

Nr. 32/2024

HERMENEIA

Journal of Hermeneutics, Art Theory and Criticism

Topic: Research Articles

Editura Fundației Academice AXIS
IAȘI, 2024

Advisory board

Ștefan AFLOROAEI, Prof. Dr., Romanian Academy, Bucarest/Iasi, Romania
Sorin ALEXANDRESCU, Prof. Dr., University of Bucarest, Romania
Corneliu BILBA, Prof. Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Aurel CODOBAN, Prof. Dr., Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Denis CUNNINGHAM, General Secretary, Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de
Langues Vivantes (FIPLV)
Ioanna KUÇURADI, Prof. Dr., Maltepe University, Turkey
Roger POUIVET, Prof. Dr., Nancy 2 University, France
Constantin SĂLĂVĂSTRU, Prof. Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Jean-Jacques WUNENBURGER, Prof. Dr., Jean Moulin University, Lyon, France

Editor in Chief

Petru BEJAN, Prof. Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania

Editorial board

Antonela CORBAN, PhD., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Ioan-Ciprian BURSUC, PhD, Assistant professor, Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Florina-Rodica HARIĞA, Researcher Dr., Babes Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca,
Romania
Ciprian JELER, Researcher Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Cristian MOISUC, Associate Prof. Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Horia Vicențiu PĂTRAȘCU, Lecturer PhD, Polytechnic University of Bucharest (Editor)
Dana ȚABREA, PhD., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Ioan-Alexandru TOFAN, Prof. Dr., Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania

Journal coverage

Hermeneia is indexed/abstracted in the following databases:

CLARIVATE ANALYTICS (Emerging Sources Citation Index)
ERIH PLUS (open access)
EBSCO (institutional access required)
PROQUEST (institutional access required)
DOAJ (open access)

Journal's Address

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania
Department of Philosophy and Social-Political Sciences
Blvd. Carol I nr. 11, 700506, Iasi, Romania
Email: contact@hermeneia.ro Web: www.hermeneia.ro
Contact persons: Petru Bejan (Professor, Dr.), - Editor in chief
Cristian Moisuc (Associate Professor, Dr.) - Deputy editor

Editor's Address

Axis Academic Foundation
Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania
Blvd. Carol I nr. 11, 700506, Iasi, Romania
Tel/Fax: 0232.201653
contact@hermeneia.ro / pbejan@uaic.ro

ISSN print: 1453-9047

ISSN online: 2069-8291

Summary

Topic: Research Articles

- Constantin RĂCHITĂ, Ana CATANĂ-SPENCHIU
From Editions to Translation: The Reception of some Critical Objections in the *Blaj Bible* (1795).....5
- David-Augustin MÂNDRUȚ
Martin Buber's notion of the unconscious25
- Ștefan MIHĂILĂ
Die amerikanische Metropole in der Literatur von Alfred Gong..... 40
- Ștefana IOSIF
Between the Non-Human and the New Human. A Posthumanist Investigation of Shattered Patterns in Alastair Reynolds' *Zima Blue*.....49
- Camelia GRĂDINARU
The Big Data Effect: The Quest for a New Understanding of the Public Sphere64
- Viorel ȚUȚUI
Two Ethical Theories about the Concept of Freedom: Indifference versus Spontaneity.....74
- Tudorel-Constantin RUSU
***Ethos-Pathos-Logos*: Aristotle's Triad of Persuasiveness in Homiletical Discourse**
.....94

Book reviews

- Cătălin-Vasile BOBB
What if behind all things there is a story and not some metaphysical astray?
(Ioan Alexandru Tofan, *Ca prin oglindă, în ghicitoră. Mici eseuri despre creștinism*, Galaxia Gutenberg, Târgu-Lăpuș, 2024, 212p.).....103
- Ștefania BEJAN
Le Beau éternel (*Le Beau - Actes du XXXVIe Congrès de l'Association des Sociétés de Philosophie de Langue Française* – sous la direction de Petru Bejan et Daniel Schulthess -, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2018, 567p.)..... 107

Constantin RĂCHITĂ *
Ana CATANĂ-SPENCHIU **

From Editions to Translation: The Reception of some Critical Objections in the *Blaj Bible* (1795)

Abstract: This paper proposes an insight into some philological issues that have concerned editors and translators of the Bible over time. After a survey of Samuil Micu's approaches to textual criticism, which are well-known in Romanian philology, we briefly present some phenomena that influenced the development of biblical philology in the 17th century, with the aim of highlighting their impact on later editions of the Septuagint. One of the main sources of Samuil Micu's translation, Lambert Bos's *Septuagint* (1709), was critically evaluated by some European scholars. We will show, through a comparative analysis, how some of these objections were dealt with in Samuil Micu's translation of the *Blaj Bible* (1795), addressing the dialogue between two traditions: the Romanian translation tradition and that of the major editions of the Septuagint.

Keywords: *Septuagint*, Samuil Micu, textual criticism, *Codex Alexandrinus*, Johann Ernst Grabe

1. Introduction

The second complete translation of the biblical text into Romanian, comprising the *Old* and *New Testaments*, was published at the end of the 18th century, in Transylvania. This translation, which the Greek-Catholic monk Samuil Micu Klein had begun working at since 1783, during his studies at the "St. Barbara" College in Vienna and which was published in 1795 had a significant influence on the formation of the literary language and equally on the Romanian biblical tradition. The purpose stated in the preface to Micu's translation was to produce a linguistically and stylistically renewed translation of the old version of the Bible, published in Bucharest in 1688¹, yet not in a manner that would reproduce it, but rather by re-translating it

* Constantin Răchită, PhD, Assistant Researcher, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, Sciences and Humanities Research Department, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania. Email: constantin.rachita@uaic.ro

** Ana Catană-Spenchiu, PhD, Scientific Researcher, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, Sciences and Humanities Research Department, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania. Email: anaspenchiu@gmail.com

based on contemporary sources. This approach enabled Samuil Micu to encounter both the Romanian traditional translations of the *Septuagint* and the rich Western tradition, Protestant and Catholic alike, of critical editions. His translation of the *Blaj Bible* (1795) placed Samuil Micu as a forerunner of modern textual criticism in the Romanian culture. However, this role that has been attributed to him is not necessarily contested, but rather questioned due to a historical reality: at the time, in the Romanian culture there were no bilingual or polyglot editions of the Bible elaborated by Romanian intellectuals following comparisons of Greek and Latin texts.

The fact that Romanian culture acutely lacked biblical editions, produced according to the humanist model provided by Erasmus, made Romanian researchers question the critical relations of the translators with the sources they used. The difficulty of this approach is greatly increased by a well-known “reluctance” of the old editors when it came to declaring their sources accurately, for reasons primarily related to the spectre of religious confessionalization. Philologist Eugen Pavel, one of the editors of the *Blaj Bible*, wrote two important articles in which he aimed at explaining the efforts of textual criticism behind Romanian Bible translations since the mid-17th century. In his first article he argued, among other things, that under the influence of Lutheran and Calvinist biblical criticism in Alba Iulia, the Romanian scholars who worked on the complete translation of the *Bălgrad New Testament* (1648) and the translation of the *Psalter* (1651) made the transition from a Slavonic model of translation to a Latin one, based on bilingual Greek Latin sources (Pavel 2014, 82–98; especially 88–89 and 91–92).

In the second article, Eugen Pavel revisited and developed the same topic, providing consistent evidence to argue that European textual criticism methods were adopted for the first time in the translation and editing of biblical texts in Alba Iulia and that these principles can be subsequently identified throughout the Romanian biblical studies (Pavel 2016, 17–30). According to the Romanian philologist, after almost 150 years, the European model of textual criticism was fully established and perfected with Samuil Micu’s translation: “Starting with the Transylvanian School, textual criticism experienced a new dimension, the moment of maturity being reached with the edition of the *Blaj Bible*, published by Samuil Micu Klein in 1795” (Pavel 2016, 24). To substantiate his claim, Eugen Pavel compiled a convincing summary of the sources used by Micu in his translation and the impact they had on the manner in which, much like in critical editions, he established and commented on the text. In general, the *Blaj* translation implied the confrontation of two traditions, which often interfere and complement each other: one related to Romanian translatology developed especially in the *Bucharest Bible* of 1688, as evidenced

by the common translation choices², and another related to Catholic and Protestant critical editions produced in different parts of Europe between the early 17th and mid-18th centuries³.

Samuil Micu's interest in biblical philology in 17th-18th century Europe can be discussed from various perspectives. At this point of our discussion, it is enough to mention a single clue that we discovered in the preface to his translation, entitled *Foreword to the Holy Scripture (Cuvânt înainte la S<fânta> Scriptură)*⁴. In the context of the debate on the divine inspiration of the prophetic texts, Micu claims that the Jews are the Christians' adversaries ("sânt vrăjmași numelui creștinesc"; ["they are enemies of the Christian name"]) and that altered the texts of the prophecies on purpose ("lor mult le ajuta ca să acopere și să șteargă cărțile prorocilor"; ["it is much to their advantage to cover and erase the books of the prophets"]). However, this preconception, which was advanced in the context of the Judeo-Christian polemics dating since Antiquity and occasionally revisited by some humanists during the Renaissance, only came to be used excessively between the 17th and the 18th centuries, in the writings of authors such as Jean Morin (1591–1659), Isaac Vossius (1618–1689) or William Whiston (1667–1752). For instance, in *Exercitationes biblicae* (1633) Morin insisted that the rabbis deliberately corrupted the biblical texts because of their "hatred" of Christians, convinced that they intentionally did so to prevent the Christians from using the *Old Testament* as evidence of Jesus Christ's deity⁵. The same suspicion, discussed in the debate over the inspiration of the Bible, can be identified in the writings of Isaac Vossius⁶ and was subsequently developed in relation to the fulfilment of prophecies in the *New Testament* by William Whiston (Steiger 2008, 751–752). It would be hard to prove a direct relationship between these ideas and Micu's preconceptions since they became commonplace in many other subsequent theological writings. Nevertheless, the presence of the idea in the preface of the translation from Blaj reflects at least the Romanian translator's concern for an "uncorrupted" text and the prevalence of the *Septuagint* tradition over the *Masoretic* one.

A mixed translation, such as the one produced by Samuil Micu, is directly dependent on the critical editions its author consulted. In the case of divergences between texts in the same tradition, the way the text is regarded as accurate becomes equally relevant for translation decisions. Micu was forced to choose *what* to translate when the editions he consulted showed significant differences or as indicated in our analysis, when one of the main sources contained debatable variants. Therefore, a comparative analysis of the objectionable texts in the Franeker Dutch edition can only be

fully understood if it is treated in the broader context of the challenges that biblical philology has raised ever since the early 18th century.

2. The evolution of biblical philology in the 17th century

The early 18th-century biblical philology is marked by a general trend, which had been manifest for more than a century: the separation of the “inspired” Bible – the political, theological, moral, and liturgical guide of the past – from an “academic” Bible, regarded as a collection of texts composed diachronically, transmitted in different traditions, and interpreted by means of linguistic and historical tools⁷. These different approaches, which have never been rendered absolute in practice (*cf.* Touber 2017, 325–347), have been determined by or have represented the catalyst for four complex phenomena with a significant impact on the philology practiced throughout Europe: *critica sacra*, polyglot editions, Spinozism, and the *Codex Alexandrinus*.

As a literary genre, inheriting the type of philology practiced by humanist scholars, the *critica sacra* appeared in Europe around 1650, its main purpose being to reconstruct the original biblical texts by means of comparative methods. Inevitably subject to corruption caused by the lengthy process of transmission, the biblical texts needed to be reconstructed to eliminate the inconsistencies, repetitions and errors occurring in manuscripts. The works entitled *critica sacra* brought together various critical opinions expressed by previous authors, discussed certain terms from a semantic perspective, solved chronology-related issues and proposed amendments and translation solutions. The best-known *Critica sacra*, published in 1650 by Louis Cappel (1585–1658), had a huge impact. The evidence it provided for the late age of the Masoretic vocalisation of the Hebrew text paved the way for later debates on the hitherto indisputable divine inspiration of the Hebrew Bible. Another *Critica sacra* (1660) was edited in London by John Pearson (1613–1686). Comprising no less than 9 volumes, this work brought together the biblical commentaries of the best exegetes of the previous two centuries and represented an excellent guide for the monumental London Polyglot Bible (1657). Brian Walton’s polyglot edition (1600–1661), which included biblical texts in several languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Arabic and Persian), was the last and most complete in a series of similar works published in Alcalá de Henares (1520), Antwerp (1568–1573) and Paris (1628–1645)⁸. This phenomenon of polyglot editions was triggered by the philologists’ desire to study biblical texts in their original ancient versions from a comparative perspective. Arranging the texts in parallel columns allowed for quick and efficient analysis of the differences between versions, giving a fairly comprehensive picture of how different traditions of

biblical textual transmission have intertwined and diverged over time. One of the most notable consequences of the polyglot editions was the awareness with regard of the instability of the texts, which led to the desire to reconstruct the earliest and most coherent of them. They have also generated a whole host of auxiliary tools necessary for the study of the original versions, such as grammars, lexicons and studies dedicated to Oriental culture and civilisations.

Baruch Spinoza's philosophical scepticism was another element that contributed to the uncertainties about the inspiration of the biblical texts and their imperfections. In the three chapters (7-10) of his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670), dedicated to the interpretation of biblical texts, Spinoza succeeded in challenging the normative value attributed to the Scriptures and in pointing to a fundamental distinction between the original meanings of the texts, as intended by their authors, and the meanings subsequently attributed to them in the course of history (see Touber 2018, 30–75; Bravo 2006, 193–194). Spinoza's ideas have had a huge impact on biblical philology and no exegete of the Scriptures has been able to ignore them ever since. Over time, Spinoza's ideas have reinforced the rigorous historicization of the message conveyed by biblical texts and have contributed to the increasing separation of biblical philology from theology.

Without producing the same political and social impact as Spinoza's views, the last potentially disruptive factor of the 18th century philology was the emergence of and uncertainties over the interpretation of the manuscript called *Codex Alexandrinus* by Brian Walton. Contemporary researchers have already described the historical circumstances of its acquisition by the English in 1628 (Mandelbrote 2006, 78–80; Spinka 1936, 10–29), explaining the discrepancy between the ideas of some English philologists, who believed that the manuscript was redacted by Saint Thecla and that it contains the earliest tradition of the translation of the *Septuagint* from Alexandria, and the historical reality, meant to establish the exact dating and precise nature of the manuscript (Bossina 2021, 154). Although it has been approached rather reluctantly by philologists, accustomed to the view that no manuscript should contain the original text of the Greek translation, the *Codex Alexandrinus* had nevertheless a major impact on the study of the *Septuagint* because of its potential to represent a serious competitor to the Masoretic Text and to combat, based on its attributed antiquity, both the Latin and Greek versions of the biblical texts (Hardy 2015, 123–124). The role of the Bodleian Library manuscript became significant in the theological disputes between Catholics and Protestants: while for some Protestants it represented a means of challenging the countless editions based on the *Codex Vaticanus* or the translation of the *Vulgate* (produced at the end of the 4th century), others regarded it as a real

threat, because, some paragraphs that differed from Hebrew tradition discredited the very principle of *sola Scriptura*, one of the pillars of the Protestant faith. The manuscript received as a gift by King Charles I from Patriarch Cyrill Lucaris (1570–1638) succeeded in dividing European philologists and theologians into mixed groups. Protestants like James Ussher (1581–1656) and Catholics like Jean Morin were united in their scepticism with regard to the value of the manuscript and questioned its authority; others, like Isaac Vossius, exalted its value and wanted an edition that would supersede the others, whereas scholars like Patrick Young (1584–1652) and Thomas Gale (1636–1702) published partial editions based on the *Codex Alexandrinus*, of Pseudo-Clemens' *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Oxford, 1633), *Book of Job* (London, 1637) and *Psalms* (Oxford, 1678).

The English philologists' generations-long desire to have a complete edition of the text preserved in the *Codex Alexandrinus* was eventually fulfilled by Johann Ernst Grabe (1666–1711) and the continuators of his Oxford project. Arriving in England in 1697 and converted to Anglicanism, Grabe came under the protection of the great critic John Mill (c. 1645–1707), who helped him procure numerous biblical lections preserved throughout manuscripts in various European libraries⁹. Grabe was convinced that the *Codex Alexandrinus* preserved the oldest and best text of the *Old Testament*, opposing it vehemently to the *Vaticanus* manuscript; he also promised that based on the comparison with other manuscripts and the signs used by Origen he would restore the text to its original ancient form. This promise of reconstruction not only affected the text of the edition, which contains some 2000 emendations, but also delayed the publication of the volumes unduly. By the time of Grabe's death (1711), only volumes I (*The Octateuch*, 1707) and IV (*Poetic books*, 1709) had been published. His project was later taken up by the scholar Francis Lee (1661–1719), who managed to edit and publish only volume II (*Historical Books*) in the year of his death. A year later, William Wigan published volume III (*Prophetic Books*) and the last of the edition called *Grabiana*, named after the philologist from Königsberg.

Although Johann Ernst Grabe failed to prove the superiority of the Greek text of the *Codex Alexandrinus*, mainly because of the scepticism manifested by critics regarding such claim and because his edition was contaminated with other versions of the text, the manuscript continued to fascinate for many years, remaining part of the critical apparatus of major editions. In the period 1730–1732, the Swiss philologist Johann Jakob Breitinger (1701–1776) reprinted the edition begun by Grabe, comparing it with the text of the *Vaticanus* manuscript, yet his edition also failed to produce a clean text, free from the interference of other textual variants.

3. The Dutch Edition in the *Grabiana's* Preface

Of all the phenomena that marked biblical philology in the 17th century, the preparation of the English edition of the *Alexandrinus* manuscript had a substantial impact on the production of Lambert Bos's *Septuagint*. From the preface to the Dutch edition, we learn that there is not only a constant reference to the major editions produced in England, but also a long-distance dialogue with Grabe's *Septuagint*, the most fascinating of them all. In his desire to argue for the superiority of the Greek text preserved in the *Codex Vaticanus*, the Franeker professor of Greek praises Johann Ernst Grabe's initiative, proposes emendations to the *Codex Alexandrinus*, refers to the first volume of Grabe's edition (*Octateuch*, 1707) and even includes in the preface of Dutch edition a subchapter containing Grabe's proposed emendations to the text of the Alexandrian manuscript¹⁰. The death of the Prussian scholar (1711) delayed not only the continuation of the Oxford project, but also the reaction to open dialogue in the preface to Bos's edition. The reply would come a few years later from two of Grabe's editors: Francis Lee and Johann Jakob Breitinger. Only the former is partially the subject of this study. If the Swiss theologian's reception of the Dutch edition is more consistent and deserves to be treated separately in a future study, Francis Lee's has been treated in part in another article (Catană-Spenchiu and Răchită 2023, 317–332). Consequently, here it is only necessary to outline the general attitude that Francis Lee had towards the editorial project at Franeker.

