumped baby's course is still unquestioned. It is the decision to receive it that would transform the dumped baby into an orphan. The discourse of the orphanity of the orphan will start *after* it has been decided to be received, to be picked up. The discourse of the orphan starts *after* the end of the course of its having been abandoned. Just as it is, there, lying there in front of whoever opens the door, belies the horizon between beings – between categories: being dumped and being orphaned. The body there constitutes a pure horizon. The intentionality of picking it up does not come from an intentionality to receive what was given but what was found there; abandoned/dumped. With no intentionality to give an orphan and no intentionality to receive one's child as an orphan, the body dumped makes the absolute gift.

The orphan (*ὀρφανόν*), as the etymology suggests, is the first phenomenon because it is never concealed and never unconcealed – it goes beyond this dialectic. There is nothing else there apart from a living/dying body, there, a body that runs its own course. It is the pure phenomenon as finite time (how long it will last) and space (its material extension); and it is beyond particular predications – it *just* is, there. Uprooted itself, it contains the root of all phenomenality: Heidegger's favorite 'pha.' Between the 'ὀρ' (becoming) and the 'όν' (being) there is the logos of the *-φα-* (pha), the wonder or the drama of the absolutely given. The abandoned baby comes to be an orphan once it has been taken as such by an Other who questions its abandoned course. The body that one receives is the absolutely given. The life of the orphan, its discourse, its *bios*, starts after one's claiming reception *of* something which by reception becomes other than it is – from

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<sup>899</sup> The use of the passive voice is intentional. We shall see in a few lines that there is never passivity in this call. This is not some kind of ontological necessity which creates the call. It is grounded on some representation. In this case, the fact that I work as a member of an institution, i.e. the orphanage, and it is my duty, in the sense of my role there as an employee and I have to act accordingly. My role there represents what I need to do. The concept 'employee of an orphanage' is a particular commandment for how the given will be shaped.

dumped to orphan: *after* an inscription on it has been made, a decisive characterisation of/on what it is. Even in the juridical order, as Agamben shows,

He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather *abandoned* by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the *threshold* in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable. It is literally not possible to say whether the one who has been banned is outside or inside the juridical order.<sup>900</sup>

The body dumbled is thus the pure phenomenon, the purely given body, the threshold, a pure horizon, pure givenness. The gift is a body or the body is the gift – the gift of the body and the body of the gift are identical in the instance of the *just-before-and-after* one opens the door. The Other who receives becomes the counterpart to the baby's course to its end, to its death. To receive an orphan is to delay and defer its own course to death, its not lasting as it is. The Other who receives is the counterpart to this imminent and immanent death. The Other is the essence of keeping the body in(-)existence – including Brentano's sense of in-existence.

The analogy of the orphan can be extended more. If we think phaneroscopically, with exactitude and justice, we could not resist admitting that all of us have been orphans – in the instance of the *just before-and-after* we were taken up, adopted, by an Other. Every baby that is given birth is excreted, dumped and abandoned. As Annie Anzieu described it through psychoanalysis, the vagina is “a place of exit: things flow, are born, discharge or slide out of the body. Milk, period, baby” (in Naomi Segal).<sup>901</sup> The body that delivers another part of its own is exuding being. In this logic of phaneroscopic analogies and family resemblances rather than genealogically sexed filiations, the cutting of the umbilical cord seals the dumping of the baby, its abandonment. The baby is banned to be on its own – if only for an instant.<sup>902</sup>

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<sup>900</sup> (Agamben 1998, 28)

<sup>901</sup> (Segal 2009, 231)

<sup>902</sup> This is another way of understanding the abandonment of being that Heidegger talks about. Thinking within Being, abandonment is experienced in the feeling of distress in the be-ing delivered over (to oneself). In fact, there are two deliveries, two comings. The first coming is the possibility of being; the truth of be-ing or Being is exhausted in the finitude of what is dumped. The possibility of its enowning comes

Even if one is adamant and insists to adhere to representations of being, drawing a theory of being as a system of biophysical or biochemical laws or an idea(1) of an always already there 'with' Being, this death as not lastingness cannot not be admitted. Death as not lasting is the natural necessity of an excreted body – 'just that.' And just that means: no thing, nothing else, nothing other. The body, extension and time, that is simply, limited duration, is finitude. It cannot have a definite outcome apart from its own course as abandoned body. On its own, its *zoe*, its being *qua* being, its *en tant qu' étant*, it is destined as not to last. Its becoming rests on the fulfilment of its being: not lasting as it starts its proper being, that is, ending in death.

At the same time, in what kind of philosophical justice can we introduce a Spinozist or quasi-Spinozist ontological discourse of auto-poeitic force of a body as living matter which, in its own accord and severed from an umbilical cord, is living/lasting and on the same accord dying/not-lasting? For instance, Braidotti, following Deleuze, tells us about human embodiment and auto-poeisis as the character of human reality. In her own words, such "philosophy of becomings rests on the idea that matter, including the specific slice of matter that is human embodiment, is intelligent and self-organising."<sup>903</sup> At the same time, to follow the character, the logos, of a post-anthropocentric approach "requires more efforts of our imagination to ground our representations in real-life conditions and in an affirmative manner."<sup>904</sup> Exhausting all our representational efforts, where exactly is this self-organising and intelligent *slice of matter* expressing itself when manifested as a phenomenally material unity which is about to dis-unite and self-destruct – or with Heidegger, about to dis-sway? *Quid/quo/qua* evolution, *quid/quo/qua* becoming, *quid/quo/qua* auto-poeisis? In all good faith, it is this abandoned question or the question of abandonment that cauterises Being-Becoming – no matter how one (*s*)lices<sup>905</sup> the meaning of becoming: where in the abandoned baby as material unity can we affirm a

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through the logos of the Other as care. In the second coming, which involves the defamiliarisation of being in order to come nearest to be-ing – the turn – the possibility of affirming any being, the possibility of returning is the choice one will make. The second coming is indeed about judgment, the ultimate judgment one could say: Keep be-ing, keep trying to be and, if so, how; or not trying to be at all.

<sup>903</sup> (Braidotti 2013, 35)

<sup>904</sup> (Ibid., 72).

<sup>905</sup> 'Lice' is an older version of 'like' – see OED relevant entry.

“desire for self-expression and [becoming] ontologically free”<sup>906</sup> Following Nietzsche’s quest(ion):

Physiologists should think before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength-life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results. In short, here as everywhere else, let us beware of superfluous teleological principles-one of which is the instinct of self-preservation (we owe it to Spinoza’s inconsistency).<sup>907</sup>

*Auto-poeisis* is not self-preservation. However, it does not *slice* teleology or transcendentalism as it cannot account for itself. *Auto-poeisis* actually refers simply to our poetic being. With respect to the ‘*auto*’ just like in referring to automobiles we remain blind to the driver who characterises it, whose logos of being it is. The double (ac)counting of *Auto-poeisis* is one of the ‘*errors in physiologicis*’<sup>908</sup> poeting ‘*counterfeit in psychologics*’.<sup>909</sup>

At another point, Braidotti seems to suggest a request “to develop a dynamic and sustainable notion of vitalist, self-organising materiality.”<sup>910</sup> We acknowledge reception of this point but we have to underscore that we are still in danger of slipping into the transcendentalism of Being. The becoming is related to the being that it is. We can read Braidotti as suggesting not a becoming stemming from a particular being but *coming to be* and this *coming to be* cannot come to be if it is not allowed by the aid of the Other. The *arch(e)* of our *bios* comes through *hetero-poeisis*. It is in this logos that we can cross paths with the characterising of our being as “the effect of irrepressible flows of encounters, interractions, affectivity and desire, which one is not in charge of.”<sup>911</sup> The flow, the coming to be of the desire is an *Eleusis* which comes in virtue/*virtū* of the Other.

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<sup>906</sup> (Braidotti, 56)

<sup>907</sup> (Nietzsche 1966, 21)

<sup>908</sup> (Nietzsche 1968, 249)

<sup>909</sup> (Nietzsche 1996, 181)

<sup>910</sup> (Braidotti 2013, 82).

<sup>911</sup> (Ibid., 100)

The coming to be of the desire in its own voice – *per-se-phonē* – is in virtue of the Other’s calling, the Other’s logos which decides.

This coming to be is a happening, a request which rests on one’s decision, one’s logos, one’s character.<sup>912</sup> The potentiality of this being to be enduring or to exist, whatever one decides to put first, is *gift; given not a given*. How this body will be characterised is conditioned upon one’s logos. There is no reason or natural necessity which determines one to pick up what (a) body has (been) excreted. If one is compelled by habit or custom to do so – by any religious, cultural or legal mandates, any kind of commanding representations – that compulsion or appeal to duty is not supported by any natural necessity. In our example with the institution, the compulsion to act in a *particular* way is grounded on an appeal to being a member of an institution – the institution is the parent-thesis for my action; the institution as polis, as a body of policies to which I could appeal for what to do. That particularity is representational and by no universal means universally presentational. The natural course of what one body has negated by excreting it has its own universal desire-less destiny, its own in-itself: death as limited duration. There is absolutely no necessity and no compulsion to pick up what is dumped or what is found lying there. One can dispel all illusions with the magic word ‘no’ and move on. In what Jankélévitch calls *the almost-nothing of the instant*, one can say ‘no’ and slice, cide and put a s(l)ide to all the sophisms of supposed moral or natural necessities and nomologies with respect to being compelled to pick up a dumped body – *refus absolu*.<sup>913</sup> The Gordian knot of Being and the necessity

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<sup>912</sup> Life, as *bios*, starts with breaking of the course of being by questioning it – and we shall see what this ‘mysterious’ breaking means. It is another, as in an Other’s questioning this body. Life starts with the aid of the question of the Other. This body is resisted in realising its essence. This resistance comes from the Other – not a hand but a picking up, a hug, an embracement – the silent touching of an Other’s welcoming. The Other braces a body, entangles (with) an Other body to use Susan Stuart’s terms (2015; 2016a; 2016b; 2017). Yet, going beyond Stuart, we have to admit that the intentional transgression, the enkinaesthetic entanglement goes beyond the dialectic of active/passive, reflective/nonreflective. There is crossing of the boundaries of the pure phenomenon as essence. There cannot be an affective reciprocity always-already there before this transgression, this crossing of boundaries of the foreign-ness of the other body; even enkinaesthesia requires a passage. Crossing but not crossing out the boundaries of the Other.

<sup>913</sup> (Jankélévitch 1981)

of Being can be cut with logos, a will to power. Again, with Jankélévitch, we shall think of this absurdity neither tragically, nor lightly but seriously.<sup>914</sup>

In thinking with being we have been accustomed to beli(e)ving in some ideal/material connection between the parents and the child as if the latter is ‘properly’ connected to the former. This ‘properly’ ends up becoming some kind of property through various representations of being which take the form of belonging or being connected. A material connection before birth becomes an ideal connection *after*. Such representations of being, such transcendental parent(-)theses as maternal/paternal instincts, filiations represented by blood types and genetics, all of which have made us blind to the fact that there is absolutely no such connection of being with these living bodies, neutralise our responsibility. As Simone De Beauvoir explained, these transcendental material/ideal connections and bonds are exposed ridiculously in the cases of adoption or abortion; in child abuse and child neglect<sup>915</sup> – or in the practices of other cultures or historical eras e.g. the Spartans who dumped their infants at will – or cases of supposedly ‘abnormal’ babies which we put to death, supposedly not able to lead a ‘good’ life – according to the definition of good life that we endorse in each epoch. But this evaluation, this evaluative synthesis of something being proper or improper, good or bad, rest utterly, as we saw in our first chapters, on our logos and not on what there is.<sup>916</sup> They belie a “swearing

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<sup>914</sup> (Schwab 2009, 41)

<sup>915</sup> (De Beauvoir 1956)

<sup>916</sup> As Anne van Leeuwen writes, for de Beauvoir, sense is constituted not ready-made. There is no normativity in existential relations which could be justified by an appeal to an epistemic naturalism which is ultimately a form of representationalism. A connection between living beings, existences, is an accomplishment not a “natural” bond (2012). An example of epistemic naturalism which attempts to prove that there is a natural bond between the mother and the new born would be an argument like the one advanced by Michael J. Russell, *et al.*, who claim that mothers can identify their own infants by their odours (1983). While the justification for the claim is backed up by statistical significance – which only rules the *particular* results have not been generated by chance – the representational evidentiary support is rather low (less than 65% in first few hours and less than 60% the following days). In addition, the whole experimental design does not secure the exclusion of other variables which could have produced these results. But even if we accepted this and we generalised from the 26 mothers of that particular set to all mothers of the history of mankind – another instance of ex-appropriating the Other by the other of the Same by extrapolating the same into a simulated Other – it does not show that *there is* a natural material/ideal



allegiance to already uttered words,”<sup>917</sup> from *lexeis*, laws of a *They* that have not come from our logos but from a faith never questioned. There is neither a material nor an ideal connection between beings or Being: we create it – better yet we have institutionalised it. To appeal to any such parent-thetical representations is to relinquish one’s responsibility, one’s logos/decision for coming to be a parent. It constitutes an excuse,<sup>918</sup> another decision to be excused from a serious decision. The decision to come to be a parent is dropped in favor of some parent-thesis, some representation: in an a-logical or absurd *there is*.<sup>919</sup> But this *there is* is a constitution of a world which appeals to *particular* representations, not the universality of human reality which, phaneroscopically, is free to say no and resist – or say yes and renew its vows. As Irigaray explains, “the impetus of freedom originates in a specifically human real and reality and not in sexual or procreative instincts, which are not strictly human.”<sup>920</sup> The parent is one who adopts us not because of some necessity but by a courageous decision to offer. And this decision must stem from a desire not from a need, a lack or an appeal to a policy. “The decline of desire is due to its reduction to need, to the subjection of its impetus to a “for what?” and not “for

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bond between the mother and the body that she excretes. It does not follow neither in the logic-logismos of being nor in (the logicis of) life. From another angle, Cixous writes that the woman (as) body has been represented teleologically as the body that gives birth. “Begetting a child doesn’t mean that the woman or the man must fall ineluctably into patterns or must recharge the circuit of reproduction” (1976, 890). Pregnancy is just a possibility of articulating human desire which ultimately rests on a decision. To posit an evolutionary idea(l) of a teleological perpetuation of the species belies other under-lying motives.

<sup>917</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 22)

<sup>918</sup> (Sartre 2007a, 29). Agamben traces the mythologeme of political philosophies which treat the newborn with the representation of being ‘sovereign subject’ on the grounds that it has just been born – or just because it is born. He writes: “The fiction implicit here is that *birth* immediately becomes *nation* such that there can be no interval of separation [scarto] between the two terms” (1998, 128). While we follow this writing to the letter we cannot assume that it is just “mere coincidence” (124). To think so is also an excuse.

<sup>919</sup> The ‘there is’ is talked about idly by everyone and no-one as we saw with Heidegger. It involves and implicates an anonymous transcendental subject. The life of this anonymous subject destroys one’s logos as within *there is* ‘I choose to live’ within “an already existing desire that is to be lived in one way or another according to the advice of parents, teachers or public opinion” (Irigaray 2008, 74) – With(in) parent-theses, ways which parenthesise my logos, which bracket it and which I (f)allow, I decide to not question in good faith and thus live bracketed with(in) bad faith.

<sup>920</sup> (Irigaray 2008, xix)

whom?” it was destined.”<sup>921</sup>There is ultimately no need to become, and certainly no need to continue being a parent. To mask the desire with a representation of need and then appeal to it as a justification for action is to kill the desire. To reverse it to something other than it is:

To cultivate the relations with the one who brought you into the world does not involve the same elements for those who are the same as her or different from her – that is, for a female or male subject. And to have recourse to the abstraction of a paternal law for remedying a supposedly amorphous empathy in the first relations with the mother cannot solve the passage from nature to culture: rather, it evades the problem from repressing it.<sup>922</sup>

Irigaray, just like De Beauvoir, underscores that it is not the material/ideal representation that makes a parent. Recourse to such representations, even viewed as spontaneous, could lead to repression – and with possible concomitants on which psychoanalysts thrive to work. No representation makes a parent; a representation which works as a reification of a bond that feeds the eye/I. Let us *unbracket* such theses and think *justly*. Let us reverse these parentheses, these transcendental parent-theses. Let us *unbracket* and keep *unbracketing* as we promised in the beginning of our undertaking. Let us request the Other by questioning all these parent-theses that deprive an authentic welcoming of the Other.

What makes a parent is the blind-and-silent force of the decision to give what one does not have, to give one’s logos. This is what is usually explained as the passage from nature to culture. The creation of this passage is what we need to trace rather than a compulsive bond that seriously, justly, logically and phenomenologically/phaneroscopically does not exist. Such imposed represented compulsion makes it a *matter* of time to lead to what Irigaray calls with Hegel “the death of the parents.” But besides this death, an appeal to a representation which works as an imperative from the outside manifests the beginning of the phenomenon of appropriation that we called

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<sup>921</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 83)

<sup>922</sup> (Ibid., 3)

intersubjection, an amorphous empathy, an empathy coming only from the empathiser where the Other is mute: I *know* what you are. I have empathy towards you as you are *mine*, you have come out of *my* body: “possession, subjection, appropriation.”<sup>923</sup>

In the same vain, the abandoned body does not necessarily compel me to pick it up *be-the-cause that* it reflects in its entire surface my own finitude as Lévinas has described. The orphan *may* reflect in its bodily surface my own imminent death, my own finitude. In this sense it is an epiphany both in its Latin and Greek meanings. Indeed, its appearance could arrest my course. It could arrest me temporarily and give me options about what to do with it. But, as we saw with Sartre and with Peirce, this could be done with the sound of the bushes, or the shadow of a stick or with a snake which comes in (to) spite my course of action. If I say no and move on, I owe no apology for my act unless one presupposes some transcendental reason, some transcendental authority based on which my act shall be evaluated – a beyond that regulates a priori. A body whose surface is reflecting me, the sense of the face which becomes a surface re-flecting, and remembering my finitude, my own course to death, may – if one accepts that it is even possible – arrest my transcendence. We can say *it will* arrest it but *it does not necessarily will it*. The silent call of the baby is not the silent call of the widow or an Other who looks at me in the sense of holding me, re-garding me, inspiring me, a-musing me or resisting me – all of which fall under an economy of surprise. In my own course, in my own monologue, in my own totality, the epiphany of the Face interrupts my interiority as

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<sup>923</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 4). As Irigaray writes, “we welcome or shelter the other because of some politica-cultural paternalism or maternalism, some social idealism or ideology, some religious or moral commandment” (22). This is an appeal to a beyond, a representational beyond even if it declares that one regards the other as end in-itself. Any way of life that appeals to representations or the beyond in the sense of the transcendent or the transcendental and does not give time and space for the unknown of the present is doomed to appropriating the Other “and does not let them really be free” (22). In a more revealing note, Irigaray underscores how such transcendental representations end up in being a ruse of a force to master the Other because of a fear of taking the responsibility to change towards the unknown. “The flesh, born from the encounter, then only leaves an emptiness after being reduced to an energy to be mastered, to be exhausted in order to put an end to the obstacle, the questions, the overflow and the absence, the jubilation and the anxiety” (37).

Simonne Plourde explains the Lévinasian thought. It does *just* that; it just shocks me, but it does not compel any particular representation or action.

Le Moi est du coup tiré de sa quiétude et ressent la responsabilité qui lui incombe sans qu'il y ait auparavant consenti. ... c'est un sens qui perce sous le sens immédiat de l'approche, « un sens autre faisant signe à un entendement qui *écoute* au-delà de ce qui est entendu, à la conscience extrême, à la conscience réveillée ». <sup>924</sup>

Yet, the breaking of my totality, this interruption belies a course of action, a transcendence that was *en cours*. If we want to talk about totality here, then this totality is an immanent totality because I am already within a course. If we want to equate the totality of the 'I' and the totality of the newborn with its own course to not lasting, to dying, then we are committing a phenomenological fallacy. <sup>925</sup> The baby cannot transcend in the same way – if we can even talk of transcendence here – that I was transcending before being interrupted. To use Lévinas's term, the “work” is not the same. To equate the two courses as totalities, as transcendences in their own immanence would become an equation which is not phenomenological but formal – *even if* we allow for a particular punctuation which reveals a parity of two totalities, two courses with uneven pasts. And this formality is grounded in representation and intentionality and a logic of *unjust* abstraction. For me the body there is both an obstacle and an opening. For the body there, what am I? To begin with, can I be anything? Does the orphan feel a presentational resistance, the way I feel it? To analogise these two totalities, even if one accepts that they are on a par on a formal level, is an analogy which does not do justice to them or to what they could come to be together. We can say that with both of them, “there is

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<sup>924</sup> (Plourde 2017, 411)

<sup>925</sup> Lévinas equates the orphan with an Other being that transcends on the account that both can retort to the state of being of wallowing or sobbing, like a baby. This is fair. Kafka does it too – it is the only way he says he could get in touch with his father: when he wept. But next? Where is the will to power of the baby when the baby's sobbing passes away? How does the sobbing pass away? The being that transcends can be touched in so many ways to alleviate the drama of tears which tears its existence. The baby? When we radicalise the analogy we find formal consistencies yet phenomenological and living/*bios*-logical inconsistencies.

something that is neither subject nor substantive.”<sup>926</sup> However, one of them *had-has-will* have possibilities in their own anonymity. The body-dumped-and-not-yet-orphan exists only as one accumulated matter – a course to end. If this matter does not come to matter for someone, then it cannot become matter-reality.