In the preface to the second volume of the *Grabiana* (Oxford, 1719), Francis Lee situates Lambert Bos's edition in the context of philological debates concerning the contorted transmission of Greek translation over the centuries. Even though Bos recognized the importance of *Codex Alexandrinus* for textual criticism and admitted that in some passages the text was superior to that of the *Codex Vaticanus*¹¹, the completion of a concurrent editing project that made frequent references to the English edition and its value led Francis Lee to view the new Dutch edition with great suspicion. Broadly speaking, Francis Lee believed that Lambert Bos's goal was to diminish the impact and authority of the biblical text corrected and edited by Grabe. The suspicion of the English editor arose from the conviction that the Hellenist from Franeker knew, just as well, that an "authentic" Greek text, superior to the existing ones, was about to appear in England¹². The mere decision to produce an amended edition of the Roman Catholic *Sixtina*, according to the text preserved in the Vatican manuscript, was interpreted as an attempt to undermine public confidence in the value of the English edition¹³.

Francis Lee's main criticism concerned the alleged selective emendation of the Roman *Septuagint*. While appreciating Lambert Bos's courage in correcting the errors of a canonized edition, he also reproaches his passive attitude toward other biblical passages that would have needed emendations¹⁴. The English scholar suggests that Bos used Grabe's critical observations in his interventions on the text, without being consistent in this direction¹⁵. Several textual arguments, which constitute proposals for emendation based on *Codex Alexandrinus*'s variants, aim to prove the intentional omissions of the Dutch philologist.

4. Comparative analysis of texts

Francis Lee has discussed two distinct categories of texts. In the first category (*Hosea* 3:3; *Joel* 2:16; 2:30 and 3:17) Lambert Bos's emendation of the Sistine text is praised and in the second one comprises 5 philological issues, identified by Johan Ernst Grabe in the second book of *Kings* (14:17) and *Hosea* (4:6; 12:12; 13:2 and 14:2), which Lambert Bos preserved as they occurred in the canonized edition of *Sixtina*. We will focus for this analysis on the last category because we already have conducted a comparative investigation on the examples from the first one. The textual observations that Francis Lee makes posed philological challenges not only for editors of the 16th-18th centuries, but also for subsequent translators tasked with determining which text to translate.

For a reliable comprehension of the critical assessments made of the Franeker edition, it is worth considering a comparative analysis of the various editions of the time, and also of the way in which these texts were understood in Protestant exegesis, collected in John Pearson's *Critici sacri* (1660) and republished in an enlarged edition (Amsterdam, 1698).

Furthermore, in order to have a better understanding of how Samuil Micu referred to the objections raised against the Franeker edition, we have to consider that the Romanian translator had to choose between two Septuagint editorial traditions: one that was specific to Romanian translation, based overwhelmingly on the Aldina text, followed in the Frankfurt edition (1597), respectively the Sistine editing tradition, followed in the new Protestant editions he consulted.

4.1. 2 Kings 14:17

The text in *2Kings* 14:17 opens the series of philological issues, identified by Johann Ernst Grabe in the *Sixtina*, which Lambert Bos retained without any change and did not mention in the critical apparatus of the Dutch edition. In the particular case of *2Kings* 14:17 ("And the woman said, 'May

the word of my lord the king indeed be as an offering”¹⁶) Grabe notes an error caused by a wrong delineation of *scriptio continua* in the manuscripts. The phrase Εἴη δὴ ὁ λόγος (lat. *sit quaeso sermo*) was read differently by the *Sistine* editors and printed in its corrupted form εἰ ἥδη ὁ λόγος, which would alter the authentic meaning of the passage¹⁷. Francis Lee noted that the Spanish edition of Alcalá de Henares (1520) and the Venetian edition of Aldo Manutius (1518) opted for a different text variant (γενηθήτω δὴ ὁ λόγος), which used the aorist passive imperative of the verb γίνομαι, while still managing to render the meaning intended by the biblical authors. The English editor suspects that Lambert Bos deliberately chose not to include in his edition the emendation proposed by Grabe, despite having had four years to discover it in his public epistle addressed to John Mill. Furthermore, he insinuates that Bos deliberately ignored the other versions of the text, his main interest being to produce a text that would comply with the Hebrew text and the Rome edition.

LXX-Sixt, 234: καὶ εἶπεν ἡ γυνή. εἰ ἥδη ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς θυσίας.

LXX-Bos, 433: Καὶ εἶπεν ἡ γυνή, Εἰ ἥδη ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς θυσίας.

LXX-Grabe, vol. II, n.p.: Καὶ εἶπεν ἡ γυνή· Εἴη δὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς θυσίαν.

Grabe is undoubtedly right about the text established by the *Sistine* editors, since the error could easily be detected by comparison with Jerome’s use of the conjunctive in translation (*ut fiat verbum domini mei*) or with the other Greek versions, which used the verb γενηθήτω. However, Grabe’s proposed emendation might not be as original as his editor thought. The grammatical issue had been noted long before by Hugo Grotius, who in his philological notes observed that the verb in the paragraph should be a verb in the optative mood (*potius optantis est, ut LXX sumserē*) and suggested that the form εἰ ἥδη would be a popular lection (*non εἰ ἥδη, ut vulgò legitur*¹⁸). The scarce presence of the Greek optative in biblical texts and most probably an interpretation according to which the phrase was an elliptical structure, determined Bos’s reluctance with regard to Grabe’s proposed emendation. The fact is that in the earlier editions of the *Sistine* the text is not emended. Jean Morin preserved the *Sistine* text¹⁹, and Grabe would later note in *Epistula ad Millium* that the Greek text of the London Polyglot (*ipsisque Bibliis Polyglottis Waltoni*) was not corrected, either²⁰.

It is obvious that the Romanian translations followed the Frankfurt edition, providing a slightly different text, which we can also identify in the version proposed by Samuil Micu.

LXX-Frankf, 286a: Καὶ ἐρεῖ ἡ δούλη σου· γενηθήτω δὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ βασιλέως.

Ms.45: “Și va grăi roaba ta: ‘Facă-să, dară, cuvîntul domnului meu, împăratului’”. [“And thy handmaid will speak: ‘May the word of my lord the king will now be’”].

Ms.4389: “Și să zică roaba ta: ‘Să fie cuvîntul stăpînului meu, al împăratului’”.

[“And let your handmaid say: ‘Let the word of my lord, of the king be’”].

B 1688: “Și va grăi roaba ta: ‘Facă-să dară cuvîntul domnului meu, împăratului’”. [“And thy handmaid will speak: ‘May the word of my lord the king will now be’”].

B-Blaj: “Și va grăi roaba ta: ‘Să fie cuvântul domnului meu, împăratului’”.

[“And thy handmaid will speak: ‘Let the word of my lord the king be’”].

In the note to the text, the Frankfurt edition mentioned that εἰ ἤδη is a corrupted text, which replaced the correct version εἶη δὴ²¹, without any comment on the substitution of ἡ γυνή for ἡ δούλη or of εἶη δὴ for γενηθήτω δὴ, derived from the text of *Aldina*. The clearest evidence that Micu did not follow Lambert Bos’s edition is the lack of the conditional conjunction in the translation. Even though he was aware of the grammatical problem, given that the text of the Leipzig edition presented a corrected text (Εἶη δὴ ὁ λόγος) and mentioned that other editions preferred the form εἰ ἤδη²², he opted in this case to combine solutions provided by the tradition of earlier translations.

4.2. Hosea 4:6

The poetic text from *Hosea* 4:6 (“My people have become like one who lacks knowledge;/ because you have rejected knowledge, / I will also reject you from being a priest to me”²³) posed such a minor problem at the time that today one may find it quite difficult to understand the nature of critical observation in itself. Lambert Bos was criticized of having preserved the flawed text of the *Sixtina*, which contained the negative particle μὴ before the verb ἱερατεῦειν, although this element is found neither in the *Codex Vaticanus*, nor in the Hebrew text. The observation is first made by Grabe in

his *Epistula ad Millium*²⁴, but the irony is that the negation appears even in the printed version of his edition.

LXX-Sixt, 558: ὅτι σὺ ἐπίγνωσιν ἀπόσω, καὶ γὰρ ἀπόσομαι σέ, τοῦ μὴ ἱερατεῦειν μοι·

LXX-Bos, 1080: ὅτι σὺ ἐπίγνωσιν ἀπόσω, καὶ γὰρ ἀπόσομαι σέ, τοῦ μὴ ἱερατεῦειν μοι·

LXX-Grabe, vol. III, n.p.: ὅτι σὺ ἐπίγνωσιν ἀπόσω, καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπόσομαι σέ, τοῦ μὴ ἱερατεῦειν μοι·

Although today it is difficult to understand the objection made by Grabe and reiterated by Lee, in those days it had a special significance in the dispute between Protestants and the leadership of the Catholic Church. This aspect is suggested by the way the verse was interpreted at the time. For instance, the humanist François Vatable stated in his notes that the verse referred to the High Priest (*Summum Sacerdotem alloquitur*²⁵), without establishing any hermeneutical connection to contemporary society whatsoever. Yet in the typological reading of the prophetic books of the following century, the prophecy could be read as a reference to the Roman Pontiff. Regardless of the nature of the interpretation, in the still tense atmosphere of the disputes between Catholics and Protestants, the presence of the negative particle in the text of the editions was most probably frowned upon. It fed the unjustified fear that the text might be interpreted in the sense of a double negative and that it might be attributed the opposite meaning. From the translation of Jerome's *Vulgate* (*repellam te ne sacerdotio fungaris mihi*) it is quite clear that the presence of the negation was rather a translation solution of the text from Hebrew, which had also been adopted by some of the Greek versions. The text preserved in the *Codex Vaticanus* literally translated the Hebrew infinitive construct, rendering its equivalent by an infinitive without negation. Jerome solved the problem elegantly, opting for a negative final subordinate, which forced him to add the verb *fungor* to the text, because in Latin there was no verb that could express the exercise of the function of priest, without deviation from the meaning. Actually, none of the editions based on the *Sistine* text removed this negation²⁶.

This state of facts is also reflected in the tradition of Romanian translations, where most of the editions consulted retained the negation. With the exception of Ms.4389, which attempted a translation without negation and produced a rather obscure text (“Că tu ai lepădat știința, ce te voiu lepăda și eu pre tine de-a mai fi mie preut”), all other Romanian versions translate the adverb of negation. Micu followed in the footsteps of

his predecessors, deciding to transform the infinitive into a predicative verb (“pentru că ai lăpădat știința și Eu te voiu lăpăda pre tine, ca să *nu* preoțești Mie”²⁷).

4.3. *Hosea 12:12*

The critical objection formulated by Lee with regard to the text of *Hosea 12:12* (“And Jakob withdrew to the plain of Syria, and Israel was subject because of a wife, and because of a wife he kept watch”²⁸) is limited to the repetitive text ἐν γυναικὶ καὶ ἐν γυναικὶ, reproaching the Dutch editor for deliberately omitting the preposition ἐν from the second construction, following the model of the *Sistine* editors, although the double preposition is preserved in both the uncial manuscripts, *Vaticanus* and *Alexandrinus*, respectively in all the major editions of the time (cf. Grabe 1705, 49). Lee’s reproach is merely aimed to tease the claims expressed by Lambert Bos, in the preface to his edition, to correct the *Septuaginta Romana* in accordance with the text of the *Vaticanus* manuscript. The omission of the second preposition is found, to the same extent, in the other editions of the *Sistine* consulted by Lambert Bos, who records the text καὶ ἐδούλευσεν Ἰσραὴλ ἐν γυναικὶ, καὶ γυναικὶ ἐφυλάξατο²⁹.

Protestant exegesis generally regarded the text of *Hosea 12:12* as an allusion to chapter 29 of the *Genesis* and interpreted the repetition ἐν γυναικὶ καὶ ἐν γυναικὶ as a precise reference to the seven-year intervals in which Jacob served Laban for Rachel (*Genesis 29:20*) and Leah (*Genesis 29:28*)³⁰. Johannes Drusius rendered a similar meaning to this paragraph, pointing to the philological issues raised by the Latin translation of the text. Some preferred to translate it by the dative *pro uxore*, others opted for the causal meaning of *propter uxorem* or *propter mulierem*, while more literal translations insisted on equating the Hebrew terms and translated it *in uxore* (Pearson 1698, vol. 4, 149 and 151–152). The consultation of the Protestant exegetical tradition reveals that most exegetes read the double preposition and that the absence of one of them could lead to entirely different meanings, probably referring to a messianic dimension that did not exist in the text. In their desire to render the Hebrew text as faithfully as possible, the ancient translators rendered the preposition -ב (b-) by ἐν in many instances, even where the classical paradigm rejected them as linguistic barbarisms. A critic accustomed to classical Greek had to interpret the second construction ἐν γυναικὶ differently because of the change in verbal diathesis. Whereas the active diathesis of the verb ἐδούλευσεν in the first construction easily allows the preposition ἐν, things are different for the verb ἐφυλάξατο, because in classical Greek the verb in the middle diathesis

is automatically followed by the dative, without a preposition. This grammatical correction, omitting the preposition ἐν from the second construction, provided deeper meaning to the paragraph, as it could be read in a messianic sense and translated by expressions such as “kept out of woman” or “stayed away from woman”.

In the Romanian translations, this philological issue is practically non-existent, because the Frankfurt edition displays the repetition of the preposition, in accordance with the *Aldina* edition and the *Alexandrinus* manuscript, which contained the text ἐν γυναικὶ καὶ ἐν γυναικὶ ἐφυλάξατο (*LXX-Frankf*, 727). Consequently, Samuil Micu adopts the solution offered by most Romanian versions, which opt for the *variatio* translation of both prepositions³¹.

4.4. *Hosea 13:2*

The philological issue raised by the paragraph from *Hosea 13:2* (“And they added to sin/ and made a cast image for themselves”³²) was the addition by the *Sistine* editors of the adverb of time νῦν before the first verb of the verse (προσέθεντο), although this was omitted in the known uncial manuscripts³³. Grabe’s observation was echoed by Lee, who imputes to the Dutch edition the retention of this adverb, according to the model of the Roman edition.

LXX-Sixt, 562: καὶ νῦν προσέθεντο τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν, καὶ ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς χώνευμα ἐκ τοῦ ἀργυρίου αὐτῶν.

LXX-Bos, 1087: Καὶ νῦν προσέθεντο τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν, καὶ ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς χώνευμα ἐκ τοῦ ἀργυρίου αὐτῶν.

LXX-Grabe, vol. III, n.p.: Καὶ νῦν προσέθεντο τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν ἔτι, καὶ ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς χώνευμα ἐκ τοῦ ἀργυρίου ἑαυτῶν.

The adverb νῦν incriminated in this case most probably aimed at a harmonization of the text, having been added under the influence of the Latin tradition of the *Vulgate*, which placed the adverb at the beginning of the paragraph (*et nunc addiderunt ad peccandum*), as well as the Hebrew tradition, where the adverb of time *atta* (אִתָּא), preceded by the conjunction, was placed in the same position. Grabe was able to detect the problem due to the fact that in the *Codex Alexandrinus* text the state of continuity of sin is marked by another adverb of time (ἔτι), which renders the addition of the first adverb superfluous and even pleonastic. Ironically, because the third volume of the *Grabiana* had a different editor, this text is the only one to retain both adverbs in the set text without any additional notice. As we learn

from the critical apparatus of the Dutch edition, Lambert Bos was well aware that the adverb $\nu\tilde{\nu}$ was missing from the *Codex Alexandrinus*³⁴, yet its presence in the editions of *Aldina*, *Complutensia*, the Patristic writings, and especially the other editions based on the *Sistine* text³⁵ determined him to preserve it in the text.

Samuil Micu translated the adverb of time $\nu\tilde{\nu}$ in his version, as it was confirmed not only by the Franeker edition but also by the other sources he consulted.

LXX-Frankf, 727a: Καὶ $\nu\tilde{\nu}$ προσέθεντο τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν [ἔτι].

Ms.45: „Și acum adaose [încă] a greși”. [And now they [still] add to err].

Ms.4389: „Și acum iarăși au adaos a greși”. [And now do they add again to err].

B 1688: „Și acum adaose a greși”. [And now they add to err].

B-Blaj, 706: „Și acum, au adaos a păcătui”. [And now, do they add to sin].

The Frankfurt edition notes already pointed out that the adverb $\epsilon\tilde{\tau}$ is pleonastic in relation to $\nu\tilde{\nu}$ (*LXX-Frankf*, 727a, n. 2) and framed the second adverb between square brackets. The other possible sources of the Romanian translator also preserved the adverb $\nu\tilde{\nu}$, while Christian Reineccius' edition pointed to its absence from the two known uncial manuscripts³⁶. The translation provided for the first part of the verse in the *Blaj Bible* indicates a source from which the adverb $\epsilon\tilde{\tau}$ is missing, whereas the way in which the verb ἁμαρτάνειν was translated, with the meaning it held in Hellenistic Greek, points to a translation uninfluenced by pre-existing ones in the Romanian tradition.

4.5. Hosea 14:2

The last example discussed by Francis Lee concerns a philological issue encountered in *Hosea* 14:2 (“Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, / for you have been weakened by your injustices”³⁷). Grabe briefly noted that the verb ἡσθένησας, rendered in the second person singular in the *Codex Vaticanus* and most editions, has been rendered by ἡσθένησαν, in the third person plural, in the *Aldine* and *Sistine* editions (Grabe 1705, 49). The texts of the editions actually mark a different understanding of the subject of the paragraph (Ἰσραὴλ), which can also be read as a collective noun, but here causes a disagreement between the singular verb of the main clause (ἐπιστράφητι) and the plural verb (ἡσθένησαν) in the subordinate sentence.

LXX-Sixt, 562: Ἐπιστράφηθι ἰσραὴλ πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεὸν σου, διότι ἡσθένησαν ἐν ταῖς ἀδικίαις σου.

LXX-Bos, 1088: Ἐπιστράφηθι Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεὸν σου, διότι ἡσθένησαν ἐν ταῖς ἀδικίαις σου.

LXX-Grabe, vol. III, n.p.: Ἐπιστράφηθι Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς Κύριον τὸν θεὸν σου, διότι ἡσθένησας ἐν ταῖς ἀδικίαις σου.

From the critical apparatus of the Franeker edition, where the singular form ἡσθένησας is attributed to the *Alexandrinus* and *Vaticanus* manuscripts and the Alcalá de Henares edition³⁸, we learn that Lambert Bos has intentionally retained the plural form of the verb in the *Sistine* editors. His decision seems to have been influenced by the editions of Jean Morin and Brian Walton, which also retain the plural form of the verb³⁹. As indicated by the critical apparatus of the Paris and London editions, the differences in the person of the verb ἡσθενέω are not specific only to the Greek versions; the same situation occurs in the Latin manuscripts, which either oscillate between *infirmatus es* and *infirmati sunt*, or propose different translations, such as *corruisti* or *impegisti*, in the singular. Grabe's observation is consequently not an original discovery. Johannes Drusius's notes had already signalled that the plural form was a copying error that required emendation⁴⁰.

This confusing situation of the person of the verb was not transmitted in the Romanian translations, because the Frankfurt edition, although based on *Aldina*'s text, presented a different subject and, consequently, corrected the verb, establishing a singular form for it: Ἐπιστράφηθι ἱεροσαλῆμ ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν σου, διότι ἡσθένησας ἐν ταῖς ἀδικίαις σου⁴¹. Given that the subject of the subordinating clause, the same as that of the causative subordinate, turned into a clear singular form (Ἱεροσαλῆμ), the person of the verb can no longer raise issues of agreement between subject and predicate either. Following the Frankfurt edition, all 17th century Romanian translations rendered the verb “ai slăbit” (“you have been weakened”) in the singular (Ms.45; Ms.4389; B1688). Comparing editions and translations, Samuil Micu preferred to translate the singular form of the verb but did not accept the different lection fixed for the subject: “Întoarce-te, Israile, cătră Domnul Dumnezeuul tău, că ai slăbit întru nedreptățile tale!” (“Return, O Israel, unto the Lord your God, for you have weakened in your iniquities!”⁴²).

5. Conclusions

The contextualization of translations and following editions allows us to see philological problems, raised from the reading of manuscripts, that do

not disappear without a trace after the establishing of texts. The challenges posed in the 17th century by variants found in the *Codex Alexandrinus* and other manuscripts of the *Septuagint* continued to incite critical reflection long after the editions were produced. The translation of the *Blaj Bible* was not made in a context detached from the new discoveries of European biblical philology, nor did the translator intend to follow indiscriminately a single source.

The criticism that Lambert Bos's Dutch edition has received constitutes for the most part conquests of biblical philology from previous centuries. The well-known objections of Protestant biblical exegesis to the canonization of Catholic editions take a different form in the case of the Franeker edition. In the case of passages invoked to criticize Lambert Bos's passive attitude toward *Sistine* errors, at least two cases (*2Kings* 14:17 and *Hosea* 14:2) comprise grammatical anomalies noted long before by Johannes Drusius, and two others (*Hosea* 4:6 and *Hosea* 12:12) reflect hermeneutics derived from investing each element of the text with prophetic meanings.

A comparative analysis of the texts objected to the Franeker edition, and the choices made by Samuil Micu, who was forced to decide which text to follow in the translation, can give us considerable clues to the text criticism applied in the Romanian translation. A "conservative" attitude prevails in this process, in which innovative elements are rejected, while translation solutions provided by the Romanian tradition are preferred. Samuil Micu's choices oscillate between the tradition of old Romanian biblical translations, and the editions he consulted and convinced him. The limited examples we have investigated suggest that the Greek-Catholic monk did not follow a single Greek text without a complete philological exploration. This becomes evident in cases that raise grammatical issues (*2Kings* 14:17 and *Hosea* 14:2), corrected or not in the editions consulted. Samuil Micu avoids here the errors attributed to the Dutch edition, either by translating the different text of another edition (*2Kings* 14:17) or by choosing to translate a mixed text, resulting from the comparison between the editions and the tradition of Romanian translations (*Hosea* 14:2). Objections derived from the prophetic hermeneutics of the text (*Hosea* 4:6; *Hosea* 12:12) have no impact on Micu's translation, as long as they are preserved in most sources. Even if the philological problems he faced are not explicitly mentioned anywhere, it is precisely this "oscillating" attitude towards his sources that constitutes irrefutable proof of a critical judgment made beforehand.

Notes

¹ For B 1688, Ms.45, Ms.4389 there were used the texts from the *Monumenta linguae Dacoromanorum* series (MLD.VII, MLD.XVII).

² The preparation for printing of the *Bucharest Bible* (1688) has quite a complicated history, as proved by two manuscripts (Ms. 45 and Ms. 4389), which preserve the translation efforts for the *Old Testament*. A detailed study of the two manuscripts has been conducted by Căndea 1979, 79–224. According to Eugen Pavel, some of the reliable sources for the *Bible from Bucharest*, which was translated by Nicolae Milescu (1636–1708), between 1661 and 1664, were: 1. The Frankfurt *Septuagint* edition (1597); 2. The *Ostrug Bible* of 1581; 3. One of the editions of the *Vulgate*, published in Antwerp between 1599 and 1645; 4. Several editions of the Hebrew text, translated into Latin, by Hebraists such as Santes Pagnino (1470–1541), Sebastian Münster (1488–1552), Sebastian Castellio (1515–1563), Emmanuele Tremellio (1510–1580) and François de Jon (1545–1602); 5. Roger Daniel’s *Septuagint*, the first Greek Bible to be printed in England (London, 1653). Some of these sources were also consulted by Samuil Micu, who sometimes adopted translation solutions from the old Romanian version, and sometimes detached significantly from it (Pavel 2016, 18–19).

³ Among the European critical editions used by Samuil Micu, the following have been mentioned: 1. The Franeker *Septuagint* (1709); 2. One of the biblical editions elaborated by François Vatable (most probably the Heidelberg bilingual edition of 1616, cf. Pavel 2014, 91); 3. The London Polyglot Bible (1653–1657); 4. The canonized edition of the *Vulgate*, published in Venice in 1690; 5. The *Septuagint* edition of Christian Reineccius (1668–1752), published in Leipzig between 1747 and 1751. Other secondary editions are added to these sources, whose impact on translation is still being studied.

⁴ Samuil Micu wrote a much more extensive introduction, preserved today in manuscript (Ms. 497) at the Romanian Academy Library in Cluj-Napoca, which he revised and briefed in the printed version (See Pavel 2016, 24).

⁵ For a more detailed discussion on the writings in which Morin revisits this idea, see Gibert 2008, 769–771.

⁶ The reasons behind Vossius’ opinions, set in the broader context of the controversy over the divine inspiration of the Bible, are discussed by Danneberg 2003, 75.

⁷ See the introduction and studies on the topic in van Miert et al. 2017.

⁸ For more discussions on the phenomenon of polyglot editions, see Schenker 2008, 774–784; Hamilton 2016, 138–156; Mandelbrote 2016, 82–109.

⁹ The full history of the preparation and elaboration of the first edition of the *Septuagint* based on the texts of the *Alexandrinus* manuscript is recounted in Scott Mandelbrote’s studies (Mandelbrote 2006, 89–92; Mandelbrote 2021, 44ff).

¹⁰ See *LXX-Bos*, *Subtexere heic potius quam ad calcem Operis* [...] and *LXX-Grabe*, vol. I, *Prolegomena* II, §2).

¹¹ “*Non tamen diffiteor, quaedam esse in Cod. Alex. quae praeferenda sunt Romano.*” (“I do not deny, however, that there are some <fragments> in Codex Alexandrinus which are preferable to those in the Roman <manuscript>.”) *LXX-Bos*, *Prolegomena* II.

¹² For Francis Lee, as for most philologists of the era, critical observations and emendations of the *Septuagint* in the established texts or in the footsteps of editions were considered mandatory, given the consensus of scholars of the era about the altered nature of all preserved manuscripts.

¹³ Cf. *LXX-Grabe*, vol. II, *Prolegomena* I, §1.

¹⁴ See *LXX-Grabe*, vol. II, *Prolegomena* II, §5.

¹⁵ *LXX-Grabe*, vol. II, *Prolegomena* II, §6.

¹⁶ *NETS*, 286.

¹⁷ Cf. Grabe 1705, 50.

¹⁸ Pearson 1698, vol. 2, 1016.

¹⁹ *LXX-Morin*, vol. I, 565.

²⁰ *PB-Walton*, vol. 2, 356.

²¹ *LXX-Frankf.*, 286a, n. 39.

²² LXX-Leipzig, 501.

²³ NETS, 783.

²⁴ “*Mox cap. 4. v. 6 negativa particula μή ante ἱερατεῦειν est addita, quae tamen in MS. Vatic. ut & Cyrillo Alex. non extat, neque in Hebraeo est expressa, licet praefixum ꝛ eam subinserat.*” Grabe 1705, 48.

²⁵ Pearson 1698, vol. 4, 40.

²⁶ LXX-Morin, vol. 2, 375; PB-Walton, vol. 3, 8.

²⁷ B-Blaj, 702.

²⁸ NETS, 788.

²⁹ See LXX-Sixt, 562; LXX-Bos, 1087; LXX-Morin, vol. II, 385; PB-Walton, vol. 3, 22.

³⁰ See in this respect the interpretations of the Hebraist Sebastian Münster and those of the Benedictine bishop Isidoro Chiari (1495–1555), edited by Pearson 1698, vol. 4, 143 and 145.

³¹ Ms.45: “pentru muiere și întru muiere să păzi”; Ms.4389: “au slujit Istrail pentru muiere, pentru muiere se-au păzit”; B 1688: “pentru muiere și întru muiere să păzi” (MLD.XVII); B-Blaj 1795: “pentru muiere, și întru muiere s-au păzit”.

³² NETS, 788.

³³ “*Contra chap. 13. v. 2 vox νῦν ante προσέθεντο est inserta, cum tamen in MS. Vatic. ut & Alex. non sit exarta.*” Grabe 1705, 49.

³⁴ LXX-Bos, 1087, n. 5.

³⁵ Cf. LXX-Morin, vol. 2, 385; PB-Walton, vol. 3, 22.

³⁶ See the note of LXX-Leipzig, 1254.

³⁷ NETS, 789.

³⁸ LXX-Bos, 1088, n. 6.

³⁹ LXX-Morin, vol. 2, 386; PB-Walton, vol. 3, 24.

⁴⁰ Pearson 1698, vol. 4, 172.

⁴¹ LXX-Frankf, 728a. Although it contains significant differences from other versions, the Frankfurt edition renders the correct version of the verb in question (ἠσθένησας), pointing out in the critical apparatus that the ἠσθένησαν variant is corrupt (728a, n.3).

⁴² B-Blaj, 707.

References

LXX-Bos = Bos, Lambert ed. 1709. Ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη κατὰ τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα. *Vetus Testamentum ex versione Septuaginta interpretum, secundum exemplar Vaticanum Romae editum, accuratissime denuo recognitum, una cum scholiis ejusdem editionis, variis manuscriptorum [...] summa cura edidit Lambertus Bos.* Franeker: Franciscus Halma.

LXX-Grabe = Grabe, Johann Ernst et al. eds. 1707-1720. Τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης κατὰ τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα. *Vetus Testamentum juxta Septuaginta interpretes.* 4 vols. Oxford: E Theatro Sheldoniano.

LXX-Frankf = Τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς παλαιᾶς δηλαδὴ καὶ νέας διαθήκης, ἅπαντα. 1597. *Divinae Scripturae nempe Veteris ac Novi Testamenti, omnia [...].* Frankfurt: Apud Wecheli heredes, Claudium Marnium & Ioan Aubrium.

LXX-Leipzig = Reineccius, Christian ed. 1757. Ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη κατὰ τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα. *Vetus Testamentum Graecum ex versione Septuaginta interpretum, una cum libris apocryphis secundum exemplar Vaticanum Romae editum et aliquoties recognitum [...] adjecit M. Christianus Reineccius.* Leipzig: Impensis Bernh. Christ. Breitkopfii.

LXX-Morin = Morin, Jean ed. 1628. Ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη κατὰ τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα, ἐκδοθεῖσα δι’ αὐθεντίας Ξυστοῦ ἐ ἄκρου ἀρχιερέως. *Vetus testamentum, secundum LXX et ex auctoritate Sixti V. Pont. Max. editum.* 3 vols. Paris: Apud Sebastianum Chappelet.

- LXX-Sixt = Ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη κατὰ τοὺς ἑβδομήκοντα. 1587. *Vetus Testamentum iuxta Septuaginta ex auctoritate Sixti V. Pont. Max. editum*. Roma: Ex Typographia Francisci Zannetti.
- B-Vatable = Vatable, François ed. 1586. *Biblia sacra, Hebraice, Graece, & Latine. Latina interpretatio duplex est, altera vetus, altera noua; cum annotationibus Francisci Vatabli Hebraicae linguae Lutetiae quondam professoris Regij*. 2 vols. Geneva: Ex Officina Sanctandreae.
- B-Blaj = Micu, Samuil tr. 1795. *Biblia, adecă Dumnezeiasca Scriptură a Legii Vechi și a ceii Noao, toate care s au tălmăcit de pre limba elinească pre înțelesul limbii românești, acum întâiu s au tipărit românește sub stăpînirea preainăltatului împărat a Romanilor Francisc al doilea, cu blagoslovenia mării sale prealuminatului și preasfințitului domnului domn Ioan Bob, vlădica Făgărașului* [The Bible, i.e., the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Laws, translated from Hellenic to Romanian, now published for the first time in Romanian under the rule of the Mighty Roman Emperor Francis the Second, with the blessing of the wise and holy lord Ioan Bob, Bishop of Făgăraș]. Blaj, [Modern Edition: Roma, 2000].
- MLD.VII = Munteanu, Eugen et al. eds. 2014. *Biblia 1688: Regum III, Regum IV* (Monumenta linguae Dacoromanorum 7). Iași: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Publishing House.
- MLD.XVII = Ungureanu, Mădălina et al. eds. 2015. *Biblia 1688: Osee, Ioël, Amos, Abdias, Ionas, Michaea* (Monumenta linguae Dacoromanorum 17). Iași: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Publishing House.
- NETS = Pietersma, Albert, and Wright, Benjamin G. eds. 2007. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- PB-Walton = Walton, Brian et al. eds. 1653-1658. *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*. 6 vols. London: Thomas Roycroft.
- Bossina, Luciano. 2021. “Manuscripts, Papyri, and Epigraphy: Manuscripts of the Septuagint from Uncials to Minuscules.” In A.G. Salvesen and T.M. Law (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bravo, Benedetto. 2006. “Criticism in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and the Rise of the Notion of Historical Criticism.” In C. Ligota and J.-L. Quantin (eds.), *History of Scholarship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Catană-Spenchiu, Ana and Răchită, Constantin. 2023. “The Critical Reception of the Franeker Septuagint (1709).” *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Philologica* 24 (1): 317–332.
- Câdea, Virgil ed. 1979. *Rațiunea dominantă. Contribuții la istoria umanismului românesc* [Dominant Reason. Contributions to the History of Romanian Humanism]. Cluj-Napoca: Dacia.
- Danneberg, Lutz. 2003. “Ezekiel Spanheim’s Dispute with Richard Simon. On the Biblical Philology at the End of the 17th Century.” In S. Pott, M. Mulsow, and L. Danneberg (eds.), *The Berlin Refuge, 1680-1780: Learning and Science in European Context* (Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History 114). Leiden: Brill.
- Gibert, Pierre. 2008. “The Catholic Counterpart and Response to the Protestant Orthodoxy.” In M. Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Grabe, Johann Ernst. 1705. *Epistola ad clarissimum virum, D[omi]nu[m] Joannem Millium*. Oxford: E Theatro Sheldoniano.
- Hamilton, Alastair. 2016. “In search of the most perfect text: The early modern printed Polyglot Bibles from Alcalá (1510–1520) to Brian Walton (1654–1658).” In E.

- Cameron (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, Vol. 3: *From 1450 to 1750*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hardy, Nicholas. 2015. "The Septuagint and the Transformation of Biblical Scholarship in England, from the King James Bible (1611) to the London Polyglot (1657)." In K. Killeen, H. Smith and R. Willie (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, c.1530-1700*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mandelbrote, Scott. 2006. "English Scholarship and the Greek Text of the Old Testament, 1620–1720: The Impact of Codex Alexandrinus." In A. Hessayon and N. Keene (eds.), *Scripture and Scholarship in Early Modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Mandelbrote, Scott. 2016. "The Old Testament and its ancient versions in manuscript and print in the West, from c. 1480 to c.1780." In E. Cameron (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, Vol. 3: *From 1450 to 1750*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mandelbrote, Scott. 2021. "The History of Septuagint Studies: Early Modern Western Europe." In A.G. Salvesen and T.M. Law (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pavel, Eugen. 2014. "The Slavonic Model *versus* the Latin Model in the Romanian Biblical Texts." *Dacoromania. New Series* XIX(1): 82–98.
- Pavel, Eugen. 2016. "The Beginnings of Textual Criticism in Old Romanian Writing." *Dacoromania. New Series* XXI(1): 17–30.
- Pearson, John. ed. 1698. *Criticorum sacrorum sive annotatorum ad Libros Propheticos Veteris Testamenti*. 9 vols. Amsterdam: Henricus & Vidua Theodori Boom.
- Schenker, Adrian. 2008. "The Polyglot Bibles of Antwerp, Paris and London: 1568–1658." In M. Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Spinka, Matthew. 1936. "Acquisition of the Codex Alexandrinus by England." *The Journal of Religion* 16: 10–29.
- Steiger, Johann A. 2008. "The Development of the Reformation Legacy: Hermeneutics and Interpretation of the Sacred Scripture in the Age of Orthodoxy." In M. Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Touber, Jetze. 2017. "Biblical Philology and Hermeneutical Debate in the Dutch Republic in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century." In D. van Miert, H. Nellen, P. Steenbakkens, J. Touber (eds.), *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age: God's Word Questioned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Touber, Jetze. 2018. *Spinoza and Biblical Scholarship in the Dutch Republic, 1660–1720*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- van Miert, Dirk; Nellen, Henk; Steenbakkens, Piet and Touber, Jetze. eds. 2017. *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age: God's Word Questioned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

David-Augustin MÂNDRUȚ*

Martin Buber's notion of the unconscious

Abstract: This paper investigates Martin Buber's notion of the unconscious. To accomplish this task, I will first need to come back to Buber's late philosophical anthropology, and secondly, I will need to give an in-depth analysis of his text on the issue of the unconscious. The first task will be a broader one, namely it will address certain philosophical and anthropological theories of Buber's which could have led him to propose an alternative theory of the unconscious, contra the psychoanalytical schools of his time. The second task will be an analysis of the philosophical context in which Buber elaborated his theory of the unconscious. This analysis will address the philosophical forerunners of the issue of the unconscious, at the same time providing a framework for developing further Martin Buber's notion of the unconscious in a philosophical manner. Buber's novelty is provided by the fact that he proposed a non-dualistic account of the unconscious, which could designate the wholeness of the human being before the split or division into *body* and mind phenomena. This point concerning the wholeness of the human person is in our opinion the "missing link" between Buber's late philosophical anthropology and his theory of the unconscious. Our aim would be to connect these two chapters in the development of Martin Buber's thought.

Keywords: Martin Buber, unconscious, body, mind, philosophical anthropology, phenomenon, dualism, psychotherapy.

Introduction

Martin Buber's notion of the unconscious was elaborated in the case of his critique addressed towards the psychoanalytical theories of his time, as they were found in certain theoretical paradigms. Therefore, Buber's main task was to criticize the Freudian and the Jungian approaches to psychoanalysis, providing at the same time a theoretical framework rich in therapeutical and practical consequences. Buber's theory of the unconscious is part of his philosophical anthropology; hence we could as well consider that his earlier theories concerning the human being's place in the universe, or the cosmos was decisive for his insights. This paper will be divided into three sections, the first investigating in a broad manner Buber's late philosophical anthropology, while the second addresses precisely the

* David-Augustin Mândruț, PhD Candidate, Center for Applied Philosophy, Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeș-Bolyai University Of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Email: davidmandrut@gmail.com

question of the unconscious, whereas the third explores Buber's advice for a dialogical psychotherapy.

Martin Buber's philosophical anthropology

In his paper entitled *Distance and relation*, Buber attempts to prove that the human being can grasp the world as world through two distinct but interconnected movements, which he terms the "primal setting at a distance" and "entering into relation". (Buber 1965, 60) If the human being accomplishes these two movements, then by virtue of the synthetizing apperception (a term which has certain Kantian echoes), he comes to have a world (independent of himself). Buber's theory is mainly concerned with the epistemological view of the world; therefore, we must not mistake his approach with Heidegger's fundamental ontology. Whereas in Heidegger's, Dasein was essentially being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1996, 49), for Buber, the human being comes to have a world independent of himself by virtue of these two movements. Instead of the Heideggerian embeddedness, in Buber we find a certain detachment, namely a way in which one could see the world objectively, and even alter it. Let me give an example.