Kelley writes: “For Lévinas, the I arises in a breakup of totality by the very presence of the Other.”<sup>927</sup> To have a totality, as we also saw with Peirce, that means that there is Otherness. Something that negates this totality by affirming it as totality otherwise there cannot be a totality. But, if the Otherness is such that conditions such totality then how can it interrupt and constitute it at the same time? This is a paradoxical reciprocity that Derrida tries to resolve both in his earlier work and in *Adieu*. But there is an other logical and phenomenological asymmetry that Derrida missed. If we move from the formal/ideal level of philosophy and phenomenologise in life, then, the Otherness that constitutes the totality cannot *only* be the Other which interrupts it. And the Other that interrupts this totality cannot *only* be the totality of Otherness that constitutes it – we are always in an en-viron. Let us look at this closely.

In *Time and the Other*, Lévinas writes:

“Consciousness is a rupture of the anonymous vigilance of the there is... it is already hypostasis; it refers to a situation where an existent is put in touch with its existing. Obviously, I will not be able to explain why this takes place. There is no physics in metaphysics. I can simply show what the significance of hypostasis is.”<sup>928</sup>

To claim that the hypostasis, the being in touch with one’s own existing, is the same in infant and widow, constitutes a decision to start phenomenology with formal logic, with a regulating idea of identity – which already presupposes otherness as negation. Lévinas double counts. This asymmetry comes about because Lévinas starts his description either formally or using a regulating idea and passes into its dialectical Other – entrapped in formalities and parent-theses. In *Totality and Infinity* the account starts with the presupposition of an evolutionary theory informed by a melange of Hobbesian-Rousseau-

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<sup>926</sup> (Lévinas 1987, 46-7)

<sup>927</sup> (Kelley 2013, 37)

<sup>928</sup> (Lévinas 1987, 50)

ean conception of human reality – the contentment of an atheistic consciousness closed in-itself and happy with the elements. Totality, egoism, and the ipseity of the Ego are all synonymous in Lévinas' work. Again the hypostasis as totality is regulated by an idea(l). A parent-thesis which does not derive its justification phenomenologically but formally. There is a difference when we start with what is evident and arrive at the metaphysical, rather than starting with metaphysical presuppositions and regulating the evident accordingly. These presuppositions do violence to the phenomenology of life. To what extent does the orphan or the dumped baby manifest egoism?

Suppose, also, that the orphan does interrupt one's course and motivates one to depart from its totality as Lévinas suggests.<sup>929</sup> What does the analogy of departure suggest? To depart, to create a distance from, a point is needed to be taken as point of departure: a port, a *porta*, a door. In the case of Lévinas there has to be a point of departure of the self, which departs from itself, to come back to itself and touch itself (totality), and another point where this circle, this exchange breaks off – another port. Is there a difference between the two? For the first Lévinas suspends judgement: "I will not be able to explain why this takes place."<sup>930</sup> Perhaps, we can think this suspended aporia as the formal and phenomenological aporia Merleau-Ponty found in Sartre.<sup>931</sup> For both Lévinas and later Derrida, the face to face with the Other is the opening of a door which announces hospitality; an instantaneous contact.<sup>932</sup> It is the threshold of welcoming the Other, "the threshold toward the Other."<sup>933</sup> But what about the hospitality of my self with myself in suspended hypostasis – the first unaccounted departure? Is that not to be reckoned as hospitality? Formally it should. And then? *How (come)* such suspension? Could we not with Henry analogise this hypostasis as an ongoing hospitality in the surface of my body as presence, a Parousia, offered by a transcendental Arche-Hospitality, Arche-Parousia offered by God? Possibly, hypostasis then becomes absolute presence as auto-affectivity,

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<sup>929</sup> (Lévinas 1987, 52)

<sup>930</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>931</sup> Cf. Pathway two.

<sup>932</sup> One has to be very delicate here with this Derridian animadversion from *différance* which requires time to the instant of the instance with no time *metaxy*.

<sup>933</sup> (Derrida 1997a, 54)

as pure pathos, narcissistic empathy.<sup>934</sup> And if so, what would be the difference between these hospitalities? We are missing the sym-pathy.

Let us look at it differently. To depart does not require a specific place and time. To depart does not require us to specify any metrical relations. It is given to us as meaning by itself. It is a welcoming concept for and of all desire to move. Even if to depart suggests just one step, if the departure consists in making one step, a moving, a *from-to*, a boundary is crossed,<sup>935</sup> a necessary and contingent boundary which we can call 'door.' Departure consists in just crossing a door, taking a step, a leap, opening one's lips, a horizon of parting, a div(id)ing from *here* to *there*. A *saltus* from here to there both of which come to be only *after* the move. The 'there' signals the arrival from a 'here' yet it can only be seen as here *after* it has become a (t)here. Departure or arrival, beginning or end can only be re-presented with an analogy: *from-to (t)here*. But this *from-to* cannot come from an orphan which does not have (t)here. To have such a place in the world one needs to be able to transcend, to be able to (de)sever the world. As such, a clearing is required. And who does this clear-ing, the clear-ance, this clean-ing of the body which f(ol)lows from an opening if not the decided and decisive welcoming embracing of the Other as a source of goods; clearly a m-other?

In the case of the orphan without any representation, as pure phenomenality, just presentation, there is no beyond. Lévinas enjoys and enjoins a double meaning in the Face as awaking conscience and consciousness. And equally a double meaning in the responsibility. The invitation of the surface of the body construed without intentionality would be to act (consciousness) but not to act *in a particular way* which would mean to compel (conscience), and from which an apology for not accepting the invitation would follow. The Face, this visible surface of the body which comes to my light, my visibility, hence literally an epiphany, re-minds me, re-verses my finitude and calls for me to act. It

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<sup>934</sup> This thesis is clear in *Incarnation*. In an interview with Olivier Salazar-Ferrer, Henry approaches what Lévinas calls hypostasis as life taken as a sort of continual presence, omnipresence of oneself to oneself – “la Vie, comprise comme une sorte d’omniprésence à soi-même, qui tout en changeant, ne se sépare de soi” (Henry 2010, 33).

<sup>935</sup> Human reality as thinking-historical starts in the ‘crossing’ as Heidegger described (1989). What we want to enact is how this crossing comes about from an Other who gives their logos, their promise for creating the possibility of crossing.

compels me by interpellating me but *not in a particular way*. I can resist it at any time – in bad or good faith. Lévinas’s apology as the first word appeals to a particular transcendental, to a particular nominalism. If anything, if the Other reflects my action, it is a confession (homology) that comes first and not an apology. A perpetrator of an act needs first to confess, to claim responsibility before accepting or recognising that an act was not right. Again, even in representational terms, the Other is my counterpart to death (homo-logue) not my transcendental judge reflecting a divine justice compelling me to act toward a particular good for the Other.

With the orphan, I am not hostage in its space because it does not have space or time as I have (had) space and time constituted in my transcendence – a transcendence which is unthinkable without a being passed/past. The orphan *just* is (space-and-time). It does not transcend in the way that I had just transcended before being interrupted by it.<sup>936</sup> And even if I decide momentarily to pick it up, that could also mean to move it out of my way and pursue my course leaving it intact – with tact and care, responsibly – as if I were never there – and thus returning to my course.<sup>937</sup> There is no presuppositionless reason

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<sup>936</sup> Although we are closely following Irigaray (2008), at times she seems to oscillate in her phenomenological description. The baby does not transcend. The “first link” that the mother has created and whom “has helped me to enter into existence” (111-112) is not one “that I formed with my mother” (112). It is my mother’s promise, her logos characterising my being, giving me means to be able to transcend so I can make sense. Representing the relation between mother-child or par-ent-ent as analogous to intersubjectivity, “ ‘two who(s)’ ” (115) is to debase and degrade, to not do justice, to the metaphysical work of care that the mother does in order to come to be (a) parent; the agony and struggle to create a path from the ent, as exist-ent, to exist-ence. We agree with her thesis that “The two are in the world, but the world in which they dwell is not the same” (115). But the relation is not between “ ‘two who(s)’ .” We recognize the ‘who’ of the mother but there is no ‘who’ of the child until the mother opens up a door by characterising, providing means to the child to enable it to pass into existence; “she who has been the company and the mediator of our first being in the world” (117). If “in that earlier relation to the world, the relation with the mother and her mediation were decisive” (118), it is because *she* transcends toward and to ward by giving her word to the Other who is not yet (t)here; *Just* she transcends at this time and in time. The Other as *who* may never come.

<sup>937</sup> Claiming responsibility should be considered neutrally – beyond good and evil. If not, we will end up parsing responsibility by infusing it with acting well. Drink responsibly or kill responsibly; euthanasia may be considered responsible killing for someone’s well-being; but whose?



why I should owe an apology for that.<sup>938</sup> Again, as Jankélévitch says, a conversion or change from all to all, a radical mutation is required from just being next to a body (*parent*) to constantly being with an Other (*parent*). But that radical conversion does not come from the Other *tout court*. It must be decided/promised – there must be logos behind, logos that extends, quests to the Other by questioning itself.

Once we realise that, once we understand that the body that is dumped does not belong to us and that we (do not) have to adopt it, then the decision to adopt comes to be a courageous decision, what Jankélévitch has called a serious decision. The serious decision is the courage to engage.<sup>939</sup> No representation can and at the same time should be allowed to demob one's logos. No representation can, nor should take the role of a (transcendental) justification for an ontological bond that comes to be iff one creates it by acting. And to create this bond is to decide it; and this decision is a de-cision, a cutting through. This serious decision is an absolute acting will; a heroic decision motivated by a personal desire to offer oneself to someone who cannot appreciate it and cannot recognise it in the present; and to whom I owe nothing – before adopting them. It is also to understand that to adopt is at the same time the reverse: to opt-to-add a burden in one's course. An opting which does not come from duty which appeals to a transcendental justification. It is a personal opening to welcoming an Other. An Other who has not yet come and may not ever arrive. An Other whom I do not know and I cannot (ever) know. The Other's coming is possible and the promise is creating an opening for this possibility: the possibility of possibility. "Welcoming requires an availability for that which has not yet occurred, an ability and a wanting to open ourselves to the unknown, to that which is still unfamiliar, and in a sense, will always remain unfamiliar."<sup>940</sup> To adopt is a promise

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<sup>938</sup> For Lévinas, as Plourde explains the values value before freedom. Responsibility comes before freedom in such a way which makes Lévinas's account transcendental. For Jankélévitch freedom comes first and, responsibility, as in Sartre, is the counterpart to an absolute freedom.

<sup>939</sup> (Schwab 2009)

<sup>940</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 18). There are great differences in the philosophies of Jankélévitch and Irigaray. For Jankélévitch, the heroic decision does not come to be after deliberation; it is spontaneous, in the absolute blind darkness that propels towards the well-being of the Other. On the other hand, for Irigaray the preparation of the welcoming is heavily invested with ongoing deliberating which allows one to secure their ground for the welcoming of the Other; equally heroic yet with a will to power which endures. Be that as it

to allow the coming of an Other's possibility or the possibility of an Other. That does not mean that this request is dissymmetrical or paradoxically reciprocal in passivity as in Derrida and Lévinas. It is just deciding to eroticise their being, to treat them, to adopt them as strangers where they are questioned and thus promised a place to come to tell their story – philo-xenia.