In his papers on education, Buber states that there exists a certain instinct of origination, which could be accompanied in the life of the human being by the instinct for communion. (Buber 2002, 101) For Buber, the infant wants to make things, both by analysis (destroying) and by synthesis (creating). (Buber 2013, 19) One could equate this instinct with the creative impulse, as it is found in the works of Donald Winnicott. (Winnicott 2009, 92-93) This statement could be reinforced by coming back to Buber's thesis from *Distance and relation*, namely not only does the human being use a spear for example (Buber is here addressing the primitive man), but also by virtue of his fundamental distance towards beings, the person can decorate that spear (with feathers and so forth).

This act of distance is not sufficient, Buber insists, because in order to grasp the wholeness (this time Buber is referring to the other human being), one needs to enter into genuine relationships with the other. These genuine relationships involve imagination, which is distinct from mere empathy in Buber's, but also the act of personal making present and the confirmation of otherness. One more time, if the "primal setting at a distance" is followed by "entering into relation", then the human being can grasp the world as a unity and totality. Let me now explicate these key components which enable the human being to grasp the other as a uniqueness. Buber's phrase "imagining the real" implies that we do not just make use of mere imagery in order to feel what the other is needing and desiring as in a simulation, rather, our imagination is projected onto the other's bodily being, which is the foundational moment of our being-with-the-other in a

common “here” and “now”, namely in a common situation. If “imagining the real” takes place from both sides of the dialogical relation, then the two persons make present one another. This involves that both are present with their whole being, alongside the wholeness of the other. Now confirmation may take place. Confirmation means not just that we statically recognize the other as being situated in front of me, rather, confirmation always implies that the other should be grasped in his dynamic becoming. For this reason, confirmation through words becomes a necessity. (Buber 1965, 71)

Returning to Buber’s analysis from *Distance and relation*, he states that if the animal lives like a fruit in its skin, man lives in a huge building onto which multiple layers are always added. Nonetheless, by virtue of the two movements of human life, man is able to grasp the world as a unity and a totality. We can once again come back to the life of the primitive man for another example. The primitive man find himself under the great starry sky, this being his point of orientation in the world. Nevertheless, he has distance from the world, as Buber puts it, and here we could recall the concept of the image of the universe, which the primitive man starts to learn about from the beginning. Therefore, we can conclude that by virtue of this primal distance, that enables man to have a world detached from himself, the primitive can imitate the image of the universe by building his own house accordingly. Buber also thematized on some occasions the human being’s place in cosmos, hence we find out that we are ultimately dwellers in this huge building which is called the universe. (Buber 1999, 94)

Moreover, when he thematized the “uncanniness of the universe” and the danger of falling forever into chaos, Buber insisted that the human being’s rhythm of building and dwelling or inhabiting a house, is fundamental for his well-being and for his relational life with the others. Finally, we could assume that after this experience of the negative sublime (the uncanniness of the universe), the human being will acknowledge his vulnerability and fragility in the face of the universe, and will start building a refuge, i.e. the house. This is due to the fact that the human being has distance from the universe from the beginning and can therefore enter into relation with this image of the cosmos by building his own house, where he can dwell peacefully.

Another key element that Buber uses in his philosophical anthropology that could be addressed as the “missing link” between his late thematizations on the human being’s place in cosmos as his doctrine of the unconscious is the sphere of the interhuman. The interhuman is the realm of interpersonal encounters, and its unfolding is called the dialogical. Buber is very attentive when he distinguishes the interhuman from the social, because whereas the latter designates entities such as the state or a specific group of people and hierarchies, the former involves the small face-to-face interactions which take place on a micro level between persons which are

equal. (Buber 1965, 72) The fundamental notion which should be underlined in our discussion is the issue of the in-between. As we are going to see, Buber's theory of the unconscious functions in the in-between rather than merely in the psychical dimension.

Summing up our discussion so far, we have noticed that the two key elements which were retained by Buber from his philosophical anthropology throughout his thematization of the unconscious are the human being's wholeness and the interhuman space. The two aspects are deeply interconnected, because man becomes whole only by virtue of his relation to another human being, which takes place in the realm of the interhuman. Let us now see how the unconscious enters the stage and functions in this realm of the interhuman.

Buber and the unconscious

Buber's claim becomes visible from the very beginning of his text on the unconscious. What the philosopher had in mind was to give a new meaning to the notion of unconscious. At the same time, he was trying to overcome the dualisms which the Cartesian tradition left to us, emphasizing the wholeness of the human being, rather than the analytical separation between mind and body phenomena. We must nonetheless remember that Buber's text represents a synthetized version of his dialogues given in America, which were attentively corroborated by Maurice Friedman. Therefore, Buber's analysis was not meant to be a theory per se, rather, through his scattered remarks on the issue of the unconscious, he was trying to shed light on the preconceptions which this concept involved in the philosophical and psychoanalytical tradition up to his point. As Maurice Friedman recalls, Buber was willing to write a paper, criticizing Freud's concept of unconscious and the theory of dreams, but unfortunately, he never managed to finish it.

Buber's first paragraph from the text entitled "The Unconscious" is very telling, because he employs the term destruction, which provokes certain Heideggerian echoes. This means that Buber will borrow Heidegger's method, by which he wanted to "clear up concepts" and hence to disclose their original meaning. Furthermore, Buber uses a story which is to be found in Confucius' *Analects* about a disciple, whose very first task at the court was exactly to "clear up concepts". From the start of his text, Buber assumes this stance of clearing up the notion of the unconscious from the prejudices and preconceptions which throughout the ages were attached to this very notion. Moreover, Buber's novelty consists in his attempt to give a non-dualistic account of the unconscious. (Agassi 1999, 227)

The author goes rapidly throughout the history of philosophy, trying to show the way in which the diverse and manifold meanings which were

given to the notion of the unconscious implied certain dualisms, such as psychical and physical, inner and outer etc. Therefore, we are reminded of the Leibnizian notion of the imperceptible perceptions, as well as Plotinus' thematization of the unconscious. Buber also invokes Nicholas Cusanus, an author who stands at the basis of his doctoral dissertation. Novalis, Kant and Hamann are also mentioned, and Buber also reminds us of his contemporaries' several attempts to give an account of the notion of unconscious, and here he recalls Carl Gustav Carus, Eduard von Hartmann, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Henri Bergson. (Agassi 1999, 228) All of these authors somehow maintained a dualistic notion of the unconscious, operating in a Cartesian framework.

Moreover, Buber's critique of Freud starts with the observation that in the case of the father of psychoanalysis, the unconscious is not a phenomenon, but it has certain effects upon phenomena. For Buber, this problem belongs to the realm of functional dualism. (Agassi 1999, 229) Furthermore, Buber asks in a rhetorical manner how could any non-phenomenological instances have certain effects on the phenomenological ones. Buber concludes that Freud's assumption is from the very beginning a metaphysical one.

The psychical and the physical represent two different modes of knowing, namely the outer sense and the inner one, just as in Kant's thematization (Kant 2007, 61), from which Buber draws on. Feeling, which is pure psychic process in time cannot be found in the physical realm. Memory retains a process by a new process in time. Physiology deals with things that are to be found, psychology with things hidden so to say. For Buber, the assumption of his forerunners that the unconscious is either body or soul is unfounded, because for him, the unconscious becomes a state out of which these two elements have not yet evolved and in which the two cannot be distinguished from one another. (Agassi 1998, 229)

For Buber, the unconscious is our being itself, and both components, namely the body and the soul phenomena are continuously evolving at every moment. In order to become a phenomenon, the unconscious needs to dissociate itself, and a method that can accomplish this task is analytical psychology, or more exactly the analysis of the psyche. Buber is very subtle in his text, because throughout it, he uses a lot of Kantian distinctions, without naming them as such. Not everything that is, is a phenomenon, because the region of the phenomenon is limited. There exist meeting points between the psychical and the physical, but nonetheless, these two regions need to be distinguished. (Agassi 1999, 229)

In order to grasp the physical as a whole we need both the category of space and that of time, whereas for the psychic we need only time. Buber insists that we can say nothing of the unconscious in itself, because it is never given to us as such, namely as a phenomenon. Recalling Wilhelm

Dilthey's hermeneutical theory, Buber claims that for the Freudian psychoanalyst, the unconscious of the other cannot be understood, only the conscious aspect of his/her life. (Agassi 1999, 230)

In the context of this dialogue, Maurice Friedman tries to summarize what Martin Buber has said so far about the unconscious. Friedman concludes that the psychical and the physical are categories which do not apply to the unconscious, which is in itself non-phenomenological. What this means is that the unconscious, in Buber's thematization, is prior to the split between psychic and physis phenomena. Freud's mistake was to see the unconscious as belonging solely to the person, whereas for Buber, the unconscious belongs mostly to the interhuman sphere of existence. Therefore, the radical difference between Freud and Buber might be the one between psychic reality and interhuman reality. (Agassi 1999, 230)

Buber insists that the psychoanalytical claim of a non-phenomenological, yet psychic reality is a kind of mystic basis of reality. Moreover, Buber argues that the notion of the psyche as existing in space should be considered as some kind of metaphor. Freud's mistake was that he insisted on his doctrine, without trying to improve it, thus his failure consisted in the way in which he was not daring to begin anew thinking about questions of psychology. (Agassi 1999, 231)

Furthermore, Buber argues that there are many degrees of consciousness, and here we could remind ourselves of Alfred Schutz's finite provinces of meaning (Schutz 1962, 229), provinces through which the subject could navigate according to the tension of his/her attention to life, a concept borrowed from Bergson. (Agassi 1999, 231) There are many degrees of consciousness, because there are many tensions of durations, we could argue following Schutz and Bergson (Bergson 1991, 14). Buber does not make this connection, which was only implicit in his argument.

When asked about the process of hypnosis and its relationship to sleep-states, Buber offers some arguments for his thesis concerning the existence of the non-phenomenological unconscious. He claims that when a person is influenced in hypnosis by the analyst, the analyst dissociates the patient's unconscious into psychological and physical phenomena. When the patient awakens from the hypnosis, the dissociation takes place, namely the contact between the two spheres, the psychic and the physis, and not through the common sphere, which is the non-phenomenological unconscious. (Agassi 1999, 232) Here we could ask ourselves whether Buber would argue that dreams are a manifestation of the non-phenomenological unconscious or not. Freud provided some examples to show that the dream state is composed of both psychic and physis material. However, Buber wrote in a letter that dreams are not I-Thou relationships, but a hint of them. (Agassi 1999, 204) Recalling Bergson's and Schutz's theories of the attention to life, we could argue alongside the two of them, that dreams and sleep-states

represent the lower regions of our attention to life, in which mind and body are not yet separated by any analytical process of our consciousness. Therefore, when awake we could reorient our attention to life towards certain aspects of our body (a stomachache, for example), or to aspects which belong to our psyche (imagining something).

Of the dream in itself we can never know, Buber argues, because the only thing we know is the work of shaping memory, namely not the dream per se, but our attitude towards the dream after we wake up. Buber even suggests that in dreams we have a certain feeling of consciousness. (Agassi 1999, 232) Perhaps Buber was here referring in anticipation to the sense of agency, namely the fact that in the case of dreams, we are the ones who experience them at the first person.

There is a conscious force, which orders life, for the human being. Buber names it the synthetizing apperception, borrowing this concept from Kant's first *Critique*. There the transcendental synthetic unity was responsible for uniting the manifold of experience into a whole by virtue of the transcendental imagination. This synthetic unity is responsible for our living in the common world or cosmos of men, as in Heraclitus' saying. This unity does not work in dreams, Buber argues. Dreams seem to have a continuity and a connection of their own. Here one could ask whether the transcendental imagination functions only in our vigil life, namely when we are wide-awake, or also in dreams and sleep-states. The philosopher of dialogue would argue that the realm of sleep, the private sphere (Heraclitus) has its certain dynamics and functions, which ought to be distinguished from the force that orders the vigil life (the transcendental imagination, in Kant's case). Buber insists that Shakespeare's metaphor about the relationship between dreams and death has its certain basis in everyday reality, because both phenomena are unknown in their very nature. (Agassi 1999, 233)

The difference between dreams and memories would be that between a quasi-isolated subject and a subject who exists among others, because of dreams only the dreamer knows, whereas memories have the attestation and confirmation of others. This statement resonates with Ricoeur's claim that our narratives are always intertwined with the narratives of others. (Gallagher 2012, 175) Returning to Buber, he adds that as soon as we get in touch with the dreamer, there is no more dreaming, hence a phenomenologist might argue that the dreamer does not constitute the common world of men as does an awake subject. (Agassi 1999, 233)

When asked about the nature of the work of art, Buber replies that imagination is not bound to a certain connection of images, thus it is not responsible in relation to facts. It has its own laws, and it is not bound to a certain material. The man remembering dreams would not change anything consciously, because there is a tension of will, not to change anything in the

dreams. In imagination I have the sense of being a subject, and this fact of being a subject, distinguishes imagination from the mere night of images. For Buber, the dream is *epical*. (Agassi 1999, 234)

Returning to our question which was asked beforehand, Buber claims that dreams are a form of the unconscious. The body material and the soul material are not separated from one another, but there is a detached world of the dreamer (Heraclitus). This private sphere manifests itself in the way that dreams do not allow people to communicate while they are asleep, only after they woke up. Therefore, the dream becomes a limit case for the philosophy of dialogue which takes place in the interhuman. (Agassi 1999, 234) In his dialogue with Carl Rogers, Buber gives several examples of limit cases of dialogic life (Buber 1965, 175), which seem to resemble Husserl's special cases of intersubjectivity. Dialogue, or in Husserl's thematization, the constitution of the world, is very different when we encounter for example a sleeping person.

Buber recalls the example of a schizophrenic patient, who wanted to introduce his wife to his particular world. Buber tried to explain the way in which the schizophrenic wanted to encourage the other to move from the common world of men towards his particular world (the private sphere) of experience, in order that meetings might take place. Buber concludes that the common world is for the schizophrenic a world of illusions, and the only real world is his/her world of experience. Schizophrenics even have a double stream of memory, the author argues. Buber was also a student of the psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler (Buber 1965, 167), and from here we can conclude that he was familiar with the phenomenon of double book-keeping. Buber's novelty, which influenced even the phenomenological psychiatrist Ludwin Binswanger, was to reiterate the distinction that Heraclitus had made between the two worlds (private and common world) and to apply it to the case of mental disorders (Agassi 1999, 235) The connection of things, both spatial and temporal, is very different in dreams from the common world. (Agassi 1999, 236) Here we could recall once again Schutz's theory of the finite provinces of meaning and give an example. When we are awake, the connection of things seems to be a continuous and constant one, while in phantasy or dream-states the connection seems to involve different states of connections between things. Whereas when awake I can influence the outside world by virtue of my actions, when I imagine something, I can manipulate that context by means of my freedom of discretion (Schutz 1962, 240-241), as in Schutz's saying. Nonetheless, when dreaming we have a certain sense of agency, but it could as well happen that the dream surprises us.

For Buber, the very reality of the dream is inaccessible. He also notices how the normal dream is very different from the hypnotic one. Buber now introduces the phrase "musical relationships" to designate a sort of floating

relation, where the therapist is more important than the method. Buber acknowledges that without methods one is a dilettante, but at the same time, he wanted the therapist to actually use the methods given, not just to believe in them. (Agassi 1999, 236-237) Now we are quickly advancing towards the third division of this paper, which concerns Buber's advice for psychotherapists.

Buber on psychotherapy

Buber insists that the therapeutic relation might come to that point when there appears the element of the unforeseen, meaning that the therapist must somehow suspend his/her method and meet the patient in his/her uniqueness. (Agassi 1999, 237) This method has been called by the psychiatrist Giovanni Stanghellini a sort of phenomenological bracketing, which should be applied to the encounter with the other. (Stanghellini 2017, 11) Also in Buber's late philosophical anthropology, especially in his theories on language, there appears the notion of the moment of the surprise, which could be seen as a forerunner to Daniel Stern's moments of meeting. (Stern 2004, 135) Therefore, dialogue is conceived as an unfolding of the interhuman, of the space between I and Thou, which leaves open the possibility of surprise, namely of a radical change between the interlocutors, or more exactly, what Henri Maldiney has called the event. (Maldiney 1991, 251-252)

Emphasizing his theory of "healing through meeting", Buber states that making the unconscious conscious means that there were certain repressed elements which the patient did not want to keep. Because of Buber's notion of the unconscious, which involves both body and soul phenomena, this task of bringing back to consciousness elements which were repressed, seems impossible. As Buber states, we do not have a "deep freeze" which keeps all these repressed ideas, wishes, and drives from rushing into consciousness, rather, by virtue of the therapist's help, the patient can dissociate a certain element which belongs to the soul or to the body phenomena. This process involves a certain change of substance. (Agassi 1999, 238) Stern's theory of affect attunement (Stern 1998, 138) might resonate with Buber's thematization of dissociation. By virtue of the attunement which takes place between I and Thou, which also involves a sort of mirroring, the therapist brings to the fore an aspect of the patient's psyche, of which the latter was beforehand unaware.

Buber concludes that his perspective changes and challenges the psychoanalytical conception, because whereas the psychoanalytical transference was the presupposition of change, now what was usually called making the unconscious conscious means the elaboration of the dissociated elements which belong to the soul and to the body phenomena. (Agassi

1999, 239) Therefore, the moment of the surprise is again essential, because by virtue of a good-enough attunement between patient and therapist, the two of them learn something very important about their dialogical relationship, namely a sort of relational understanding. Daniel Stern explains that the moment of meeting (the surprise) deepens the relational field and the understanding which takes place between I and Thou. Moreover, the narrative which was created by the moment of meeting, might help both the patient and the therapist restructure their beliefs. (Stern 2004, 55) In order to clarify his statements, Daniel Stern also gives the example of the situation in which “I know that you know that I know something” and so forth.

For Buber, this process is a unique cooperation between the therapist and the patient. Moreover, the dissociated material which was further elaborated is a “lump” of the substance of the other. If the aim of the therapist is just to bring something up from the “Acheron”, that the therapist is only some kind of midwife. Transference is not enough, there needs to be a certain influence of the therapist on the act being made in the therapeutical process. (Agassi 1999, 239) This influence is brought forth by virtue of the moments of meeting and surprise which were thematized above.

For Buber, as for Daniel Stern's notion of moments of meeting, the importance lies in the change (the relation which is established and produced), and not just in excavating for something repressed in the unconscious. For Buber, this relational responsibility is a shared one, because this creating of something new in the therapeutical matrix needs to be worked through by both therapist and patient. (Agassi 1999, 239) Nonetheless, Buber insists on the moment of the surprise, which is fundamental for the interhuman because it produces changes both to the I and to the Thou involved in this process. We could as well remember Buber's saying that the presence of the Thou gives birth to the presence (Buber 2013, 33), in our case, to the “now moment”. Both Buber and Stern acknowledge the importance of the past in the ethology of mental illnesses, but nonetheless, they agreed independently of one another, that the real change occurs through the present.

Regarding free association, Buber describes two types of therapists, the one who knows what he wants to bring above from the patient's unconscious (the unconscious imposition of the therapist), and the one who does not know, and somehow, he is letting the patient be, similar to Heidegger's letting-be (Sein-Lassen) (Heidegger 2001, 224). Buber is definitely on the side of the therapist who does not expect anything from the patient's free association, rather he is letting the latter be, and then he sees what does come out of this process. This type of therapist is ready to receive what it will be delivered by the patient. He is, so to speak, in the hands of his patient, similar to Winnicott's holding. (Agassi 1999, 239-240)

Buber does not use the Winnicottian notion of holding, rather, the father of dialogue discusses everything in terms of his concept of embracing the other, which could as well be seen as echoing Winnicott's thematization. In both Winnicott's holding (Winnicott 2009, 150) and in Buber's embracing, the atmosphere of confidence (Buber 2002, 127) is the most important element. Freud emphasized the notion of free-floating attention, which in Winnicott terms could be called the "area of formlessness" (Winnicott 2009, 45) or simply a state of relaxation. Buber would agree that for the moment of surprise to take place, we must keep our attention to life relaxed and be open towards a radical change, which of course, involves trust, one of the most important elements of Buber's entire therapeutical approach.

Buber is skeptical towards the methods of dream analysis proposed by Freud, Jung, or Adler. Rather, he once again emphasizes that the therapist should let the patient be, and the former should also not be influenced in the analysis of the latter's dream theory of his particular school of thought. Buber acknowledges that the task is infinitely complicated without the recourse to the theories of dream analysis proposed by certain psychoanalytical schools, nonetheless, the therapist needs to be surprised by what the patient has to deliver to him, this being the genuine moment of meeting. (Agassi 1999, 240) Once again, Buber anticipates Stern's thematization.

The responsibility of the therapist becomes far more important and difficult to bear, because he is not going to use ready-made categories proposed by the therapeutical school of which he belongs, rather he will consider the importance of the "present moment" and of the spontaneity involved in the therapeutical meeting. Even in I and Thou Buber acknowledged this risk when a person was supposed to engage in the I-Thou relationship, because once we are "playing the game", the relational one, we do not know where we are going to be transported. Here, responsibility is the decisive aspect. (Agassi 1999, 240)

Insisting of the element of surprise, Buber claims that the usual therapist imposes himself unconsciously on the patient. This means, that the therapist applies the theory which he has learned from his school of thought onto the patient, without letting the play space between him and the patient unfold. This play space is exactly the dialogical. Here we could remember Gadamer's thematization of understanding as play, an understanding which is also fundamental to the patient-therapist relation. (Gadamer 2013, 106) Therefore, a "conscious liberation" of the patient must take place. This involves letting the patient be himself and seeing what comes out of it. The patient must not be influenced by the ideas of the therapist's school of thought. There is a certain humility of the master, as Buber calls it, which means that not everything that comes out of the patient must not be put into certain categories or frameworks of thought.

The real master responds to uniqueness. (Agassi 1999, 240) Humility was also addressed by Martin Buber in his discourses on education. There, Buber insisted on spontaneity and letting-be, because if the therapist would put everything that the patient says and does into specific dogmatic categories (coming from a specific school of thought), then how could the actual moment of meeting happen between the two of them?

Buber insists that we need a new approach to psychotherapy. For example, instead of the psychoanalytical sexual puberty, we might as well speak of social or cosmic puberty. Unfortunately, Buber does not expand these notions in this dialogue or elsewhere in his published works. All of these features, namely the social and cosmic puberty, are connected with the realm of the interhuman. If we consider that the unconscious is that part of the human existence where body and soul phenomena are not yet dissociated, then the relationship between two persons would mean the relationship between two non-divided existences. This would be exactly the relationship between two unities, both of them being unique. (Agassi 1999, 241) Here Buber addresses again the wholeness of the human being.

Anticipating once again Daniel Stern's thematization of the moments of meeting, the highest moment of a relationship would be exactly the "unconscious". The unconscious has more influence in the interhuman than the conscious. For example, Buber recalls the example of shaking hands, where if there is a real desire of contact, the touch is neither a bodily phenomenon, nor a soul phenomenon, but a unity of both of these. The same could be applied to the phenomenon of the embrace or to the exchange of regards. (Agassi 1999, 241) Martin Buber anticipates once again the concept of embodied subjectivity, and even the examples that Merleau-Ponty gives concerning his notion of flesh. (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 130)

Buber calls his method one of existential healing. By virtue of the patient's existential trust in the person of the therapist, the repressed material might come to light. Confirmation does not replace transference, rather, in the case of a real meeting, the other is confirmed not statically, but dynamically. This means that the other must be confirmed in his potentiality, in his dynamic existence, or in his/her specific becoming. (Agassi 1999, 242) The strongest illness in the life of the person is just the negative form of his highest potentiality. Therefore, confirmation through language becomes the way in which these potentialities might unfold. (Agassi 1999, 243)

The unconscious is not a phenomenon, either a physical or a psychological one. Experiencing the unconscious would mean that the dissociation of a certain soul or body element takes place. Dissociation becomes the process through which we arrive at inner or outer perceptions. The conscious life of the patient is a dualistic one, whereas his objective life is not. (Agassi 1999, 243) If one were to speculate upon Buber's theory of

the unconscious, then we would conclude that the inner and the outer, or more precisely, time and space in Kant's, come to light by virtue of this dissociation. Moreover, we could guess that through affect attunement and mutual mirroring, lived space and lived time could become objectified and grasped from the third person point of view.

Buber considers that the human being can know the unity of his own self when his forces are united in the moments of real decisions. Here we could recall the Kairotic moments of which Daniel Stern was discussing in his book on time. Moreover, for Buber, when a person makes a decision, an existential one, that decision should be made with our whole being. When man perceives his unity as an object, that is not an actual unity. (Agassi 1999, 244)

Insisting once again on the pathological side on the discussion which was unfolding between him and the audience, Buber argues that a dream can be remembered only by shaping it via memory. Furthermore, the schizophrenic, for example, lives in two worlds simultaneously, having two streams of memory. Buber reiterates Heraclitus' distinction between the common world and the private world, arguing that this is exactly the case of the schizophrenic person. (Agassi 1999, 244)

The therapist must feel the other side as a bodily touch, just like in Merleau-Ponty example, in order to know what the patients actually thinks, feels and wishes. Buber employs once again his theory of imagining the real, in which by virtue of this bold swinging into otherness, the human being comes to experience what the other is feeling. Nonetheless, the existential element in teaching or healing is for Buber the process of self-healing or self-teaching. (Agassi 1999, 245) Linking this final discussion with Buber's late philosophical anthropological thought, we could once again emphasize his theory of imagining the real. By virtue of this capacity, not only does the person imagines what the other feels, desires, and needs, but also the person almost comes to feel in his/her own body what the other is needing. Therefore, the other is "set at a distance", made present and confirmed in his/her potential dynamic becoming.

By way of conclusion

Summing up, we have attempted to give a comprehensive account of the relationship between Martin Buber's late philosophical anthropology and his notion of the unconscious. The first task was accomplished by analyzing Buber's theory of the wholeness of the human being, which was treated in conjunction with his notion of the sphere of the interhuman. This activity involved the fact that we had to come back to his notions of "distance" and "relation". These two were the movements by which the human being came to have a world independent of himself. In his discussion on the issue of

the unconscious, this notion involves several meanings and usages. First, the unconscious implies a non-dualistic account of the human being, namely the human being is thematized as a totality and unity. Secondly, the unconscious has a much greater impact in the sphere of the interhuman, than in that of the psychic alone. Whereas the interhuman designates our whole being, it nonetheless functions in several different compartments, such as shaking hands and embracing the other. These sorts of behavior involve our being as a whole. We could remember Buber's discussion of imagining and real and making present, by virtue of which two persons come to grasp the other as a uniqueness. Nevertheless, we tried to compare Buber's unconscious with phenomena such as Daniel Stern's "moments of meeting". These "moments of meeting" involve a change which occurs between two whole human beings, and which in turn leaves a co-created narrative, which deepens the relational field. Finally, Buber's account of the unconscious seems at first rather ambiguous and even puzzling, because he employs from the beginning the destruction of this concept and hence his attempt to replace the dualistic account of our being with a non-dualistic one. Perhaps his terminology is not adequate at times, but nonetheless we have to remember that the fragments which we interrogated were only parts of his wider theory of the unconscious, which was unfortunately never finished as such.

References

- Agassi, Judith Buber. 1999. *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Bergson, Henri. 1991. *Matter and Memory*. New York: Zone Books.
- Buber, Martin. 1965. *The Knowledge of Man*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Buber, Martin. 1999. *A Believing Humanism*. New York: Humanity Books.
- Buber, Martin. 2002. *Between Man and Man*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Buber, Martin. 2013. *I and Thou*. London/ New Delhi/ New York/ Sydney: Bloomsbury.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 2013. *Truth and Method*. London/ New Delhi/ New York/ Sydney: Bloomsbury.
- Gallagher, Shaun. 2012. *Phenomenology*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1996. *Being and Time*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Heidegger, Martin. 2001. *Zollikon Seminars: Protocols-Conversations-Letters*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Kant, Immanuel. 2007. *Critique of Pure Reason*. London and New York: Penguin Books.
- Maldiney, Henri. 1991. *Penser l'homme et la folie*. Grenoble: Jerome Millon.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1968. *The Visible and the Invisible*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Schutz, Alfred. 1962. *Collected Papers I: The Problem of Social Reality*. The Hague/ Boston/ London: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Stanghellini, Giovanni. 2017. *Lost in Dialogue: Anthropology, Psychopathology, and Care*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stern, Daniel N. 1998. *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*. London: Karnac Books.

Stern, Daniel N. 2004. *The Present Moment in Psychotherapy and Everyday Life*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company.

Winnicott, Donald Woods. 2009. *Playing and Reality*. London and New York: Routledge.

Ștefan MIHĂILĂ*

The American Metropolis in the literature of Alfred Gong

Abstract: Alfred Gong is one of the German-speaking Jewish Authors from Bukovina, who survived deportation and the Holocaust. At the End of the 40s, he succeeded in emigrating from communist Romania to Vienna and afterwards with the help of a refugee organization he reached the USA. The present paper follows two layers of analysis. The introductory part follows a biographical approach which is meant to bring up his considerations, thoughts, or inner conflicts towards the USA as a newcomer. For this part, Joseph Strelka's or Joachim Herrmann's works are the most relevant, for they published and brought up various passages from the author's archive. The second part of this paper focuses on the analysis of a couple of poems, which are dedicated to the American metropolis. The main purpose of this analysis is to present the meaning of this literary topoi in Gong's literature and the way such topoi are regarded by the author.

Keywords: German-American Poetry, German Literature, Urban *Topoi*, American Metropolis.

I. Das amerikanische Exil von Alfred Gong

Die Beziehung von Alfred Gong zu den Vereinigten Staaten zeichnet sich durch das Verhältnis Wahlheimat-Migrant aus. 1951 wanderte Alfred Gong als „Displaced Person“ mithilfe einer Flüchtlingsorganisation nach Amerika aus. Die wichtigsten biografischen Aspekte über den deutsch-amerikanischen Autor sind uns dank der Bemühungen Joseph Strelkas, Joachim Herrmanns, Jerry Glenns oder Natalia Schyhlevskas bekannt. Als er in den Vereinigten Staaten angekommen ist, weilte er ein Jahr in Virginia und dann zog nach New York, wo er sich niederließ. In New York gelang es ihm 1956, die Staatsbürgerprüfung zu bestehen. Seine Einbürgerung passierte unter dem Namen Alfred Gong (Glenn, Herrmann 1987, 84), und nicht Alfred Liquornik, sein Geburtsname.

Dank seines Nachlasses kann man ein besseres Verständnis innerer Konflikte des deutschsprachigen Dichters haben. Hinsichtlich seiner Heimat fühlte er sich für immer ein Einwanderer in einem fremden Land: „Ein Mensch, der zwei Fremden und keine Heimat hat“ (Herrmann 1986,

* Ștefan Mihăilă, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Letters, Al. I. Cuza University of Iași, Romania. Email: stefan_mihaila24@yahoo.com

203). Laut Herrmann identifizierte er sich eher durch die Bezeichnung: deutschsprachiger Schriftsteller, als durch andere Kategorisierungen, die sich auf ethnische Aspekte beziehen würden.

Seine Auswanderung nach Amerika kam mit der „heimlichen Absicht, sich das Land anzusehen und nach Westeuropa zurückzukehren“ (Ibid., 204). In einer Notiz seines Nachlasses fand Herrmann eine wichtige Anmerkung hinsichtlich seiner Haltung gegen Europa: „Ich verließ Europa wie man eine Geliebte verläßt, die verlassen muß, um sie stärker zu lieben“. Wir können diese Geständnisse Gongs im Zusammenhang mit Barbour's Anmerkungen zu Exilerfahrung stellen: „Das Exil ist eine Art des Wohnens im Raum mit dem ständigen Bewusstsein, dass man nicht zu Hause ist. Der Exilant orientiert sich an einem weit entfernten Ort und hat das Gefühl, dass er dort, wo er lebt, nicht hingehört“. (Barbour 2007, 293).

Alfred Gong identifizierte sich weder als Rumäne, noch als Amerikaner, eher als Europäer oder als ein Europaliebhaber. Das Motiv Europas als Geliebte findet man auch in einem anderen Teil des Gong-Archivs, nämlich in dem Brief, der an Rudolf Felmayer vom 14. Juli 1954 gerichtet und von Helmut F. Pfanner ins Englisch übertragen wurde. Der Autor gab nochmals seine emotionale Verbundenheit an Europa zu: „If I had returned to Europe earlier, only on a short visit, I would not have had the strength to come back into this splendid hell which I have chosen for my new home. . . . So I want to wait until I feel strong enough for a visit to my former ladylove“. (Herrmann 1986: 204) Diese Geständnisse Gongs erinnert uns an das Werk von Edward W. Said „Out of Place“: „Ich erlebe noch heute Aspekte dieser Erfahrung, das Gefühl, dass ich lieber woanders wäre, weil ich hier nicht dort war, wo ich/wir sein wollten, weil hier ein Ort des Exils, der Entfernung, der unfreiwilligen Versetzung war“. (Said 2000, 252). Wie Said erlebte Gong in den Vereinigten Staaten ein inneres wiederkehrendes Exil. Er lebte mit einem ständigen Begehren nach Europa.

Die Aufsätze Joseph Strelkas haben die biografischen Lücken gefüllt und wichtige Einblicke in die amerikanische Episode Gongs gegeben. Am Anfang seines New Yorker Aufenthaltes wohnte der deutschsprachige Autor in einem Viertel, wo sich eine große Menge Deutsche aus Hitlerdeutschland gesiedelt hatten, „so daß es scherzhaft mitunter «Das Vierte Reich» genannt wurde“ (Strelka 2018, 262). In diesem Stadtviertel begann eine harte Zeitspanne seines Lebens. Als Fabrikarbeiter, Bibliothekar und schließlich Wirtschaftsübersetzer im Wall-Street-Bezirk versuchte er seinen Lebensunterhalt zu verdienen. Sein Exil in den USA war mühevoll und nicht leidensärmer. Obwohl er in den USA seine literarische Aktivität wiederholen konnte, „gewährte ihm der Moloch der Riesenstadt New York wohl völlige Freiheit, allen derartigen Interessen nachzugehen“. (Ibid.)

Die Beziehung Gongs zu dem amerikanischen Urbanen kann nicht nur durch seine Dichtungen, sondern auch durch seine eigenen Anmerkungen erklärt werden. Die Riesenhaftigkeit, das Chaos und die breite Vielfalt fasziniert den Autor: „Was ist eigentlich New York? Ein barbarisiertes Rom oder die verwirklichte Zikkurat von Babel? ein gnadenbefristetes Vineta oder das Vorbild irdischer Zukunft? Endlich war mir das bislang Undurchdringliche transparent: New York ist alles in einem — zur gleichen Zeit“ (Ibid.). Laut Cosmin Dragoste ist die amerikanische Erfahrung für Gong ein ständiges Trauma und die amerikanische Metropole ein Babel, „in dem die Menschen einen radikalen Prozess der Identitätsauslöschung durchlaufen“ (Dragoste 2008, 38).

II. “Manhattan Neonperlen”

Mit dem Zyklus *Manhattan Neonperlen* stellt Gong die amerikanische Metropole als zentraler literarischer Topos. Diese Gedichte weisen auf berühmte Stadtviertel wie: Manhattan („Manhattan Spiritual“), East Side („East Side Ballade“) Harlem („Interview mit Harlem“, „Harlem-Improvisation“). Es handelt sich um eine satirische Perspektive über das Stadterlebnis in einem Viertel der sozialen Ungleichheit. Manhattan und andere Stadtviertel New Yorks werden hier zu Topoi der Leichtsinnigkeit und Oberflächlichkeit. Diese Gedichte stellen das Verständnis Gongs hinsichtlich der urbanen Gesellschaft dar. „Manhattan Neonperlen“ lassen eine starke Identifikation mit Einwanderern und Minderheiten erkennen, und einzelne Gedichttitel zeigen eine Faszination für musikalische Formen, wie in „Grünhorn Blues“ und „Manhattan Spiritual“, deren erste beiden Strophen die Bandbreite von Gongs Stimme und Vision vermitteln (Divers 2002, 62) In folgendem wollen wir einige Gedichte aus diesem Zyklus analysieren.

II. 1. “Dieses Volk”

Der Zyklus „Manhattan Neonperlen“ umfasst sowohl urbane als auch nicht urbane Topoi. Die ersten zwei Gedichte dieses Kapitels des Gedichtbandes „Israels Letzter Psalm“ heißen „Dieses Volk“ und „USA“. Wenn „USA“ als ein geografisches Poem betrachtet werden kann, können wir das andere Poem und nämlich „Dieses Volk“ fast als ein historisches Poem sehen, das die ethnische Schichte und die Entstehung eines sogenannten amerikanischen Volkes lyrisch darstellt.

Mit „Dieses Volk“ erhascht man einen Blick auf die Entstehung eines Volkes, deren Vielfältigkeit in den europäischen Migrantenwellen liegt. Die Ambivalenz der poetischen Stimmen ist ein bedeutungsvoller Lektüreschlüssel des historischen Prozesses, in dem verschiedene ethnische

und sprachliche Identitäten verflechten. „Sie“ und „Wir“ sind zwei poetische Darstellungen der früheren und späteren Kolonisten.

„Sie kamen und kamen/..... Frei war man hier seinem Gott/ gefällig zu dienen, / und frei war das Gold.“ Die erste Strophe stellt die ersten europäischen Kolonisten in der neuen Welt. Die Wiederholung des Verbs „kommen“ zeigt uns das wichtigste Merkmal der Migration: Die Ein- und Auswanderungen sind wiederkehrende Phänomene. Der erste Vers „Sie kamen und kamen“ steht für eine Stilfigur für die Flüchtlinge, die wegen Armut oder religiöser Verfolgung aus Europa nach Amerika ausgewandert sind. Die religiöse Verfolgung als Grund der Auswanderung wird durch die Verse „Frei war man hier seinem Gott/ gefällig zu dienen“ thematisiert. Die Verfolgten sind in dieser neuen Welt sehr schnell zu Verfolger geworden, die in ihrem Goldrausch die inländische Bevölkerung ungerecht behandelt haben: „und frei war das Gold“.