To adopt implies giving one's time and space which the Other receives as care. And this giving is to live less for oneself. Not less in being but another less. To less one's transcendence to a personal transcendental beyond by changing its direction where the personal becomes inter-personal. To adopt announces the first economy. Caring for oneself turns around, a decided anastrophe, and comes to be care for me-and-the-other. To adopt is a matter of distribution of transcendence; from being disinterested to taking another interest. The anticipation of another transcendence *matters*. An enhanced transcendence happening at the same time/space yet in another direction, the Other's direction. It is abandoning one's own beyond, a self-imposed ban to one's beyond, which does not involve the Other and a div(id)e for the quest for an Other. In Irigaray's terms,

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may, the decision to adopt the Other, is the point where they touch, where the logos of each philosopher comes to touch the Other, where they dialogue – through our writing. This decision for Irigaray comes from the event – or advent – of the newborn which, by rupturing the same (individual beings) and the Same (the couple), which calls for action (2008). With this advent there are “three births” (31) not just one. “There are now at least three new existences, which, at this very moment, make us pass from one life to another, from world to another” (ibid). “Something has happened” (32). She goes on by quest(ion)ing a similar path: “How could I deny this, or want to nullify its having taken place? And, moreover, why? Unless I find it an obstacle in my way, an impossible crossroads upon my path, a disowning of myself” (ibid). And there is always this possibility in the depths of my thinking being – a being repressed by parental representation and sublimation; a being which does not recognise that it is absolutely free to say no and go on for whatever reason. To appeal to ideal/material bonds, the so-called “natural conception” is a favouring of “a physical begetting in love because of its easiness” (35). It is an overevaluation of “genealogical relations to the detriment of love as such” (ibid). It is again in love that these two very great philosophies find and found their existence. As we shall see, the quest(ion) is erotic in the ancient sense, *ἐρώτ-ησις*, a quest to look-for-and-after the Other which requires a fall *with the Other* in love, in eros, in quest(ion), and not a fall in love *of* the Other.

it is changing the direction of transcendence from vertical to horizontal.<sup>941</sup> This is how one's *bios* comes to be.

Let's play forth(-)with the horizontal. It is trying to find/found space and time for the Other to come to be. Giving the Other a horizon of existence. Is that horizon not an extension of their time and space in all senses? Giving space and time in this other body is adopting ways to prevent its not-lastingness. To adopt is "not to let death have the last word, or the first one;"<sup>942</sup> to adopt is to confront the death of the Other with one's own time and space, with an-other transcendence. It is a quest against the death of the Other, a questioning of death by providing a horizon of existence, a request to come to live. To adopt a body is to (f)allow its time and space, in all senses its being, and give it an alternative, an existence. To give such alternative is to promise a horizon of existence by questioning its previous being. If the horizon is the effect of two bodies coming into contact, this horizon belongs to none of them but to a beyond which they create/enact together. But the beginning of the contact, in the instance we are discussing, starts only from the movement of the Other. A movement of an extended transcendence, a quest towards another by questioning oneself.

This questioning is the first promise. To adopt is to promise 'Thou shall not die.' What does this mean? To promise, we saw, is to future. Here the future is not only for oneself but for an Other, an impersonal other without eyes/Is: You, whoever you are, shall not die. 'Thou shall not die' is never accomplished. It is an undertaking, a constant trial. It does not mean that you should last forever. It means that I will you to exist by trying myself towards you. It is a promise to give a bit/beat of time and space before death. It is death that I am up against when I adopt. It is to silence death for a bit/beat. To ward off the course of immediate not-lastingness. This is how to promise is to give one's word. To adopt is to ward the Other from death by giving a word of welcome *now*, at this very instant. It is to *sea* to the whether of the possibility of an Other. The gift then is not the orphan as we said earlier, but the promise, the logos which wards one's course, which dis-ses it and gives them discourse. The gift is the passage (fallowed being) created by one's logos which will allow for the Other to express their own logos, to future. The gift is the promise to communicate with the Other by (f)allowing, questioning ontic-

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<sup>941</sup> (Ibid., 121)

<sup>942</sup> (Lévinas 1987., 3)

ontological time and space (body) for the creation of place, an existential place, an Other's place, a place where they can have their own time and space of expression (logos). It is a promise in all senses of the giving (of) one's word. Before all existence and being, there is the promise of the Other: gifting logos.

*passage, promise, gifting logos & a door*

The philosophical-scientific canon has always been oriented toward finding ways to characterise literally the metaphor of passing from nature to culture. It has always been a question of deciphering linearly the how of the evolution from nature to culture. Irigaray uses the concept of 'cultivation' to describe the movement, the metaphor, from 'nature' to 'culture.' From a sociological perspective, Georg Simmel<sup>943</sup> also prefers to describe human reality as the process of cultivation which shall yield its fruits – in the sense of a process by which our essence will be realised. Yet, again, apart from the issue of the genealogy of this metaphorical representation which, as De Beauvoir maintains, can be traced to male sexuality,<sup>944</sup> it lacks phaneroscopic prescission. We can cultivate land and re-cultivate it to yield crops. The land can ultimately remain fallow, barren, and be(come) abandoned. Or, we could never have had the possibility to cultivate. When this lack becomes evident and pressing, there is only one way to express this passage from nature to culture; an alternative logos comes to rescue this fallowed metaphor of cultivation: "It is based on an inner fact which can be expressed completely only allegorically and somewhat vaguely as the path of the soul to itself."<sup>945</sup> The allegory of the path: There can

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<sup>943</sup> (Simmel 1987). When Heidegger talks about the 'being of a people' in the sense of a collective or a culture he writes about a "higher order of be-ing" which has to be achieved: "Mindfulness of what belongs to 'being a people' constitutes an essential passage-way" (Heidegger 1989, 30). But this passage-way or crossing is never the given of the Other but it is sacrificed to an anonymous 'be-ing.'

<sup>944</sup> The cultivation of the land and the possibility of yielding its goods has always been associated with the ploughing of the feminine land to yield crops and reproduce. "He wishes to conquer, to take, to possess; to have woman is to conquer her; he penetrates into her as the ploughshare into the furrow; he makes her his even as he makes his the land he works; he labours, he plants, he sows: these images are old as writing; from antiquity to our own day a thousand examples could be cited (De Beauvoir 1956, 170).

<sup>945</sup> (Simmel 1987, 55)

be no human reality without a path and a passage coming from the logos of an Other – this alter logos, literally allegory – as its universal possibility; a logos which figures or better prefigures our being.

Suppose we take the orphan as a hypostasis as Lévinas said. Let the identity pass, let it be. In this absolute narcissistic identity, where the self is in the order of its same, in and of itself, a closed circle, there is a mimodrama happening. As we saw with Mallarmé's narcissist mime, this hypostasis is played over the surface of one body closed on itself. To access this mimodrama, this enclosed spectacle, a path and a passage are needed, both of which will allow to see, to have a theory of this absolute sameness: "un chemin tout sombre ce soir-là descend le long de la Seine: puis, poussant une petite porte."<sup>946</sup> The mimodrama of hypostasis, the in-itself of the or-phan spectacle, is (a) happening behind closed doors. To see it we first have to follow a path leading to a small door. Many paths could (have) le(a)d to that door but the passage, the door that we shall pass is universal for all possible paths that could (have) le(a)d to it. The door which would allow the passing of the inside to the outside and the outside to the inside is universal, *une petite porte*. This door, which in the ancient *phonē* sounds like *δῶρον* which means gift, constitutes an entrance – the beginning, arche – of and for culture. In our idiom: a passage which follows being and allows the departure from being to existence. And this door is given to us through the promise (logos) of the Other.

In this way we can understand Lévinas's and Derrida's 'trace' differently. The trace as passage can be just the incision on our being created by another's logos; the trace of the Other's transcendence on our being. "In a trace has passed a past absolutely bygone."<sup>947</sup> The trace is like a wake. It is the Other who awakes us from a wallowing dream by (f)allowing, characterising our being. The logos of the Other drafts, writes an opening, o-pens our being from the circle of atemporality. A trace, says Lévinas, "is the insertion of space in time, the point at which the world inclines toward a past and a time."<sup>948</sup> Simply, a passage into time for a being, or better still, for a something which is out of time, alien to time, closed in itself and wallowing. The trace is an opening, a schism, a draft. This drafting is the first promise; an indelible mark not as a trace with particular

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<sup>946</sup> (Margueritte 1882)

<sup>947</sup> (Lévinas 1986, 357)

<sup>948</sup> (Ibid., 358)

ontic-ontological import, but a mark through which – in all senses of ‘*through which*’ – we trace, find or found everything. Through which everything flows as Mallarmé wrote. It remains, there, pres/ent-and-abs/ent like a promise of a promise. It (f)allows every transcendence we undertake. But this mark, this scar, this “incision made in time that does not bleed,”<sup>949</sup> comes from the Other. Perhaps, Sartre may have been suggesting this with the terms ‘omnipresence’ and ‘contamination’ of the Other. What the Other gives us is their logos through its mediation and representation; their promise of giving us what they think is good, our well-being. But the gift is not the intentionality of the gesture but the effect of the gesture itself. And this effect is *entropy* which phenomenalises or traces the how of the attempt of the Other’s fulfilling their promise. Is not the gift the unbracketing of Being through a m-other logos, a promise as giving us her wor(l)d?

There is the implication of a passage in the giving of one’s wor(l)d. This passage stays given on our being like an indelible and indicible mark, a character on our being. It is in this sense that the passage is the promise. The gift is a mark as the first writing, a writing *avant la lettre*. Because it is a promise as the possibility of every transcendence

...writing is the first passageway, the entrance, the exit, the dwelling place of the other in me – the other that I am and am not, that I don’t know how to be, but that I feel passing, that makes me live – that tears me apart, disturbs me, changes me, who? – a feminine one, a masculine one, some? – several, some unknown, which is indeed what gives me the desire to know and from which life soars.<sup>950</sup>

Although Cixous thinks that the ‘I’ is ontologically intersubjective, that *there is* within me an Other, we can retain our convergence with her in the phrase that the Other presences themselves. The Other not as part of my presence but as a present, a gift, a promise which *I feel* (as) *passing*, as I transcend. Since the *entrance* and the *exit*, the opening that we require in order to transcend is what allows my *desire to know and from which life soars*, the promise of the Other is felt as that very threshold of entrance/exit. It is the horizon beyond which everything happens. One cannot ex-ist without passing from

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<sup>949</sup> (Lévinas 1986, 354)

<sup>950</sup> (Cixous and Clément 1986, 157-8)

the Other's logos. The Other is not just standing next to this passage, this door. The Other is under-standing it; the Other is that door – not the Other's being but their logos.