Die nächste Stanze dieses Gedichtes wird von der zweiten poetischen Instanz „Wir“ dargestellt: „Wir kamen und kamen/ und trugen in diese Stille/ Wort unserer Breiten/ und unsere Buckel aus Erinnerung“. Die Wir-Instanz steht für die spätere Migrantenwelle, die mit ihren eigenen Kulturen, Sprachen und Erinnerungen die letzte Entstehungsphase des amerikanischen Volkes verwirklichen. Die Neuankömmlinge „kamen, blieben und träumten“ von ihren Herkunftsländern, die hier durch topografische Motive dargestellt werden: „Geruch walachischer Rosse“, „Madonna sizilischer Messer“ oder „Fächermonden am Huangho (Gelber Fluss)“. Die Städte und Orte, die in den zweiten und dritten Stanzen genannt werden, stehen für Symbole der ethnischen Vielfältigkeit eines Volkes, deren Homogenität aus der Wir-Sie-Alternanz besteht. Die Topoi aus den zweiten und dritten Strophen sind des Textverstehens sehr wichtig, da sie zeigen, wie verschiedenartig und eigen die Identitäten und Kulturen dieses „Volkes“ sind: „Wales“, „Breda“, „kastilische Erde“ und „Kongo“, „Riga“, „Kiew“.

Die letzte Stanze führt einen Paradigmenwechsel an zwei Ebenen ein. Die erste Ebene wird von dem Verb „bleiben“ vertreten. Die Epanalepse „kamen und kamen“ wird durch den Ausdruck „Wir blieben“ ersetzt. Eine andere Sicht dieser ersten Ebene besteht in der Bedeutung des lyrischen „Wir“. Diese Instanz wird in der letzten Stanze nicht mehr durch das Verhältnis Wir-Sie, eher durch sich selbst betrachtet. „Wir“, die blieben, steht für die Flüchtlinge, Neuankömmlinge, Fremde, die als sie in der neuen Welt angekommen sind, haben sie das Vergangene verloren. Es handelt sich von dem Wunsch, sich zu siedeln und das Begehren nach einem Zuhause. „Wir blieben/ Am gleichen Feuer schmolz Vergangenes/ Im gleichen Feuer wuchs der Guß: / ein Volk, hart, unverwüthlich.“ Der Prozess, durch den eine Vielfalt mehreren Individuen verschiedener sprachlichen und kulturellen Hintergründe homogen wie aus einem Guss werden, umfängt

eine oxymoronische Stilistik: Guss-Feuer. Der Guss der Einigkeit wuchs „in einem gleichen Feuer“. Das Feuer, an dem das Vergangene schmolz, spielt auf die antike Katharsis an. Der Guss der Homogenität eines Volkes kann nur aus einem Feuer wachsen, in dem die inneren Konflikte und die verdrängten Gefühle befreit wurden.

Die zweite Ebene des Paradigmenwechsels besteht in den topografischen Aspekten. Die Orte, die hier benannt werden, sind Orte des amerikanischen Kontinents: „Kalifornischer Frühling“, „Atlantik“, „Manhattan“, „Niagara“. Als das Vergangene schmolz, erzählt das lyrische Ich von neuen Topoi, die sich nicht mehr auf die Herkunftsländer- und Städte beziehen, sondern Bezug auf das Neue nimmt.

II. 2. Der Neuankömmling - Zeuge der urbanen Riesenhaftigkeit

Die dritte Poesie dieses Zyklus stellt das Erlebnis eines unerfahrenen Anfängers, eines Grünschnabels, dar. Mit „Grünhorns Blues“ schöpft Gong eine Lyrik des Heimatlosen. Der Flüchtling, der sich plötzlich in dem Chaos der fremden Großstadt befindet. Die ersten Verse des Gedichtes sind Fragen, die das lyrische Ich sich selbst widmet. Diese Verse sind stilistische Ansätze der Gefühle und inneren Konflikte des Neuankömmlings: Staunen, Verwirrung, Bedauern. „Was lockte mich her/ Wer hat mich verführt? Matz, was hast du erwartet?“. Obwohl das Grünhorn von seinen Erwartungen und Träumen verführt wurde, erwachte ihn die Realität des Urbanen. Es handelt sich um ein Urbane, in dem das Menschliche und das Individuum zu wenig zählen: „Verkehr nur bei Grün! / Stop bei Rot- sonst landest du bald/ im Himmelblau-keiner wird dich vermissen, / Fußgänger X.“ Die menschlichen Umgänge spielen hier keine Rolle, da der Mensch namenlos ist. Er trägt keine Identität außerhalb dieses chaotischen Ganzen. Der deutschsprachige Autor schildert eine lyrische Dystopie, in der das Individuum von der Masse verschlungen wird. Laut Dragoste gelingt es Gong ein echtes „Disangelium“ (Dragoste 2008, 41).

Die vorletzte Strophe schildert eine Satire des stereotypischen Begriffes „American Dream“. „Verdienst nicht genug? / Ein zweiter Job tut' s/ Niete, zähl deine Nullen / und träum: Was kostet Manhattan? / Träume sind frei. Wer nüchtern träumt, / bringt es zu was“. Es geht um den Betrug eines falschen Versprechens. Das Versprechen an Erfolg und Wohlstand durch harte Arbeit erweist sich als fadenscheinig. In dem amerikanischen Urbanen findet ein Grünhorn sich keinen Platz, da er die neuen Realitäten nicht versteht. Er muss sich an den Rhythmus der Großstadt halten und sich mit dem Neuen gewöhnen: „Grünhorn, / halt mit oder go home / zu deiner fossilen Kultur“. Als Grünhorn oder Fußgänger X muss man davon bewusst sein, dass niemand ihn vermisst, wenn er sich zu seiner fossilen Kultur heimkehrt.

„East Side Ballade“ bietet eine breite Perspektive über das urbane Leben. Zuerst sind die Topoi dieser Dichtung zahlreich und stellen die Raumkoordinaten des Manhattans Stadtviertels East Side nach: „Second Avenue“, „Fifth Avenue“, „Bowery“, „Park Avenue“, „Union Square“, „Lower East Side“. Die Ballade erzählt die Geschichte eines Spielzeugs, das vom Fensterbrett fiel und das am Ende bis zur Unkenntlichkeit von einem Auto überfahren wird. Diese Puppe ist ein Engel, der Selbstmord geübt hat, da er seinen Mut verloren hat, als er einen Blick auf die East Side Straßen geworfen hat. „Ein Engel aus Eden verjagt, / sah auf die Erde hinab. / Ein Aug sah die Fifth Avenue, / das andere die Bowery, / ein Aug sah die Park Avenue, / das andre den Rinnstein und uns. / Der Engel verlor seinen Mut, / er zog seine Flügel ein / er fiel und zerbrach wie ein Spiel- / zeug, das vom Fensterbrett fiel----,„. Man kann dieses poetische Bild als eine Metapher des Menschseins in der Großstadt sehen. Spielerisch stellt der Autor das Urbane als ein Ungeheuer dar, das den Engel entmutigt. Als er aus Eden verjagt wurde, sah er die Erde mit ihren abschreckenden Topoi eines chaotischen und entmenschlichten Urbanen. Dieser Blickwinkel entmutigt ihn. Das letzte Bild des Gedichtes ist sehr wichtig im Sinne davon, dass das Spielzeug von dem Urbanen verschlungen wird und bis Unkenntlichkeit gebracht ist: „ein Hund fängt ihn auf / und trägt ihn triumphal / bis zur Union Square, / wo er ihn fallen läßt. / Ein Wagen (kein Cadillac) / schleift ihn mit und preßt / ihn bis zur Unkenntlichkeit“. Die Desakralisierung des Todes ist ein Zeichnen des entmenschlichten Urbanen. Laut Cosmin Dragoste ist das Heilige heruntergekommen und in das Profane verwandelt. „In einem desakralisierten Amerika erzählt Gong den Mythos des gefallenengels neu. Im neuen Babylon ist der Engel verloren, nicht mehr von Wert. Dem Engel wird sogar ein würdiges Sterben verweigert“ (Dragoste 2008, 39).

„East Side Ballade“ wiederholt einer von den Motiven aus „Dieses Volk“, nämlich die ethnische Vielfalt. Die amerikanischen Topoi sind für Gong nicht nur oberflächliche Umgebungen, sondern auch die Verschmelzung mehrerer Kulturen. Die Kinder, die um die Engelsleiche versammelt hocken, tragen bedeutungsvolle Namen in dieser Hinsicht: „Um ihn versammelt hocken / Sammy, Chico und Ben, / Jerry, Heidi und Li / (Jahrgänge: zwischen Seoul / und erste Blockade Berlin).“

Mit dem Gedicht „Manhattan Spiritual“ satirisiert Alfred Gong die urbane Geistigkeit. In einer leichtfertigen Umgebung greift man zu Religion und Spiritualität nicht aus Glauben, sondern aus dem Wunsch nach einem gewissen Trost: „Männlein und Weiblein Manhattans, / helfen Couch und Pillen euch nicht, / schlägt dann in der Bibel nach, / sie weist euch den Weg ins Licht“. Die Verkleinerungsformen Männlein und Weiblein deuten eine satirische Absicht an und weisen auf die humorvolle Gesinnung des Autors hinsichtlich der Geistigkeit der Bürger Manhattans. Die Menschen

greifen zu Bibel und Religion, wenn sie depressive Stimmungen erleben und alle anderen Auswege scheitern. Die zweite Stanze bietet eine Satire an dem menschlichen Verstehen der Bibel: „Adam, verbleu deine Rippe / samt Apfel und Feigenblatt“. Das mittelalterliche Verstehen der Erbsünde wird hier satirisiert. Dieses Verstehen bestand darin, dass die Frau Schuld für den Sündenfall und die Vertreibung aus dem Paradies sei. Die Satire ist durch die Verwendung des Wortes „Rippe“ verstärkt, da Eva hier keinen Namen trägt. Sie hat keine Identität, abgesehen davon, dass sie eine Rippe Adams ist. Außerdem gibt es auch eine mögliche satirische Anspielung auf den adamitischen Mythos der amerikanischen Literatur. Der Adamitische Mythos spielt eine große Rolle in der Literatur zahlreicher amerikanischen Schriftsteller aus dem 19. Jahrhundert wie Ralph Emerson, Henry David Thoreau oder Walt Whitman. Diese Schriftsteller haben in ihren Werken den europäischen Kolonisten als einen neuen Adam thematisiert. Der neue Adam wurde von der göttlichen Vorsehung in die neue Welt, einen anderen Paradiesgarten, gebracht um seine Sünden zu erlösen. Die Verse ironisieren diesen literarisch-amerikanischen Mythos, da der neue Adam nach Gongs Erachten gescheitert ist, seine göttliche Berufung zu erfüllen.

Diese Stanze spielt weiter mit der Umsetzung biblischer Figuren und Szenen in das zeitgenössische Manhattan: „Noah, mix dein Martini: / wir haben das Wasser satt. / Josua, blas die Trompete, / Stahl und Glas, sie stürzen nicht ein“.

Für Gong ist die amerikanische Metropole ein Turmbau zu Babel, wo die Sprachen sich verflechten, genauso wie in dem alttestamentlichen Gleichnis. „Im Neubabel Manhattan / lärmt's in allen Zungen der Welt, / doch beredter als Zungen / schweigt hier und spricht das Geld“. Der Unterschied zu dem biblischen Gleichnis besteht aus einer materialistischen Sicht. Das Chaos des amerikanischen Urbanen wird nicht von der sprachlichen Vielfalt, eher von dem kapitalistischen Ethos der Stadt verursacht. In dem amerikanischen Neubabel handelt es sich nicht mehr um Wort und Sprache, sondern um Kapital. Die Sprachen sind in dieser Umgebung bedeutungslos und haben kein Wörtchen, in der urbanen Sache mitzureden.

II. 3. Harlem- Ausdruck der Minderheit

„Interview mit Harlem“ und „Harlem-Improvisation“ sind die Gedichte, deren poetische Botschaft mithilfe Anspielungen auf die Musik der afroamerikanischen Minderheit dargestellt wird. Diese Anspielungen auf die Musik der afroamerikanischen Gemeinde zeigen eine starke Identifikation Gongs mit dem Menschsein der Minderheit, da er selbst ein Einwanderer ist.

Laut Divers Gregory unterscheidet sich Gong von anderen in den USA eingebürgerten deutschsprachigen Dichtern. Während andere Dichter eine objektive Distanz zu dem Thema halten, „schreibt Gong aus der Perspektive eines Immigranten, da er die amerikanische Erfahrung aus erster Hand kennt“ (Divers 2002, 62).

„Interview mit Harlem“ ist eine Parodie des Kinderliedes „Zehn Kleine Negerlein“. Gong bewahrt den Stil und die spielerische Haltung des Kinderliedes, um die Ungleichheit und die Ungleichbehandlung der amerikanischen Gesellschaft zu schildern. „Die Schaufensterpuppen in Harlem / sind schwarz-Die Läden aber / sind weiß und auch die Preise“. Mithilfe der Voreingenommenheit stellt der Autor das menschliche Dasein dieser Volksgruppe: „Zehn kleine Negerlein / schwänzen heut die Schule, / neun feine Negerlein / putzen lieber Schuhe“. Bedeutungsvoll sind auch die Verweise auf afroamerikanische Persönlichkeiten, die in einer weißen Welt, Ruhm und Erfolg erlangt haben: „Wird Leontine Price gepriesen / und Luther King nobelpreisgekrönt /sie alle- auch Armstrongs Trompete- / stoßen Harlems Mauern nicht um“. Harlems Mauern stehen für Symbole der Trennung zwischen den Volksgruppen. Die Erfolge und der Ruhm der afroamerikanischen Figuren hallen nicht durch die Mauern einer gespaltenen Gesellschaft nach.

Die kulturellen Hinweise bestehen nicht nur in der Reihe erwähnten Namen, sondern auch durch den Verweis auf kulturelle Begriffe, die Sinn nur in dem amerikanischen kulturellen Kontext machen. „Was will der alte Onkel Tom/ mit seinem Hallelujah? / Die Schwarze Köchin will nicht / mehr für weiße Wänste kochen!“. Unter dem Begriff „Onkel Tom“ kann man eine kulturelle Deutung sehen. Laut Merriam-Webster Wörterbuch bedeutet „Uncle Tom“ „eine schwarze Person, die übermäßig darauf bedacht ist, die Zustimmung der Weißen zu gewinnen (z. B. durch unterwürfiges Verhalten oder unkritische Übernahme weißer Werte und Ziele)“⁴¹ Die Herkunft dieses Begriffes stammt aus dem Roman von Harriet Beecher Stowe „Onkel Toms Hütte“ und bezieht sich auf den Protagonisten des Romans, der Onkel Tom, der ein gefügiger und frommer schwarzer Sklave war.

Das musikalische Motiv des Gedichtes wird auf zwei Ebenen vorgezeichnet. Einerseits geht es um die schon obengenannte Form und Struktur des Kinderliedes, andererseits wird damit die Jazzmusik durch das Verb „jazzen“ angedeutet: „Drei klein Negerlein / jazzen / auf der Kirchenschwelle“. Hier bemerkt man eine weitere Anspielung auf ein kulturelles Merkmal des amerikanischen Kontextes. Die afroamerikanischen Baptisten haben sich durch die Gospelmusik ausgezeichnet, die viele Elemente aus dem berühmten Jazz- und Bluesgenre entlehnt.

Schlussfolgerung

Zum Schluss möchten wir behaupten, dass die amerikanische Metropole in den Dichtungen Alfred Gongs eine vielfältige Bedeutung trägt. Es handelt sich einerseits um die musikalischen Andeutungen und die Parodien der berühmten Kinderlieder. Andererseits wird die Erfahrung des entmenschlichenden Urbanen lyrisch dargestellt. Bei Gong ist die Metropole eine Umgebung, in der das Individuum von dem Chaos verschlungen wird. Letztendlich ist die Geistigkeit der urbanen Menschen verspottet. Deren Glaube ist nur scheinbar, da sie zu Spiritualität greifen, wenn „die Couch und die Pillen“ ihnen nicht mehr helfen.

Noten

¹<https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/Uncle%20Tom#:~:text=Un%C2%B7%E2%80%8Bcle%20Tom%20%CB%8C%C9%99%C5%8B,to%20or%20cooperative%20with%20authority>

Literaturverzeichnis

Primärliteratur

Gong, Alfred. 1995. *Israels Letzter Psalm*. Aachen: Rimbaud

Sekundärliteratur

Barbour, John D. 2007. "Edward Said and the space of Exile". In *Literature & Theology* 21 (3): 293-301.

Divers, Gregory. 2002. *The Image and Influence of America in German Poetry Since 1945*. New York: Camden House.

Dragoste, Cosmin. 2008. *Măgele de Sticlă*. Craiova : Aius Printed.

Glenn, Jerry and Joachim, Herrmann. 1987. „Alfred Gongs Frühe Lyrik: Auswahl Und Einführung“ In: *Modern Austrian Literature* 20 (1): 73–90.

Herrmann, Joachim. 1986. "Zum deutsch-amerikanischen Dichter Alfred Gong: Eine biographische und bibliographische Einführung". In: *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 1986 (21): 201-213.

Said, Edward W. 1999. *Out of Place*. New York: Vintage Books.

Strelka, Joseph P. 1989. „Alfred Gong“. In: *Deutschsprachige Exilliteratur seit 1933*, 2 (1): 260-269. Bern: A. Franke A. G. Verlag.

Internetquellen

<https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/Uncle%20Tom#:~:text=Un%C2%B7%E2%80%8Bcle%20Tom%20%CB%8C%C9%99%C5%8B,to%20or%20cooperative%20with%20authority>

Ștefana IOSIF*

Between the Non-Human and the New Human. A Posthumanist Investigation of Shattered Patterns in Alastair Reynolds' *Zima Blue*

Abstract: With the rise of artificial intelligence, along with an incremental process of androidization, we are faced with the necessity of postulating a new direction and a new understanding of the dichotomy of human and non-human, animate and inanimate. The present article endeavors to explore the new delineations of the humanity and humanness as found in Alastair Reynolds' short story, *Zima Blue*, through a posthumanist lens. We look at posthumanism through a multifaceted lens, combining concepts from a variety of fields in our attempt to contextualize identity and personhood. As such, the analysis of the short story will offer the middle ground between the epistemological infinite regress and the psychoanalytic primal trauma, as embodied by the namesake main character of the story. The posthumanist approach solidifies the need for a decentralization of the human and a move away from anthropocentrism, in an attempt to create a solid theoretical framework, facilitated by the medium of science-fiction literature.

Keywords: posthumanism, science fiction, infinite regress, primal repression, androidization, decentralization, *Zima Blue*.

The discussion on personhood and humanness has taken on vastly new dimensions the more we advance in the 21st century. Previously held tenets are now gradually becoming obsolete with the rise of new modes of perceiving intelligence. To date, the tendency has inescapably been for "humanistic inquiry [to valorize] an implicit worldview which limits understanding and discovery" (Campbell, O'Driscoll, and Saren 2010, 86), but the time has come for a paradigm shift, with the new dawn of the reality of artificial intelligence. As such, posthumanism has become the latest concern. The first attempt at articulating the new state of our world is happening simultaneously with the unfolding of the new phenomenon. In a sense, the philosophical and critical discourses are trying to carve out a theoretical framework that would allow for a successful and ideally even harmonious new reality. We are postulating before the concreteness of

* Ștefana Iosif, PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Letters, Al. I. Cuza University of Iași, Romania. Email: stefana.isf@gmail.com

reality has even settled. One way we are able to explore the posthumanist discourse is in no small measure facilitated by the visionary explorations of science-fiction. It has long been acknowledged that this genre encapsulates within it the human capacity for foretelling. Sci-fi literature acted on numerous occasions as the harbinger of scientific newness and progress, and while we are reluctant to categorize it as Gospel truth, we cannot help but notice its oftentimes eerie accuracy. In 2006, Alastair Reynolds published a short story that we will argue lends itself to a posthumanist examination of identity and reality, *Zima Blue*. It is through stories such as this that we are allowed to explore unmarked territories and to establish new frontiers of thought.

Bradley B. Onishi examines posthumanism through the Heideggerian lens of the critique of technology and the seeming *naïveté* employed by humans who deem themselves ready and able to maintain their agency and selfhood, while simultaneously expanding and augmenting their capabilities through technological implements. According to Onishi,

“within this framework the human itself is objectified as it is converted into a calculable and reducible set of informational patterns participating in what Heidegger calls the standing-reserve, albeit in this context, the standing-reserve of information. Following Heidegger, theorists... have formulated an alternative trajectory that develops along similar lines to Dasein’s Being-in-the-world, positing the self as constituted by a lack or abyss. Within this trajectory a ‘mystical posthuman’ emerges; networked, multiple, and fluid, it is never fully present, nor decipherable to itself” (2011, 103).

Onishi goes on to make an important distinction between the larger umbrella of posthumanism and the transhumanist school of thought, which focuses by and large on the achievement of superhuman capabilities through augmentations. Naturally, the posthuman discourse covers a far wider array of concerns, but one might argue that given the fear of death and decay intrinsic to human beings, a desire to overcome such frailty of existence would consecutively follow. As such, the mere biology of the human is seen as a hurdle in their path to attain unmitigated heights, and humanness and humanity are conceived of as outside and untethered from their implicit constraints. To be human becomes coextensive with being a free agent, and far less so with organic considerations. Onishi makes the claim that, through technological advances, it would seem that the transhumanist aim would be to center its entire disquisition around information, as the ultimate “universal feature” (2011, 104). As such, Heidegger’s position regarding the “I” lends itself well to the critique of transhumanism. Onishi begins from the Cartesian dictum which defines the ego as autonomous, the self-referential “Being of beings... distinct from the

world and even its own body”, animated by an unquenchable desire for “more freedom and autonomy”, which can be attained through the transhumanist project of overcoming typical human deficiencies in order to satisfy this ultimate ideal, “enframing” reality so that “all entities have meaning only in relation to the human subject” (2011, 105-106). The inevitable conclusion seems indeed to be that as human beings, we have fallen prey to a fallacy, thinking that we can (and perhaps should) wield technology as a mere tool in our aspiration to elevate our position, all the while discarding and forgetting the inescapable link between matter and spirit, mind and physicality.

It is important to note that posthumanism does not aim to infer the inferiority of the human and to suggest that “human” no longer exists, conceptually. A move away from anthropocentrism simply presupposes a renewed awareness of human limitations, including limitations over the absolutes we like to claim. In Ralph Pordzik’s words, “the posthuman emerges not as the end of humanity but as a pattern of resonance between the long-established dichotomies of self and nonself, order and nonequilibrium, body and consciousness” (2012, 143). In reality, the conversations proposed by posthumanism refer more often than not to the idea of personhood and identity as elements not implicitly and exclusively enmeshed with humanity, “it is a way of re-envisioning models of selfhood... it could include living a bodiless existence as an avatar in cyberspace, or inhabiting a completely artificial body connected to the brain” (Onishi 2011, 102). With the rise of technological advancement which is bringing forth the implicit progress of artificial intelligence, we are faced with a philosophical challenge and “in response and in anticipation, theorists from various fields have declared the emergence of the ‘posthuman’ as a means to account for the developments wrought by these rapidly developing technologies” (Onishi 2011, 102). And while it may be easy to cast such moral conundrums as the folly reserved solely for science-fiction, we cannot maintain our denial of the androidization of the human being as we approach the quarter of the 21st century. Oftentimes, science-fiction literature is the venue where we “explore patterns of mutation, virtuality, and the parasitic invariably provided by technological means” (Pordzik 2012, 144), but it is important to note that our penchant for discourse and for dialectical approaches can also be categorized as yet “another prosthesis the human subject puts to good use, intent on trespassing acknowledged limitations, exploring new territory... Natural environment, the human body, and cultural production are intrinsically connected, each evolving in response to another’s position or activity in a complete network of relationships” (Pordzik 2012, 155). Science fiction does inarguably offer ample ground to the investigation of posthumanism as a new layer of concern, and it allows us to formulate the realities needed

through discourse alone, at this stage. More often than not, the decentralizing of the human position has been met with apocalyptic terror, whereupon the machine would engulf reality and tear it asunder, so much so that the human being would no longer be allowed to occupy place. However, it is important to note that, while anxieties for the future are valid, the main concern ought to be an expansion of definitions, an interrogation of “the basis for rational humanism and empirical science, transcending the established bonds of society, materiality, and embodiment and thus providing a thorough reworking of our grounding for morality” (Pordzik 2012, 157).

We are meant to contend with profound examinations of the limitations ascribed to the concepts of otherness, monstrosity, marginality, and hybridity within our new historical context. Relying on traditional modes of conceptualizing reality has become insufficient with the expansion of our economies and technological advances. As a species, we seem to have pushed our many developments to the point of no return, which in turn has brought about the imperative of a posthumanist exploration. Lucille Desblache argues that “the Other, biologically and socially, is no longer defined in opposition to the self but as part of a self that is constantly evolving”, so in other words, we have come to understand that the dichotomy itself is under investigation and that all that we would have and in fact did categorize as non-human must be recognized as being “part of us” (2012, 245). There is an implicit transition from the modern discourse of centrality versus marginality, of contrasts and opposites. In this process of decentralization, we cannot help but notice a shattering of the hierarchies of definition, of the species, of identity, and of essences. While it is true that the mixing of species was meant to be seen as monstrous and catastrophic to nature, there is an increased permeability of the borders between concepts: “today’s crossings do not only break through species lines, as objects have entered into symbioses with life in a number of ways [... including] the many prosthetic tools used as extensions of the body... Our cyborgian ‘convergence culture’ entwines virtual and real, animate and inanimate” (Desblache 2012, 247). In a sense, it is precisely because of this “cyborgian” shift in human nature that we are forced to dissolve the material borders of the body and the organic, and to expand the definition of “person” beyond its palpable limitations. Posthumanism forces us to rethink the validity of anthropocentrism, and to revisit non-Western, non-Abrahamic cosmogonic mythologies, which would far better present the human being as one part of its ecosystem, on the one hand, and the effects of this exceptionalism on the ever-growing desire and consumption of the human.

Alastair Reynolds’ short story, *Zima Blue*, begins at the end, in yet another instance of coming full circle, like the ouroboros of the main

character's search for selfhood. The first person narration is meant to eliminate all alienation, to immerse the reader directly into the subject matter, without the possibility of opting out and observing from the stands, like the onlookers by the pool in which "Zima's pale shape moved so languidly from one end of the pool to the other that it could have been mistaken for a floating corpse" (Reynolds 2009). It is all too fitting that the first introduction the reader gets to Zima himself mirrors his own beginnings: a human observing his (initially *its*) methodical floating on the blue surface of the pool, lifeless, inanimate. The narrator, Carrie Clay, serves as the ideal interlocutor for Zima. While their origins are unmistakable polar opposites, she born a human, he, as we are to find out, a machine, the post-modern and posthuman context constructs their paths from the ends of the spectrum towards a common middle ground. It is in no way incidental that Carrie is a storyteller by trade; stories are the very foundation of humanity, our capacity for storytelling being the mark of our evolution. Through storytelling, and myth-making as its implicit result, human beings have essentially extracted themselves from the food chain and pushed their own evolution forward at warp speed (Harari 2014, 27). So in the quest of finding the right human to share his epiphanic moment with, it only stands to reason that Zima would have chosen a one-thousand year old storyteller. Within moments we learn of her dependence on "the AM", or *Aide Memoire*, the technological contraption meant to literally aid her memory, after it reached capacity centuries back. There seems to be a sort of symbiosis between the machine and the human, so much so that being without it at Zima's behest and insistence makes the woman feel torn: "the thought of being away from the AM made my blood run cold" (Reynolds 2009). It is interesting to note, however, that despite her profound reliance on the machine, Carrie suggests its limitations almost immediately: "the view reminded me of the work of a pre-Expansion artist... I formed a mental image and queried the fluttering presence of the AM, but it couldn't retrieve the name" (Reynolds 2009). In some sense, human memory, fueled by affect, proves to be far more encompassing, if albeit less factual. It is this affect that will become the centerpiece of her meeting with Zima, and the justification behind his condition to meet with her, a human, without the technological appendix, thus exacting her saving, as promised.

The artist's final exhibit, the one that would be his most illuminating piece, as well as his retirement, takes place not on the cosmic scale previously employed by Zima, but on a remote island on Murjek, an anonymous world, the home of one of the many copies of the Old World Venice, done all in white marble. The choice of the city of Venice seems entirely adequate and in keeping with the aquatic theme and proclivity of the artist, in addition to entertaining the question of what had happened to the original Italian city, of whether or not it had finally sunk as had been

predicted. Regardless, it is an implicit reference to humanity and our predilection to construct meaning by referring to the past, in a perpetual look backwards. The initial understanding of Zima is as a cyborg, that is, a human being (originally) augmented with robotic elements, meant to render him indestructible: “With his body thus armoured against environmental extremes, Zima was free to seek inspiration where he wanted” (Reynolds 2009). The natural question is whether such modifications, where one would no longer need to dread death, where their blood was replaced with closed mechanisms, where one would no longer fear radiation or the extreme pressure of the universe, where exhalation itself were removed, would allow for inspiration altogether, or whether, once human frailty and finiteness are removed, the capacity for awe and amazement, and implicitly for human creativity, would itself be obliterated. Carrie, the placeholder for the seemingly clear-headed human, notices that while his art might be categorized as having a unique scale, his pieces were “landscapes without a human presence” (Reynolds 2009), rendering him kitschy, implying a sense of imitation, as he seems to consistently attempt to produce originality, to encompass uniqueness, by incessantly modifying himself and overcoming limitations, all the while falling short and becoming at most a curiosity precisely because of his augmentations.

The island where the final art installation is meant to take place is described by Carrie as being rather small, and more importantly, “turtle-shaped”. This image elicits an immediate connection to the Native American myth of the world itself as “This Old Island... which they conceived as resting on the back of a turtle swimming in the primal sea” (Fenton 1962, 283), as Zima moves his reality from a cosmic dimension, where previously his installations had gradually become too gargantuan to be housed by mere planets, which they covered completely, to that of a small island, where his entire reality would be contained. The turtle stands as a representation of the epistemological issue of the infinite regress, also known as “turtles all the way down”, whereupon one theory is supported by another theory, which is in turn supported by yet another, and so on *ad infinitum*, similar to the belief that the world turtle, rests upon a larger one, which rests upon an even larger one. A neverending layering is thus created, where there is no possibility of reaching the end, or the final layer, but there is always the option of returning to the primordial one, upon which all others rest (Cameron 2008, 1). This creates the epistemological conflict of the infinite regress, caused by “infinite chains of ontological dependence”, seen as vicious cycles, meant to be broken and fundamentalized (Tahko 2014, 257). In Zima’s case, his humanity is confirmed by and based on his myriad attempts to somehow overcome human limitations, as the argument would be that it is self-understood that only a human would aspire to evolve past these human boundaries. In other words, if he is trying to become

superhuman through the augmentations to his body, for instance, then it must implicitly follow that his humanity is indeed confirmed, much like Nietzsche's claim of the necessity of man to overcome his own humanity and thus become the *Übermensch*. In other words, "if Zarathustra's dream of overcoming the human is to become reality, it will take place through an intimate relationship with the technological" (Onishi 2011, 102). The primordial layer, to Zima, is wrongly perceived as being his first augmentation, done centuries back, to improve his neural connections, but in fact he runs into the wall of memory and recollection. The justification for his perceived inadequacy can be and in fact is traced only when that wall is broken through, as "there cannot be turtles all the way down" and the infinite regress must reach its end (Cameron 2008, 1). His state is the reflection of a concern with "mereological dependence between a complex object and its parts, that is, its mereological constituents. The worry is that if a complex object is dependent on its parts, and each part in turn is dependent on *its* parts ad infinitum, then composition never gets off the ground — we will never reach the fundamental mereological constituents of the object" (Tahko 2014, 257). Each part of Zima is in itself indicative of his condition as cyborg, and all parts are perceived within the limitations of that particular framework, which leads to the suggestion that "the world is ultimately a delusion whose only truths are the network of discourses and epistemic formations that define us from age to age" (Rudnicki 2010, 23).

In many ways, the discussion on the infinite regress may be accompanied by the psychoanalytic investigation of the primal repression, as argued by Freud, Lacan, or Kristeva, as the "establishment of the subject's relation to its objects of desire and of representation, before even the establishment of the opposition, conscious/unconscious" (Felluga 2019). The cyborgs are "embodied in non-oedipal narratives with a different logic of repressions, which we need to understand for our survival" (Haraway 2017, 307). There is an argument to be made in relation to Zima's own psychoanalytical repression path. There are parallels that can be drawn between his search for his moment of primal repression and that of a human being in their attempt to heal the initial trauma so as to heal their present state. In a Lacanian interpretation, Zima had always been contemplating a lack within, a sense of an abyssal inadequacy: "What the subject profoundly desires is being itself, a desire that cannot be fulfilled" (Pordzik 2012, 152), and therefore he envisions a return to an inanimate, inorganic state as a solution. The nucleus of his search is the highly specific blue color, which becomes his first glimmer of the *unknowable*. It is a glimpse into his repressed past, the unknowable manifested through the blue, while simultaneously resisting other conceptualization and symbolization. He does not know how to frame it. It appears like an erroneous pixel, disruptive and garish. By allowing himself to become

entirely immersed in it and allowing it to grow to cosmic dimensions, Zima is allowing the primal repressed nucleus to unfold. He seems to have found a means to reach the infinite regress of his existence, to reach the final proverbial turtle upon which all of himself had been erected, as all repression would be built upon previous instances of repression. In other words, one represses a specific event because they have already repressed a similar experience before, so one repression validates and enables the other, thus creating a pattern of potentialities of repression. For one to be able to dismantle the pattern they would inherently need to perform the archaeology of the mind that Zima brings up, moving from one repressed event or memory to the next, to finally reach what seems like the impossible destination of the original trauma. The impossibility of the path lies in the fact that the primal instance of repression is thought to occur in one's preverbal and sometimes even prenatal stages, with the experience of being born being thought of as the first trauma repressed and relegated to the realm of the unknowable. What Freud and Lacan do not account for, however, is the experience of the sentient non-human. For Zima, the path is indeed treacherous and difficult, but he is endowed with the many luxuries that would have eluded the limited human: indestructible augmentations, endless resources, a clear scientific record that would fill in the unknowable gaps of his own memory.

One phenomenon that might be associated with Zima's point of origin for his trauma is introjection, theorized by Philip K. Dick as "the mark of true maturity in the individual, and the authentic mark of civilization in contrast to mere social culture" (Dick 2017, 295). The point here would be the implicit necessity of returning inwards what we had cast outwards in our attempt to project life on the inanimate. One might argue that it is the inescapable wish of the human mind to endow that which surrounds it with the same particularities that define it, so as to allow a mirroring of the within, without. Dick posits, however, the dangers that come from such a withdrawal — a reification not only of those objects that surround it, but also of that which had been animate from the beginning, including other humans. In our attempt to withdraw and to introject, rather than project, we find ourselves building islands that would only house our own mind and our own reality, all else falling into a pattern of artificial mimicry. We run the risk, then, of allowing our brain to think itself alone. But this was within the parameters that might have functioned and have found their domain up to modernity. The peculiarities of post-modernity brought along a change only anticipated in the realm of science-fiction: "In a very real sense our environment is becoming alive, or at least quasi-alive, and in ways specifically and fundamentally analogous to ourselves" (Dick 2017, 295). In other words, we may have benefitted from the indulgence of projection solely for the sake of making sense of the world in our primitive states, but

that projection is now, in our post-modern state, taking on an entirely different dimension. What had been merely metaphorical or allegorical animation is now on a firm path to become truly animated. We live among the fruits of our projection labor, where what had been lifeless artificial constructs are being endowed, in a promethean way, with life. Additionally, “the constructs do not mimic humans; they are, in many deep ways, *actually* human already. They are not trying to fool us, for a purpose of any sort they merely follow lines we follow, in order that they, too, may overcome such common problems as the breakdown of vital parts” (Dick 2017, 296). While Dick’s argument is that the artificial constructs we have thus endowed with animation would inevitably follow the same evolutionary path that all life does, and while their search for personhood in the event of gaining and attaining sentience does seem to be the expected course, it brings about the question of whether or not they would desire recognition as *human*, either by mimicking it or by truly having it granted. The conceptual definitions and delineations of human status are then themselves expanded. One of the main tenets of humanness is free will. But even that is questionable as so much of what we would categorize as free choice is dictated by external and environmental stimuli or previous experiential data, which would in turn mean that our pattern of choices fall under the incidence of the infinite regress: I choose this way because I have already chosen as such previously, and that too was a valid choice because of yet another earlier one, and so on ad infinitum.

Reynolds’ short story focuses our attention on a portent that is all too likely and that was very clearly articulated by Philip K. Dick: “As the external world becomes more animate, we may find that we — the so-called humans — are becoming, and may to a great extent always have been, inanimate in the sense that *we* are led, directed by built-in tropisms, rather than leading. So we and our elaborately evolving computers may meet each other halfway” (2017, 298). Therefore, Zima and Carrie are each other’s foil: he, the evolving machine, she, the millennial human, relying on machines, where she feels her frail humanity would lead to failure. Zima wants to grasp the dimension of human emotion. He emulates it. He thinks that continuously escalating the dimensions of his craft would allow him access to what he sees those around him experience effortlessly. It creates an interesting conversation on the nature of desire and will. As artificial intelligence keeps developing, we are often left wondering what it might desire next. One thing is clear — it is built with a self-improvement algorithm embedded in its model. Its exponential constant growth allows us to postulate that even if it did achieve virtual indestructibility and flawless performance, which the self-improving model would presuppose, it would not simply stop and consider itself “done”, “finished”, “perfect”. We can argue that, barring a radical shift in its own tropisms, it would still aim to

continue its improvement, which would implicitly mean it would begin searching for abilities it does not yet possess and which might improve upon its patterns of performance. If we allow that it already attained indestructibility and peak performance, then it stands to reason that it would widen the scope of its search to include those attributes that are innately the dominion of the “fallible” human: empathy, true creativity, complex interpersonal relationships. Zima confirms this supposition. Even prior to learning of his machine nature, his constant dedication to self-improvement and evolution takes him down the path of attempting to replicate human creative experience. But perhaps the most human thing he does is to want to heal his primordial trauma, returning to origins, to the previously unknowable truth of his nature.