The passage is given through the path. The path as means is nothing else than everything that we learn by example. We are taught these means by example. From how to eat, and do our toilet to the language that we speak and the how to speak it. Lévinas talks about teaching as a manner of speaking or a manner of reasoning and this could be broadly construed in the sense of Peirce's *logica utens*, a mother language game. To learn the mother language requires a game of repetition, habitual way of doing. The possibility of habit then is not an ontological necessity but an expression of the gift. The first habitus is given by the Other who tries to reach us. A trying to reach through repetition, again and again, through patterns of touch, sound, gaze and so on. It is the constant exposure of the Other, of the m-other, who goes into a repetition, into a routine, a procedure, who inscribes themselves in circuits of action, again and again to reach us. The orphan is *drawing in* from the m-other by *withdrawing from itself*, it is ex-hausting them. The orphan drinks up, absorbs, haunts the source of goods, the means offered for its lasting – to pass from duration to endurance. The orphan exhausts the m-other. Is a mother ever not tired-by-being-tried? The m-other gives until the orphan takes care for-itself. Until it can procure for itself and thus exemplify itself. Until it can resist the offering of means and can make its own means, be its own example. Can we not say that to express oneself is to self-exemplify? The passage then is not the means offered but the effect of these means which constitutes an opening where the orphan can exit it, ex-it, and decide *for-itself* what path to follow or create.<sup>951</sup> When it can reflect and understand. "Concern, in fact, can be interpreted as a way of substituting oneself for the mother, which a process of reversal makes difficult to decipher."<sup>952</sup>

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<sup>951</sup> As Kafka writes to his father, "your effect on me was the effect you could not help having" (1976, 20).

<sup>952</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 119). This passage which is given through a path is what Patrick Modiano is writing without writing it himself in his novel entitled *Pour que tu ne te perdes pas dans le quartier*. By this title formulated in the French subjunctive, Modiano follows all the teleological prescription one could mean with such a syntax in compelling the Other with an 'in order to,' a 'so that' or a 'do so, that,' and passes into the promise which reveals that in the end of this prescription the one who commands inscribes themselves toward the Other by being commanded in the 'just-in-case' one is to be lost. The prescription passes into a promise of not being lost. And this promise comes through a m-other's writing. A m-other

The deciphering of the process of reversal is a question of ‘how.’ Ever since our introduction we have been attempting to characterise this how, that is, that introduction to ‘culture’ requests the invisible aid of the Other. We said that the opening of being, the passing from being to existence requires a gift which literally means a door. If, to use another analogy, we are “awaken to another world,”<sup>953</sup> the world of the mother, it is ultimately not about the world of the m-other, but about the how of the awakening. This awakening is, in all senses, a c-section<sup>954</sup> on the circle of being. This break comes as a tear, a crack, a fissure on being from which one’s logos/existence could flow. To create an opening, a door for the Other to see/sea on the Other side, some force is required for drafting this door. In this way, the drafting of the door surprises us. In the attempt to open a door on our being, the Other surprises us. The Other surprises us by attempting to question the monotony of being, its natural course to death by giving us a rhythm which comes through the how of this opening; in this way every surprise is tempora(ri)lly abrasive or excoriating. The surprise is always in-between, the horizon of all times, the arhythmic and the rhythmic.

To use another analogy, scientists talk about the phenomenon of palmar grasp. New-borns’ palms are closed. And if you try to open the hands *there is* a reflex, in essence an immediate reaction, whereby the hands will clench.<sup>955</sup> There are many ways to open

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who in Modiano’s elliptical writing is not the biological mother but the woman who gives him this subjunctive in written form. The representationally biological mother is substituted by a m-other who ‘adopts him’ by caring. The m-other cares by providing the possibility of a *bios*, thus a *bios-logical* m-other with her written address: her promise to him for him (so) as (not to be) lost (Modiano 2014).

<sup>953</sup> (Irigaray 2008, 104)

<sup>954</sup> As we saw earlier, the dark Heraclitus uses two metaphors for this opening. The opening as c-section can be done with bow or lyre. Both constitute a logical opening of being. It is our choice, our decision, whether the opening toward and to word the other will be done with a bow – killing physically or in semblance, or with a lyre – by being a-muse for each other, an inspiration.

<sup>955</sup> “To elicit the palmar grasp reflex, the examiner inserts his or her index finger into the palm of the infant from the ulnar side and applies light pressure to the palm, with the infant lying on a flat surface in the symmetrical supine position while awake. Tactile without pressure and nociceptive stimulation of the palm are both inadequate. The response of the reflex comprises flexion of all fingers around the examiner’s finger, which is composed of two phases: finger closure and clinging. The latter occurs as a reaction to the proprioceptive stimulation of the tendons of the finger muscles due to slight traction subsequent to the application of pressure to the palm” (Futagi, Toribe and Suzuki 2012, 5).



these hands. You can finger them or hug them. Or you can caress them and make them shiver. The ways that the m-other will traverse the surface of this body, the way she-verses will leave marks, verses on this body, shivers, grooves, rhythms. The opening of the palm can be done with fingering, with penetrating the palm. But it can be done with encompassing the hand or the whole body, with embracing it – in both its English and French meanings. We saw with Sartre the importance of the caress. It is not a give and take as Derrida describes. The one who caresses verses the body and writes an opening on the surface of the body. The caress creates a metaphysical opening to the Other as one traverses their body. A caress by one hand over a surface is not versing the same as an embracing caress by one's whole means, one's whole body. The caress questions, verses, rills. How much caress will be spent through the hand and how much through the whole body? It is in the expenditure of the caress taking place in the whole surface of one's body where the other can have a surface to be revealed. It is the horizon of two bodily surfaces, the hug or the cuddle; (t)here, where an embrace or an en-com-passing can be felt. A passing towards each other in the hug or the cuddle, in the syn-pathetic touching of contact. The opening of the other as request requires a tactics of touching with tact, a rhythm of tac-tics, a rhythm of a bit/beat; a beat of embracing.

Similarly, De Beauvoir talks about the verse, the rhythm engendered in/by rocking the baby-body. Different rhythms contribute to the constitution of different openings which will affect the ways we transcend. They compose ways, horizons of the ways of transcendence. We have categorized rhythms as proper for boys and proper for girls. Rhythms that suit according to what someone is supposed to become. Throwing oneself to the world becomes sexed, throwing like a boy or a girl,<sup>956</sup> when it is in fact engendered by being en-gendered by the one who promises to help one transcend. In fact, the possibilities are infinite precisely because the opening is the possibility of possibility.

*Again*, if the gift as opening or the opening as gift might be analogised with a process, then it is *just* (that) process, or in Kafka's words *Prozess*: a trial; a procedure or proceeding towards the possibility of a verdict; to be able to come to the ultimate trial, the possibility of judgement, understanding. And, *again*, this process, this trial, this undertaking, is an attempt coming from an Other whose gaining towards. Once *again*,

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<sup>956</sup> (Young 1980)

and this again-ness as process comes to be through a forced, better still, an en-forced writing on the ‘gain,’ dispels the naturalness or naturalness of the process, it gainsays it as it goes *against* it; it is a process of opening a door for someone’s gain. It is all about gain as help or avail, and/or bargain as opportunity. But whose? It is on this undecided decidability or the decided undecidability of the quest(ion) through which Kafka’s writing comes to be writing *literally*, or *literally* writing, as Walter Benjamin would say,<sup>957</sup> of the opening as gift, as door. A door on/with which Kafka was literally fixated in his writings.

### ***Kafka’s (a)mazing d(o)or-gift***

Kafka was fixated on/with this ‘door’ as a gift or as opening to the world which (f)allows existence. But this fixation was not just on any door but his door. If only we could say ‘his this door.’ We shall not attempt another reading of Kafka’s work as a whole. We just want to enact this fixation in Kafka’s writing – not represent it, but enact it. We just want to fix our attention on the door as a figure of the whole of existence or the given or created (w)hole of this figure in Kafka’s writing. A (w)hole which Deleuze and Guattari take as a burrow, as it is written in one of his short stories, whereas for us it seems more like a burrow turned into a furrow and open to view in writing: “All that can be seen from outside is a big hole.”<sup>958</sup> But let us start from the beginning, once *again*, let us try a beginning.

“How can we enter into Kafka’s work? This work is a rhizome, a burrow. The castle has multiple entrances whose rules of usage and whose locations aren’t very well known.”<sup>959</sup> Benjamin also took heed of the door. Reflecting on Kafka, he wrote to Gerhard Scholem that Kafka can be heard through a physicist’s words: “If one reads the following passage from Eddington’s *The Nature of the Physical World*, one can virtually hear Kafka speak. ‘I am standing on the threshold about to enter a room. It is a complicated process...’”<sup>960</sup> The threshold of entering a room is an opening a ‘door.’ Yet,

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<sup>957</sup> (Benjamin 1968)

<sup>958</sup> (Kafka 1971, 205)

<sup>959</sup> (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 3)

<sup>960</sup> (Benjamin 1968, 141)

besides the fact that all three realised the importance of Kafka's door, a possible *arche* which allows a reading of Kafka beyond the traditional ways – theologically, with classical psychoanalysis, or classical legal theory – and, thus, rid the violence of exhausting the meaning of this writing within particular categories; still, they did not show enough *respect* to 'his this door.' "Yes, the mere thought of the door itself."<sup>961</sup> Deleuze and Guattari "enter, then, by any point whatsoever; none matters more than another, and no entrance is more privileged even if it seems an impasse, a tight passage, a siphon."<sup>962</sup> And as Benjamin claims, there is essentially no entrance to Kafka's work. Any way we claim to enter his work fails, and this failure is the beauty of Kafka's revelation: "the beauty and purity of a failure."<sup>963</sup> This rushing in into Kafka's work seems indeed a process bound to failure, just like his father's process which kept him in limbo without reaching him.

Let us go back to the door and start with the front door. Let us officially announce ourselves at the front door by knocking. None of the officials announced themselves in his writings. All officials pop up harrassing the writer and showing no tact, no touch, no respect. Let us try to reach Kafka's front door otherwise. It is right (t)here that we shall fail. If we fix ourselves by fixating on the front door we shall fail, and for two reasons. First, there is no front door in Kafka, no official or proper door to knock. Second, when a front door appears, it is never properly functional; it appears as after having been torn open: "they had evidently left it open, as one does in houses where some great misfortune has happened."<sup>964</sup> The misfortune is that there is no path to the front door as passage to the house, the apartment, the Castle. As Sartre noticed, "the castle on top of the hill is visible from everywhere but no road leads to it."<sup>965</sup> To come to knock on a front door is impossible. To be fixed at a front door as an official entrance is not only hopeless but impossible. Kafka's front door or entrance is defected: "The burrow has so many unavoidable defects imposed by natural causes that it can surely stand this one defect for

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<sup>961</sup> (Kafka 1971, 210)

<sup>962</sup> (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 3)

<sup>963</sup> (Benjamin 1968, 145)

<sup>964</sup> (Kafka 1971, 70)

<sup>965</sup> (Derins, Hollier and Krauss 1999, 25)

which I am responsible, and which I recognize as a defect, even if only after the event.”<sup>966</sup> The realisation of this defected entrance, one can even call it a *trauma* or say that the door has been blessed, comes ‘*If only after* the event.’ An entrance is an entrance from a particular orientation, let us say the outside. From the other side it is an exit. Only after one has taken the Other side can the entrance be seen in its universality – entrance/exit. Only after such an event. And this event is an event of understanding – seeing oneself as another. The door is this threshold, this border, this edge, *The Bridge*: “not traced in any map”<sup>967</sup> and yet allowing for the Other to come. In this story, ‘in his this’ story, the bridge bends *only after* a passenger comes on it.

All the stories of Kafka can be traced back to the beginning, this *arche*, this front door which does not exist, but which appears unofficially as an essential condition for all the events and connections of events in the stories. This opening as door is just an arc, a frame which allows every beginning, every possible being, every *ar(ch)e*. There is always a door before, around, or beyond which everything happens. Every story is fixed in a physical or virtual door which allows its unfolding.<sup>968</sup> And with no front door as a transcendental beyond, everything is contained within a milieu of rooms, corridors and doors. As the architect Ayah Rahmani<sup>969</sup> writes, there is no world as a beyond or exterior. Even in those stories where there is a link to another city or another country as in *The Trial* and in *America*, this link is a corridor to another room that requires another door – or a port(al), somekind of opening. This opening is simply transcendence or the possibility of existence.

The opening to the world is a fixation which is first of all his fixation. The door about which he writes or a door which is fixed in all so many places in his writings goes beyond any figure of writing, metonymy or metaphor, since it is the very door that was

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<sup>966</sup> (Kafka 1971, 210)

<sup>967</sup> (Ibid., 259)

<sup>968</sup> Even in stories such as the *Jackals and the Arabs* a door is always drawn virtually. “One jackal came from behind me, *nudging right under my arm*, pressing against me, as if he needed my warmth, and then stood before me and spoke to me almost eye to eye.” (Kafka 1971, 256; my emphasis). If we were to draw or enact this description the whole movement of behind-right\_under-against-before sign-writes a door.

<sup>969</sup> (Rahmani 2015)

written, fixed, or framed on his being. The door is the only figure, if one could call it so, that is never distorted or proliferated, never assembled into series or assemblages; it never escapes itself.<sup>970</sup> The door is written both in the abundance, fluidity and universality of the *en vrac* and the robustness, solidity and particularity of the *en bloc*. It (f)allows all the writings of Kafka – it is the very possibility of his writing. Kafka never writes *about* or *of* a door. He writes with the aid of the door. And when he attempts to write about it there is nothing to say, there is no whole door, but just a hole and a doorkeeper. To write about the door is to be fixated and doing nothing like the man from the country who stands before the ultimate paradigmatic door: *Before the Law*. This fixation at the door succeeds in failing as fixation just at the instance of the figure of the door or the door as figure. If this were not so, there would be no construction, no writing at all about this failure, this defect. And this failure which fails its success fails again and again by not being what it is, that is, (im)possible. This failure is written and, thus, fails to be a failure in the distance around a point which can never be reached, in the instance of the just-before or just-after-the door: in writing and erasing, in constructing and destroying, in doors opening and closing restlessly as Ayad Rahmani put it – “leaving and returning,” versing and reversing, to and fro.

That is exactly what is happening in *The Burrow*. Apart from the whirlpool of creating and destroying the interior of this habitat, the to-and-fro is more evidenced when the dweller attempts to dwell on a noise. No path can lead to that noise, that minor failure of silence which becomes so loud and which bugs the inhabitant of the burrow. In the being of absolute silence or in the absolute being of silence there is an opening, a noise, but there can be no access, no entrance, no door to it. No matter how many corridors, paths, and alleys the inhabitant creates, this noise can never be found in its source. Insofar as one is arrested by this humming with its various rhythms, then there is no possibility of going back. And, tragically as it is, there is no reason for this rhythm; the rhythm is the

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<sup>970</sup> Benjamin, and following him, Deleuze and Guattari, have provided beautiful analysis of the figures in Kafka whose structure is differential. They appear in differential intensities traversing all his corpus, his body of writing. These figures, proliferate schizophrenically “to unblock a situation that had closed elsewhere in an impasse” (53). Yet, there is only one figure for which none and all interpretations apply: the door.

reason. And, in *The Trial*, once arrested or accused by the law there is no turning back. There is no reason for this law, the law is the reason. This opening for which one is not responsible offers, prescribes, promises a life on a “razor’s edge.”<sup>971</sup> one can go against it either towards a life of forgetfulness, by forgetting about it in habit or addiction, a life without reason, without justice; or towards death.<sup>972</sup> To be fixed on writing about this opening, this rhythm, this door itself is like a trial with no end; “a sheer impossibility.”<sup>973</sup>

Benjamin insists that we should never forget that Kafka gave in his testament an order for his unpublished writings to be destroyed, yet, at the same time, we cannot forget his other testament that all of his writing is about his father. How can we reconcile these two testaments with that which testifies itself indelibly in his writings as the figure of door?

Let us start from the letter to his father; not the beginning of the letter but the beginning testified by Kafka as his beginning within the letter, Kafka’s existence *avant la letter*, an event inscribed on him and coming to be his first memory:

Once in the night I kept on whimpering for water....After several vigorous attempts had failed to have any effect, you took me out of bed, carried me out on the *pavlathe* and left me there alone for a while in my nightshirt, outside the shut door.<sup>974</sup>

The first memory is an exodus from being in the house and an abandonment to the *pavlathe* outside the shut door. A door which was opened and then closed. This is a dramatic experience which opens the story of his memories, his-story. But this dramatic experience starts with his being carried out. Right *after* this experience comes the writing of a wonderful experience, that of being driven to public view. The wonderful experience is about his being presented in the bathing-hut: “What made me feel best ... I was able to

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<sup>971</sup> (Kafka 1971, 277)

<sup>972</sup> As Smock describes, this door can be accessible only in dying. “To enter one need only die, be left out, take the last step which is: no step. Stillness” (1980, 859). And just as it is “a place with no entrance except the exit, from which all depart before arriving” (ibid), it is also the reverse, a place with no exit except the entrance from which all arrive before departing – as we saw earlier.

<sup>973</sup> (Kafka 1971, 76)

<sup>974</sup> (Kafka 1976, 559)

stay behind in the hut alone and putt off the disgrace of showing myself in public until at length you came to see what I was doing and drove me out of the hut.”<sup>975</sup> In-between these two experiences there is difference to such an extent that we could say that it is a chaotic opening, a chasm. In-between the carrying out and the driving out there is a chasmatic difference.

Any particular psychoanalytic or religious reading will fail to account for these reversals which do not necessarily happen in the same text but transverse the whole writing corpus. We follow that all Kafka’s writings are about entering the symbolic world, the passing to culture. But this passing should not be construed in the sense of the exclusion and repression of otherness as one assimilates the Logos of the Father-God-Transcendental Authority. Rather, entering the symbolic world is revealed in the possibility of questioning this logos.<sup>976</sup> Anne Fuchs writes that “Like no other modernist writer Kafka is concerned with the symbolic threats on which the symbolic order is erected. This is the explicit theme of his ‘Letter to his Father’ which explores his own relationship with his father as an example of the crippling effects of unbridled paternal dominance.”<sup>977</sup> We just saw the reversal of this dominance within the same text. There other reversals proliferating in Kafka’s body of writing. If the abandonment in the *palvatche* comes from Kafka’s desire which is absurdly represented and which his father negates by expelling its expression altogether, this absurdity is an unbridled welcoming from a feminine other. The woman in the first interrogation in *The Trial* does not inquire about K.’s absurd quest(ion). She does not need a reason. She tells K. to go through the door. And remarkably, a reversal in the same text which has been neglected in the name of the father is the following:

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<sup>975</sup> (Kafka 1976, 560)

<sup>976</sup> This is what Simmel has called the “paradox of culture.”

<sup>977</sup> (Fuchs 2002, 35). Earlier we saw the reversal of this sheer dominance. Another psychoanalytic reading, less patriarchal and more existential would start from this neutralisation: the in-between, the frame of the the door. The door is nothing and everything – sheer impossibility. As Sartre writes, Kafka’s writing is all about being found in this impossible situation: “If Kafka’s “original project” was his discovery of the self through a return to Jewish sources, the father not only provided a passageway but at the same time appeared as an obstacle in the path. As a result, the father attracts and repels Kafka to an equal degree” (Bogaerts 2015, 148).

K., feeling the air too thick for him, stepped out again and said to the young woman, who seemed to have taken him wrongly: 'I asked for a joiner, a man called Lanz.' 'I know,' said the woman, 'just go right in.' K. might have not obeyed if she had not come up to him, grasped the handle of the door, and said: 'I must shut this door after you, nobody else must come in.'<sup>978</sup>

Whereas the male doorkeeper stands absurdly and shuts the door only after death, the female doorkeeper shuts the door after passing into the absurd living. Just like Samsa's sister in *The Metamorphosis* who attracts him with her rhythm in the living room, so many of the female characters in Kafka are the ones who adopt the rejected and abjected hero. Obviously, her trial to create a path for him fails in the end. Still, her trial comes to strike a gain, some time, before, against death which is the reverse of the shocks of the father who is bugged by this presence and pushes him immediately to the silence of his room. Kafka's writing is rewarding by re-wording the feminine *gestus*<sup>979</sup> – as Benjamin would say. Yet, if anything, it is not only that the entering to the symbolic order does not exhaust itself in the oppression and depression caused by the father, but, rather, by the very possibility of an archaic opening the details of which one cannot even trace:

You asked me recently why I maintain that I am afraid of you. As usual, I was unable to think of any answer to your question, partly for the very reason that I am afraid of you, and partly because an explanation of the grounds for this fear would mean going into far more details than I could even approximately keep in mind while talking. And if I now try to give you an answer in writing, it will still be very incomplete, because, even in writing, this fear and its consequences hamper me in relation to

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<sup>978</sup> (Kafka 1976, 31)

<sup>979</sup> There are multiple 'rewardings' of the feminine helpers in Kafka. But, in this particular text, the sister is the giant who says 'Enough.' She will not sacrifice her own transcendence till the end. The feminine is never on trial in Kafka when trying means representing a process of exculpation or vindication. They are never accused. They are on trial by enactment: they have all tried for Kafka's gain. They have been there to help him again and again.



you and because the magnitude of the subject goes far beyond the scope of my memory and power of reasoning.<sup>980</sup>

Everything has happened in this o-pening. In the surprise of the question, in the sudden appearance of the Other who quests him, who is asking (for) him, who is looking for his answer, there is no reason. The reason to be offered comes *after* the request. He cannot answer writes Kafka. He is (in) pieces: *Partly* because he was afraid and *partly* because he could not approximate. As we shall see, Kafka cannot approximate because the *de-tails* of this frightful presence cannot be touched. There is no contact. He cannot tail, follow his father/m-other. There is no sight, no intentionality as subject of this fear. The ‘father’ is a hollow referent. There is just magnitude which goes beyond observation, beyond scope, beyond sight.

In the first quest by his father, Kafka was afraid because he was afraid. There is no other reason: the Other is the reason. Or, he was afraid because of the reason he gave him. His reason of being? Within this fear there is an element of surprise. His Father was an Other who surprised him by calling him into question and asking for reasons – forgetting that he gives the reason by being it; the Other who parts being and asks him to depart from it and go with them in their path, to reason. But this surprise turned into a fright as there was no reason. The magnitude of the opening had shocked him so much that he could not approximate – one cannot approximate with no reason. He just stood before (t)his Law. Even now while he passes it (in)to writing, he is afraid. There was never a passing from standing-under him to an understanding. The “impression [he] made on the child,” these “worn grooves”<sup>981</sup> that he engraved on his brain, ended up in “depression.”<sup>982</sup> It was an opening which was not done with care but with speed, and violent shocks: “...completely tied to the business, scarcely able to be with me even once a day, and therefore made all the more profound an impression on me, never really leveling out into the flatness of habit.”<sup>983</sup>

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<sup>980</sup> (Kafka 1976, 558)

<sup>981</sup> (Ibid., 567)

<sup>982</sup> (Ibid., 560)

<sup>983</sup> (Ibid., 559)

One could even risk a hypothesis that has not yet been dared in the literary canon. *The Trial*, if not all of his writings, is not about Kafka himself but literally written about his father. Deleuze and Guattari came very close to formulating this thesis when they write: “the judges, commissioners, bureaucrats and so on are not substitutes for the father; rather it is the father who is a condensation of all these forces that he submits to and the he *tries* to get his son to submit to.”<sup>984</sup> In his endless trial, his father does not have a reason for his life other than the transcendental policies and traditions whose secret authority authorises one to be reli(e)ved by relinquishing one’s responsibility. And in this vertigo of absurdity, in his father’s trial with no ultimate reason, the process of bringing up his son falls into this void. Deleuze and Guattari are once again exact to underscore that “the question of the father isn’t how to become free in relation to him (an Oedipal question) but how to find a path there where he didn’t find any.”<sup>985</sup> It is Kafka himself who is the true accuser and judge since he has come to understand and reflect on the real absence of his father. The story of his abandonment on this area, this spacing, this *pavlatche* is on trial. But absurdly there is no defendant. His father, a true enactment of the Law, brought him to life to abandon him. In reality Kafka is an orphan picked up by enacting a transcendental logos and not by the enactment of giving one’s logos. Kafka cannot try his father for not keeping his promise because he never really gave one: he never tried.

Kafka never doubts that this opening or gift comes from his parents. It is not taken for granted but it is given to him. But it seems that this gift which is given from his parents is not an offering for him and him alone but an exchange. It is as if his father wanted something in exchange. This father opened a door but wanted something in return for opening. And the tragedy of this drama is that the gain from this exchange was not even for his father. It was for neither for the one nor for the other but a sacrifice to a transcendental beyond (for no) reason. It is not Kafka who fails but his father. He would not leave the door but would stand there blocking it. “What I would have needed was a little encouragement, a little friendliness, a little keeping open of my road, instead of which you blocked it for me, though of course with the good intention of making me go

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<sup>984</sup> (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 12; emphasis added)

<sup>985</sup> (Ibid., 10)

another road.”<sup>986</sup> It is as if he would not deserve this gift unless he followed the only path through which this passage was created. If Kafka did not follow “in-such-and-such a way,”<sup>987</sup> then he did not deserve a gift as promise or invitation. That is why his life, his *bios*, felt “an undeserved gift from you.”<sup>988</sup> But this undeservedness is (not) coming from his father’s promise as someone who is fathering words which are not his. In the end, no one fails, says Kafka, because he never really followed his father – ‘father’ is an empty referent, a hollow.

The fixation of Kafka on the door is precisely there where there is no path, no door but just a frame. To create a door a frame, an opening must be formed. Where there is no door to kick, push, unlock, open or close, there is only framing. His door was framed, period; only framed. Framed as in created, that is, draught, and framed as in fraught with the terror of nothing to separate, as in naught. With respect to his father, Kafka was carried and pulled into the world but left abandoned. With no door to open and close, there is no passage, no possibility of a path, transcendence or meaning. Lying out in the passage, abandoned in the nothingness of the horizon, Kafka was adopted and then abandoned. The promise was broken.<sup>989</sup>

Yet all this, despite the trauma of the shocking opening, the chasm of not being able to approximate a father who is absent, was still a gift – even if it was “an undeserved gift from you.”<sup>990</sup> A gift which opened t/his being into three parts: “the world was divided for me into three parts”<sup>991</sup> The trauma of being a “slave,” the chasm of an Other’s wor(l)d “infinitely remote from mine,” and the wonder of asking how “everybody else lived happily and free from others and from having to obey.”<sup>992</sup> An undeserved gift, yet gift

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<sup>986</sup> (Kafka 1976, 559)

<sup>987</sup> (Ibid., 564)

<sup>988</sup> (Ibid., 564)

<sup>989</sup> This drama writes itself ironically in the debate about Kafka’s works. Kafka created an opening to the world with his writing, a writing whose belongingness is on trial with respect to rights of ownership “ironically in family court.” The passages of Kafka are blocked anew by opposing forces of profit as Butler explores (Butler 2011). But these forces claim to be family and what is best for Kafka’s writing! Kafka’s writings are orphans.

<sup>990</sup> (Kafka 1976, 564)

<sup>991</sup> (Ibid., 562)

<sup>992</sup> (Ibid.)

nonetheless. What Kafka was grateful of was the gift; yet for the gesture of this gift he was resentful. Yet he could write for both only in virtue of both where no one is to blame and that both are to blame:

A gives B a piece of advice that is frank, in keeping with his attitude to life, not very lovely but still, even today perfectly usual in the city, a piece of advice that might prevent damage to health. This piece of advice is for B morally not very invigorating—but why should he not be able to work his way out of it, and repair the damage in the course of the years? Besides, he does not even have to take the advice; and there is no reason why the advice itself should cause B's whole future world to come tumbling down. And yet something of this kind does happen, but only for the very reason that A is you and B is myself.<sup>993</sup>

He is grateful for the giving of the advice as the giving allowed him to not take it. As we said earlier, for a gift to be a gift it must allow for the possibility of its negation.

Among other things, what Kafka gave us was the gift. Not a definition or a representation of the gift but its enactment. He showed us, or better yet to use Sartre's expression, he guided us<sup>994</sup> literally by enacting what the gift as coming to existence involves. Coming to existence is an event, a movement towards a living (room) from a path (a corridor) which links the living with the anonymous being (locked private room). The opening of this anonymity, this gift, this door, involves a *gestus* from the Other. It is a play of forces and that is why it comes to be **wonder**(full)/thauma(turgic)-(θαῦμα), **chasm**(atic) (χάσμα), and **trauma**(tic) (τραῦμα). Even if the gain of this existence is expelled to a beyond, never to be found(ed), once a-gain, the Other is the writer of this drama, the essence of existence. To exist is to be given an Other's logos, a blessing, an indelible opening, a promise, the spell of a metamorphosis.

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<sup>993</sup> (Kafka 1976, 580)

<sup>994</sup> (Sartre 1988c)

# 9 EPILOGUE

Our journey has been about Altruism. We have undertaken a philosophical passage to altruism through which we advanced the hypothesis that the Other is the essence of our existence. Let us retrace the steps of our philosophical itinerary and raise a couple of implications for further research.

1. In the prologue (chapter 2), we reflected on our initial desire to argue that altruism is the essence of existence. *Ab initio*, we wanted to argue and prove that one cannot exist without the Other. By reflecting on the methodology of logical argumentation, we came to realise that any philosophy made up of arguments set forth to convince (the Other) about something creates paradoxes, both logical and performative, with respect to altruism. At the same time, classical phenomenology, as set up by Husserl,<sup>995</sup> could not help us create a philosophical path to altruism. With altruism, it is not the world that is bracketed by the knowing subject in order to find truth. What we realised is that, for an altruistic act to occur, the subject itself is bracketed as it moves towards the Other. Yet, paradoxically, the subject must freely initiate this move toward the Other for the altruistic act to take place. In other words, *the 'I' must motivate itself to bracket itself*. Otherwise, if the subject is not motivated to act in an unfettered way, then the act may be a result of the implicit violence of another will or persuasion.
2. From these observations we were moved to find another way to philosophise about altruism. We requested the other meaning of the philosophical argument (*ἐπι-χείρημα*). Before Aristotle, as Heidegger<sup>996</sup> reminded us in *Being and Time*, an argument meant an undertaking, an attempt or an essay. Thus, our writing came to be an undertaking of creating a new path to Altruism. Instead of bracketing the discourses of the Other – as we would have to do with philosophies of logical

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<sup>995</sup> (Husserl 1960; 1983; 1996)

<sup>996</sup> (Heidegger 1962)

argumentation or classical phenomenology – we reversed the bracketing and undertook an *unbracketing*; an unlimited opening to other words, to the Other's expression. Thus, with *unbracketing*, we were able to look for altruism through trying to understand the words of the Other. Instead of defining what altruism is and exhausting ourselves in providing reasons to convince the Other that such a phenomenon constitutes the essence of human understanding, we explored how one *can come to believe in altruism* and live altruistically with an unfettered motivation. We formulated the latter as 'coming to beli(e)ve in altruism' to approximate both the theoretical (belief) and the practical aspect (live) of altruism.

3. Our prologue, then, did not introduce us to any particular definition of what altruism is, but worked as a propaedeutic for a new hodological approach to altruism. Inspired by Sartre,<sup>997</sup> we followed the idea that any undertaking which reflects a concerned existence must explore many paths; that is the meaning of hodological. Instead of a particular methodology we undertook many pathways in order to arrive to altruism. Thus, after our prologue, we introduced the meaning of altruism as it has been originally defined by Comte and has been recently elaborated by anthropologists and neuroscientists (chapter 3). We found that these accounts, important as they have been in their contributions, they could not help us much since they all relied on the practice of habituation in order to make one live altruistically. At the same time, they were all committing a performative paradox insofar as their process of reasoning and argumentation was conditioned on rejecting previous relevant theorisations on altruism. These accounts were limiting in our attempt to unbracket (for) the Other. To avoid such implicit violence in our undertaking we decided to start by reflecting anew on our own methodology.
  
4. In our first path then (chapter 4), where we reflected on our methodology anew, we realised that we had set an axiom, that is, we were making a prescriptive claim. We claimed that for the possibility of a philosophy of altruism, we *must unbracket*

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<sup>997</sup> (Sartre 1993)

ourselves and be open to all discourses. Thus, our starting point, our first path was to explore the phenomenon of prescription. With the aid of early Husserlian phenomenology,<sup>998</sup> we undertook a logical investigation of prescription and what it means to prescribe oneself towards the other – which is altruism. To prescribe oneself toward the Other means to make a silent promise to the Other and undertake to realising it. To make a promise means to give one's word. New paths opened up. If altruism is manifested when one gives one's word to the Other, how could one be motivated to undertake such giving? From this question our second path laid open: we had to explore who the Other is and what do we actually give *when we give our word*.

5. We looked for the Other both theoretically and in our everyday concerns (chapter 5 – pathway two). With Husserl, we learnt how the Other is the condition for obtaining knowledge. As Husserl has shown in his *Ideas*, either as a principle of verification or as our safeguard from illusion and madness, the Other is required for knowledge to occur. With Heidegger<sup>999</sup> we understood how, in our everyday experience, the Other is both the catalyst and the inhibitor of our being authentic when faced with the ultimate potentiality of our being which is death. Yet, with a closer reading of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*,<sup>1000</sup> we were able to explore further the role of the Other in our existence. Human understanding is possible only insofar as one can see themselves as another. To see oneself as another means being able to transcend one's being. We usually call this reflection. With Sartre, we managed to explore reflection as a back-turning, an entropy, a rupture from the circle of one's being. However, as Sartre reminded us, this phenomenon is not a natural necessity but requires the involvement of another person to start happening. Every human requires a metaphysical opening on their being so they can exit their being and thus exist reflectively. This opening is given by an Other as if it is a gift. It seemed as if this opening is an authentic promise given by the

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<sup>998</sup> (Husserl 1970)

<sup>999</sup> (Heidegger 1962)

<sup>1000</sup> (Sartre 1993)

Other. However, we could not yet make such a claim until we explored what we give *when we give our word*. First, we had to explore the meaning of ‘metaphysical.’ Second, we had to explore extensively the event of *giving one’s word* and, finally, bring these two together.

6. Thus, our third path (chapter 6) was to explore the meaning of ‘metaphysical.’ We had to understand what we mean when we say that something is metaphysical. The term ‘metaphysical’ is usually ascribed to what Aristotle is trying to explain in his book *Metaphysics*.<sup>1001</sup> By reading closely this text, we found that ‘metaphysics’ always refers to something in particular. It is used to describe an object which can be identified either as material or immaterial. Thus, we cannot conceptualise something metaphysical because it will always be bound by some kind of identity. Nevertheless, with our analysis we realised that we can experience ‘metaphysical’ by *feeling*. When we decide we experience feeling metaphysical or metaphysical feeling. But to decide also means to characterise the world. To characterise means to express one’s logos. Yet, logos has always been associated with some kind of structure or order and with reason or truth, either natural or divine. Going back to its inceptual meaning in Heraclitus, we were able to articulate an alternative logos.
7. Ever since ‘being’ became the currency of our thought, everything we say we have already thought it through being. Even logos has been subjected to being something particular – a voice, discourse, reason, speech, divine mind and so on. With the help of Axelos<sup>1002</sup> and Mallarmé<sup>1003</sup> we managed to articulate logos differently: logos precedes being as force of expression which characterises, creates. Logos makes being possible, not the other way round. Moreover, only with our logos can we go beyond being by questioning it. To question requires logos. There can be nothing without logos. With the aid of Heraclitus’

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<sup>1001</sup> (Αριστοτέλης 1992)

<sup>1002</sup> (Αξελός 1974)

<sup>1003</sup> (Mallarmé 1897)



fragments<sup>1004</sup> and Nietzsche's insights<sup>1005</sup> we were able to articulate logos as one's existence, one's subjectivity as will to power. Logos cannot be defined and if it be told, it would be in a way that dissimulates 'itself.' Logos as existence is not an intelligible, ideal or material object to be defined as such and such. Logos is valueless, nameless and soundless since logos alone brings values, names, and rhythms in the world. In virtue of our logos there is a wor(l)d.

8. Such an altruistic act to unshackle logos from being allowed us to spiral back to the act of promising and explain what we give when *we give our word*. To give our word means to give our logos. Each person as logos characterises the world. Thus, to give one's logos comes to be an opening up of the world for the Other. As we saw with Ricoeur and Marcel in our prologue, promising means to fallow the present and allow a future for the Other. Logos as will to power can be authentically revealed in promising. Logos, however, can also be manifested in dialogue. Our fourth path, then, was to explore the event of dialogue and explore the affinity between promising and dialogue.
9. Our fourth path (chapter 7) started with an analysis of dialogue. Dialogue is an event where meaning is created. However, in the history of modern philosophy meaning has always been a subjective enterprise. We have been trying to understand understanding and meaning by analysing subjective conditions and thus plucking the 'Is/Eyes' of the Other from understanding human understanding. By exploring closely how understanding has been approached through the subject with the help of Kant,<sup>1006</sup> Heidegger<sup>1007</sup> and Peirce,<sup>1008</sup> we uncovered how such efforts are silently based, shouldered on the Other who is never given the opportunity to speak but is kept silent and muted. The work of

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<sup>1004</sup> (Hράκλειτος 1999)

<sup>1005</sup> (Nietzsche, 1989; 2005b)

<sup>1006</sup> (Kant 1929);

<sup>1007</sup> (Heidegger 1962)

<sup>1008</sup> (Peirce 1955)

feminist psychoanalysis of Irigaray<sup>1009</sup> helped us articulate such a phenomenon. The Other as different from oneself, like a silent promise, follows and allows all the discourses on meaning. With the help of Derrida's deconstruction we explored this process deeper and showed how the Other is always implicated in any attempt to understand or constitute meaning through subjective conditions. In another sense of altruism, we were able to request the 'Is' of the Other in talking about meaning and understanding. If we do not have the logos of the Other, there can be no possibility of understanding. Human understanding starts with such a gift: the logos of the Other.

10. Our final path, pathway five (chapter 8), led us to explore the possibility of the gift. Every philosophy which derives its analysis from the bank of 'Being,' that is, every philosophy which tries to define what the gift is, ends up describing the phenomenon of exchange and its various manifestations. Even in the deconstruction of Derrida<sup>1010</sup> and Lévinas,<sup>1011</sup> the gift ends up being an aporia precisely because we have a concept which cannot be found in reality. In our analysis, the gift is not an aporia. Just because the gift may entail a representation which cannot find its adequate or actual presentation does not mean that the gift is impossible. Rather, it shows us the limits of thinking with being. It is impossible to be thought and described with being. But being impossible does not mean that it does not exist. We can feel the gift. With the help of Kafka's stories<sup>1012</sup> and the feminist critique of De Beauvoir<sup>1013</sup> and Irigaray,<sup>1014</sup> we were able to articulate the gift as the opening of a door on our being; an opening created by the Other who gives us access to their wor(l)d. Each person's course, being just after birth, constitutes an abandonment. The course of one's existence starts by being adopted by the Other who disrupts this abandonment and thus pauses our death. If a human body is not adopted, that is picked up immediately after birth, death is a matter of

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<sup>1009</sup> (Irigaray, 1977; 2002; 2008)

<sup>1010</sup> (Derrida 1997b)

<sup>1011</sup> (Lévinas, 1961; 1986; 1987)

<sup>1012</sup> (Kafka, 1971; 1976; 2006)

<sup>1013</sup> (De Beauvoir 1956)

<sup>1014</sup> (Irigaray, 1977; 2002; 2008)

little time. The Other pauses death by giving us an extended time – as they are trying to sustain our being. By pausing our death, the Other (im)poses a future for us. In this adoption, being a parent means undertaking a promise to always be there. They give us their logos. When logos is freed from the voice, then logos comes to be a rhythm of doing. This is what the Other gives us: a particular way of doing things which they inscribe on our being. While the Other gives us a particular way of doing things in order to start existing, they also give us the universal possibility of questioning it – since their logos questions our initial being which is our being unto death. When our possibility of questioning comes, our logos comes and reflection begins. Human understanding as reflection means precisely that; the possibility of questioning what has been given. There is no wor(l)d for us, if the Other does not give us their wor(l)d which we could question in order to understand.

Our journey in creating a philosophical passage to altruism opens up new ways of understanding our condition with certain implications for future research. In our prologue, we saw that Hannah Arendt<sup>1015</sup> said that there is no possibility of collective living, of a community, without the phenomenon of promising. Through our journey we can log that the very human condition is impossible without the act of promising. We can thus extend Arendt's thesis and touch a primitive truth. In Orpheus's *Argonautica*,<sup>1016</sup> the very possibility of Jason's existence depends on Orpheus's promise. There is a double promise in that text. A promise to come along with others to undertake the acquisition of the Golden Fleece and a promise to relate the journey itself. It is this double promising that Orpheus calls destiny. The Other is the condition of our humanity and our destiny.

In Hesiod's *Theogony*<sup>1017</sup> there is again a double promise. The children of Uranus and Earth are kept in darkness by Uranus. He does not allow them to come to light. It is Chronos who first promises an undertaking to realise his mother's word and save the children. But Chronos is being devoured by his narcissism and fails. In time, in being himself as himself, he ends up like his father. It is the promise of Zeus that undertakes to

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<sup>1015</sup> (Arendt 1958)

<sup>1016</sup> (Ορφείας 2010)

<sup>1017</sup> (Ησίοδος 2000)

divide the narcissism of Chronos, time itself, to follow him and allow for the possibility of the human condition to take place. Human reality starts with a double promise.

We can now see some implications that are raised from such a philosophical journey. If the possibility of a future lies on altruism, then what does it mean when today we do not engage in such way of life? We can say that today we live like Chronos. Our logos suffers as it does not get into an authentic dialogue with another logos. We exist with a suffering logos; to transliterate: we exist pathologically. And that is why we cannot create a sustainable future. As we saw in our journey, it is through giving one's logos that futuring is possible, for it is through the Other that we can create a future. The logos of the Other is marginalised and muted as we philosophise and lead our lives through an impersonal 'being.' We reject the Other when we approach them impersonally through what we think they are – through thinking with being. To bring back the logos of the Other and as such dialogue, the logic of being must lose its priority; we need to question it. We cannot overcome the pathology of our times unless we stop what we called with Derrida<sup>1018</sup> the mimodrama of thinking with(in) being (see pathway three – chapter 6).

Thinking with(in) being has resulted in taking care of only our *own* well-being, subjectively; and if we leave room for the well-being of the Other, it is carried out intersubjectively not intersubjectively (see pathway two – chapter 5). Thus, we are abandoning each other and limit our time. In addition, in this immersion in subjective well-being, our time is also limited because it is not only the Other as an other human being who is impacted. It is also the Other as an other living existence and existence in general. Our hypothesis of adopting the Other as existence will give us altruistic time, meaningful time, with the Other as a purpose, that is a sustainable and meaningful future. Our journey allows us to come into dialogue with other philosophies, such as eco-feminism and post-human philosophies which articulate such deep mutual dependence of existences. The figuration of adopting the Other allows for a way to engage with the Other as another existence in general, which, like a promise, guarantees our own.

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<sup>1018</sup> (Derrida 1981)



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