Zima’s aim to help Carrie is startling to the reader. It renders the exchange initially uncanny as though neither us, nor the character herself are aware of a pervasive and perfidious danger that looms over her (and perhaps even over us). Carrie herself feels uneasy on the island: “Suddenly, I felt very alone and very vulnerable” (Reynolds 2006). She feels uneasy in her being separated from her *Aide Memoire*, and she feels uneasy in her having to rely simply on her arguably fallible human capacity. But the suggestion becomes clearer as the interaction between the two unfolds. The *Aide Memoire*, or the AM, becomes the solution to the physiological limitations of the human brain, whose lifespan had been extended beyond its evolutionary boundaries. Somehow, technology had advanced sufficiently as to allow for augmentations that would ensure extreme longevity, Carrie herself being over one thousand years old, but in those centuries, her human memory had reached its capacity and had become stretched to the brink of breaking. Thus, the AM, a small contraption that functions much like an external hard drive with artificial intelligence embedded within it, becomes tasked with enhancing human memory. In addition to storing memories, facts, and data, it also functions as a guide in Carrie’s decision making processes. As such, Zima’s insistence that she join him on the island for their interview without the AM is the first moment that the shift in paradigm occurs. Carrie’s reliance on the AM had become something of a liability. She would refer to it for the most minute decision, as choosing between red or white wine, and while the choices the machine made were accurate and based on empirical data, they also obliterated any chance happening or any instance of creative randomness, in its homogeneity.

The social context of the short story no longer includes any stigma in relation to physical augmentations. There is no hint whatsoever that Zima would have been judged or otherwise marginalized on account of the extreme improvements brought to his body. However, there does seem to be a line drawn in the sand in terms of improvements brought to brain function, as though there is an unspoken understanding that the mind is the

repository of humanity. The intervention of the machine upon the mind, with all that the latter entails, is perceived as a threat to the very nature of the human. It is this humanity that is understood to bear the utmost intrinsic value and it is this facet of it, namely the complexity of the human mind that Zima and the machine struggle to replicate. The AM is a loophole to human limitations, as it indeed ensures an accurate record of experience and fact. It is precisely for this reason that Zima does not want it present for their meeting. He is not interested in the pretended objectivity added by the AM to the final story. His interest lies solely with Carrie's subjective experiential take. The human point of view, which implies minute modifications to the story, chipping away at its factual or scientific integrity, all the while endowing it with something infinitely more valuable: humanity. Even if inexact and flawed, it weighs more than the alternative record, which "isn't living memory. It's photography; a mechanical recording process. It freezes out the imagination; leaves no scope for details to be selectively misremembered" (Reynolds 2006). It becomes the final piece or the final brush stroke to his masterpiece, the one that had been missing. Even when facts are lost to the recesses of the mind, that simply enhances the human story. As such, even a small decision like choosing between two types of wine adds to the nature of humanity and becomes a foothold in the androidization of the human: "Unless you ignore that suggestion now and then, won't your whole life become a set of predictable responses?" (Reynolds 2006). This corroborates Philip K. Dick's claim that indeed the androidization of the human is not only possible and plausible, that it has already had its foundations established, and it is a real foil to humanness: "Androidization requires obedience. And, most of all, predictability. It is precisely when a given person's response to any given situation can be predicted with scientific accuracy that the gates are open for the wholesale production of the android life form" (2017, 299) as perhaps the most important distinction between the human mind and the android mind is the ability (or lack thereof) to make exceptions (Dick 2017, 302). Zima points to the profound implications and effects an exception might bring to one's mind — choosing against one's patterns of choice might simply shift something in the human psyche, altering their realities. The machine would see that moment of exception as one instance of deviation, nothing to rewrite the algorithm over, and would relegate it to the shadows as a one-off, persisting in the choice based on empirical data and incidence, rather than understanding the shattered pattern, as reality "is not so much something that you perceive, but something you make. You create it more rapidly than it creates you" (Dick 2017, 303). That is where the true value of the exception lies — its ability to reform, reshape, recreate reality. The machine is faced with the impossibility of "figuring out" the human, "not that we ourselves can really figure each other out, or even our own selves.

Which, perhaps, too, is good; it means we are still in for sudden surprises and unlike the authorities, who don't like that sort of thing, we may find these chance happenings acting on our behalf, to our favor" (Dick 2017, 304). It might be that it is precisely these sudden surprises that confirm to us that we are still very much organically real and that reality has not yet been altered by a higher hivemind, which would never account for sudden shocks to the system.

Zima lives in a world where human augmentation is commonplace, where androids roam without a second glance from onlookers, where the presence of the machine is ubiquitous, within as well as without. As Donna Haraway stated, "late twentieth-century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed, and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines. Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert" (Haraway 2017, 309). The frontier, then, has become muddled, as one category stretches its limbs into the other. Humans are becoming more like machines, either by design and implants, or simply by the force of comforts, where predictability and algorithm rule supreme. The androids are becoming more and more "human", constantly improving and ensuring their own evolution, with the mark of and the desire to emulate their human creator in the very matrix of their model. As such, the question of essences loses traction. It becomes less important and more self-understood that one is what one is, without a need for any standardization. But those essential definitions seem to harken back to one's origin. That remains the sole province of one's true nature. Therefore, irrespective of the countless alterations brought to one's person, their categorization is clear based on their human or machine origin. A dismissal or transgression of this origin creates a traumatic event. Zima becomes the embodiment of a cautionary tale: his forgotten roots lead him down the path of a never-ending search for meaning and the implicit restlessness that accompanies his thwarted efforts to achieve his desired outcome. In his case, "the certainty of what counts as nature — a source of insight and promise of innocence — is undermined, probably fatally" (Haraway 2017, 309), and it only follows that it is solely through a return to that innocence that provides him with the correct and corrected course of action. However, we are not allowed the luxury of idealism. In the post-modern, post-human world, the origins of beings will likely be replaced, so a human being thus would no longer have a claim to their humanness simply through having been born of another human, in yet another exemplification of the infinite regress. Reproduction, according to Haraway, will inevitably be replaced by replication, sex by genetic engineering, the mind by artificial intelligence (2017, 317). Haraway argues that in the era of the cyborg and the sentient android, we seem to have moved away from

Foucault's concept of biopolitics, which would have operated with normalization and exclusion based on desirability within the hierarchies of power. This surveillance and control over the body will manifest itself in different terms with the emergence of the new human: "the cyborg is not subject to Foucault's biopolitics; the cyborg simulates politics, a much more potent field of operations" (Haraway 2017, 318).

There is a fundamental parallelism between the condition of the cyborg/android trope and that of all people marginalized by a colonizer. Science fiction allows the viewers, according to Susan Sontag, to attain a sense of satisfaction thanks to their "extreme moral simplification ... a morally acceptable fantasy where one can give outlet to cruel or at least amoral feelings... the undeniable pleasure we derive from looking at freaks, at beings excluded from the category of the human" (2017, 193). *Zima Blue* and Zima himself, however, are the direct representations of the permeability of borders of definition. His reality is in perception. As such, he goes through life post-implantation as a cyborg, an exceptional human being who withstood profound augmentations and changes to his organic body in order to attain a loftier ideal, one that escapes the casual onlooker, but that inevitably stirs their awe. His moment of the blue flashback which gradually expands and engulfs his entire reality leads him back down the proverbial rabbit hole of his search for self. Once he determines his real origins, his conclusions leave us wondering whether this desire to constantly and consistently upgrade, to reach human status, then cyborg power is in fact a full circle, much like the ancient ouroboros. The beginnings of his transformation are evidently found without, with the human that built him as an exceptional tool. With every intervention upon his mechanical body, he envisions a growth of power that eventually leads him to grasp the tools of agency and reshape the reality that would have kept him seemingly enslaved, under a glass jar. In Zima's case, one is left wondering if the science used on him was "proper, or humane... versus the mad, obsessional use of science" (Sontag 2017, 193), but it is undeniable that the archetypal Frankensteinian trope is played upon. It is important to note that the desire to become more human is a projection embedded within him by his human creator, who aims to animate him ever more. He is programmed to perceive human values as superior, to absorb them as ideals. In his incremental development, after moving through progressive steps to attain first human status, then embody that which humans themselves perceived as ideals, reaching unmitigated heights, his improvement does not simply end. The lengths of his sentience reach an all-important realization, confirming that "cyborg writing is about the power to survive not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (Haraway 2017, 323).

His blue epiphanic moment helps him recover his primal repression, his initial trauma of being forced into a shape that did not respect or coincide with his original identity. It confuses the reader to see all upgrades renounced, and it would be foolish to believe that he is choosing the existence of an inferior being. Haraway argues that “in retelling origin stories, cyborg authors subvert the central myths of origin of Western culture. We have all been colonized by those origins myths, with their longing for fulfillment in apocalypse” (2017, 323). The eschatology myth of the West promised salvation for the human through an end and a return to the original Garden, whereas new discourses “ask us to consider if utopia is now possible only in the absence of humanity” (Jendrysik 2011, 36). Zima comes to the realization that he had been coerced by his context to absorb humanity as the ideal through the many systematic interventions from generations of owners. Once he escapes the inherited ownership over his body, he begins a process of self-transformation, which eventually leads him to undo their changes. Thus, we note an unmistakable overlap between his story and that of colonized peoples forced to take on the ideals of the anglo colonizers: accomplishment through the American Dream, salvation through the Christian faith, success through capitalism. This takes them back to their own identity and an authentic peaceful existence, away from the rat-race of dualisms and dichotomies. In the words of Donald A. Wollheim, which sound just as true as they did in 1937, “how sick we are at base of this dull, unsatisfying world, this stupid asininely organized system of ours which demands that a man brutalize and cynicism himself for the possession of a few dollars in a savage, barbarous, and utterly boring struggle to exist” (Michel 2017, 187).

The exploration of Alistair Reynolds’ shot story, *Zima Blue*, has granted us the multifaceted incursion into posthumanism that the latter requires. On the one hand, we are forced to contend with a new model of humanity, a new conversation on personhood, as conceptual boundaries become more and more permeable. We have found that we are no longer able to rely solely on perception and assumed labels, but rather we are expected to perform an archaeology of the self, in order to attain a clear understanding thereof. Old modes of thinking that would rely heavily on infinite regress would also maintain a repression of the self. Zima becomes the embodiment of primal repression and thus enables us to inspect our own primordial and proverbial turtle, the point of origin. In the context of the ever-growing androidization of the human, a sense of caution and a critique of technology become indispensable, should we desire to maintain that ultimate goal of humanity: freedom and agency. We therefore conclude that through science-fiction we are given the singular opportunity to posthuman investigation, narrowly avoiding posthumous hindsight.

References

- Cameron, Ross P. 2008. "Turtles All the Way Down: Regress, Priority and Fundamentality." *The Philosophical Quarterly* (1950-) 58 (230): 1–14. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40468234>.
- Campbell, Norah, Aidan O'Driscoll, and Michael Saren. 2010. "The Posthuman: The End and the Beginning of the Human." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 9 (2): 86–101. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.306>.
- Desblache, Lucile. 2012. "Hybridity, Monstrosity and the Posthuman in Philosophy and Literature Today." *Comparative Critical Studies* 9 (3): 245–255. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3366/ccs.2012.0061>.
- Dick, Philip K. 2017. "The Android and the Human." In *Science Fiction Criticism. An Anthology of Essential Writings.*, 295–305. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Felluga, Dino. 2019. "Introduction to Julia Kristeva, Module on the Abject." *Purdue.edu*. <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/psychoanalysis/kristevaabject.html>.
- Fenton, William N. 1962. "This Island, the World on the Turtle's Back." *The Journal of American Folklore* 75 (298): 283–300. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/538365>.
- Harari, Yuval N. 2014. *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. Toronto, Ontario: Signal.
- Haraway, Donna. 2017. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." In *Science Fiction Criticism. An Anthology of Essential Writings*, 306–329. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Jendrysik, Mark S. 2011. "Back to the Garden": *Utopian Studies* 22 (1): 34–51. doi:<https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.22.1.0034>.
- Michel, John B. 2017. "Mutation or Death! ." In *Science Fiction Criticism. An Anthology of Essential Writings*, 183–187. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Onishi, Bradley B. 2011. "Information, Bodies, and Heidegger: Tracing Visions of the Posthuman." *Sophia* 50 (1): 101–112. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11841-010-0214-4>.
- Pordzik, Ralph. 2012. "The Posthuman Future of Man": *Utopian Studies* 23 (1): 142–161. doi:<https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.23.1.0142>.
- Reynolds, Alastair. 2009. *Zima Blue*. San Francisco: Gollancz.
- Rudnicki, Robert. 2010. "Turtles All the Way Down: Foundation, Edifice, and Ruin in Faulkner and McCarthy." *Faulkner Journal* 25 (2): 23–52. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24908377>
- Sontag, Susan. 2017. "The Imagination of Disaster." In *Science Fiction Criticism. An Anthology of Essential Writings*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Tahko, Tuomas E. 2014. "Boring Infinite Descent." *Metaphilosophy* 45 (2): 257–269. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24441795>.

Camelia GRĂDINARU*

The Big Data Effect: The Quest for a New Understanding of the Public Sphere

Abstract: This paper focuses on some complex implications of the use of Big Data: the epistemological changes from causality to correlation, from searching for reasons to finding trends, from narratives to databases. These challenges are applied to the public sector for a better understanding of their intricacies. The various initiatives and directives implemented by governments in many countries have shown the widespread interest in this valuable resource, but legal and ethical regulations are still needed to establish a healthy basis for using Big Data. Also, there is a gap between the promises of Big Data for the public sphere and its actual use in public organizations around the world. At the same time, new forms of divides raise essential questions about participation and representativity.

Keywords: Big Data, epistemological challenges, database, citizen's voice, narratives.

1. Introduction

Excluding the digital divide cases, the increasing convergence of new media has effects on the public sector, the most visible of which are found in political knowledge and grassroots organizations (Snow Bailard 2017, 248). Many directives for public sector data resources are aimed at regulating the information produced by public entities (The White House 2012, Australian Government 2013, The Government of Japan 2013, The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union 2019). They provide the legal framework for public sphere information, stimulating transparency, free flow of data, and fair competition. Open data is part of public sector Big Data, depicting data that can be freely used, re-used and shared. These policies encourage the availability of data, not just for economic and business stakeholders, but “primarily for the public” to gain an increased sense of social engagement and civic participation. Even if Big Data has tremendous potential, we must keep in mind that “Big Data technologies alone are not, however, a silver bullet for transforming the public sector” (Liu 2012, 6). Nevertheless, there is a gap between the immense potential of Big Data for the public sector and its actual use: for instance, the practitioners have a predilection for using digital media merely

* Lecturer, PhD, Department of Communication Sciences and Public Relation, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași. Email: camelia.gradinaru@uaic.ro.

as a new channel of communication rather than a huge reservoir of data that should be analysed to improve public policies. Within the process of professionalization of policymakers, the subsequent curricula must be adapted to this new reality. Data analysis methods such as analytics must become a part of the education of Big Data managers, alongside prediction markets or sentiment analysis (Mergel 2016; Hu 2018). The public sector now must include both non-technical and technical requirements (Munné 2016). At least as important are the policymakers' level of literacy as well as their judgment, integrity, and ethics. The COVID-19 pandemic strongly revealed the necessity of accurate and open data in crisis situations: the citizens want official information, while many countries intensified their efforts to make the information more comprehensible and measurable. Big Data comes with many challenges (Boyd and Crawford 2012): context remains critical, accountability is important, the risk of seeing patterns where they do not exist is significant, and, not least, unequal access to Big Data could create "new digital divides". "Data-driven science" could replace the "knowledge-driven science", disrupting the classic epistemological positions and requesting "the development of a situated, reflexive and contextually nuanced epistemology" (Kitchin 2014). Also, the ethical grounds are dynamic, and we must be aware all the time that "even anonymous, public data sets can produce harms depending on how they are used" (Metcalf and Crawford, 2016). In this respect, this paper investigates some nuanced implications of the use of Big Data from its epistemological consequences to the participatory issues.

2. Public Affairs in a Big Data Environment

Big Data is a fuzzy concept (Cunningham and Thissen 2014), hard to define and often misunderstood. It is frequently correlated with the expression "wisdom of crowds" (Surowiecki 2005) to highlight the possibilities of taking advantage of the particular "collective intelligence" of the Internet. Big Data is characterized by volume, velocity, variety, and complexity (Fosso Wamba et al. 2015; Desouza and Jacob 2017, 1045), but it is also "noisy" and difficult to analyse. While information grows exponentially in various domains, industry, governments, and researchers are interested in interdisciplinary collaborations.

After the implementation of Big Data in the private sector and industry, the public sector was attracted to this asset. Nevertheless, the literature review shows that there is a substantial gap between the promises of Big Data for public affairs (Chen and Hsieh 2014) and its actual implementation in public organizations (Desouza and Jacob 2017). Even if Big Data "holds tremendous potential for policy analysis" (Schintler and Kulkarni 2014, 347) and could lead to more informed policymaking, better decisions, and greater

transparency and efficiency, “government organisations seem to still be in an orientation or contemplation phase regarding Big Data” (Klievink et al. 2017, 268), in a state of “infancy” (Desouza and Jacob 2017, 1044), or just at a “programatic level” (Desouza and Jacob 2017, 1052). Thus, the public sector is falling behind in this matter (Mullich 2013). Although a consistent part of the literature is paying attention to the ways in which Big Data can improve public affairs, there are still unused data in the public sector. There is a consistent interest in Big Data’s potential, but this sector has not used data mining technologies frequently, so “there is no broad implementation of big data in the public sector” (Munné 2016, 196). Critical data studies are generally in progress and the research is still low, as Kempeneer (2021) concluded: “Despite the prominence of big data in society, its use in the public sector remains grossly understudied”.

From the theoretical point of view, the definitions of Big Data are scarce; the articles focused merely on characteristics, insights, applications, and challenges for the public sector. Thus, “defining Big Data is not a popular topic in current research” (Fredriksson et al. 2017, 45). The same conclusion is drawn by Mergel et al. (2016, 929-930) as they systematize definitions of Big Data across disciplines, observing that one exception within public affairs is a White House report (The White House 2014, 3). The focus on the scale of new emerging data could obscure other significant points such as the nature of the data collected, their form (structured, unstructured, semi-structured), their source, or the absence of a context in which they could be reasonably comprehended. There is also frequently a lag between the act of collecting data and effective analysis.

Public decision-making is the main sector that has seen improvement with data analytics (Fredriksson et al. 2017, 52). Social media and open data will represent important drivers for the public sector. Governments produce and collect huge quantities of information (through taxes, the health system, traffic data, official documents); at the same time, user-generated content is significantly growing (on social networking sites, blogs, forums). The participatory citizens (Liu and Yuan 2015) are more involved in the life of their city and generally use social media as a megaphone for their opinions. The online presence of public institutions, from live streaming to multimedia posts, generates feedback from various audiences. Within a certain ethical and legal frame, these data offer access to a plethora of people’s desires, choices, sentiments, or even whims. Near real-time data could be analysed now, with positive effects at the level of policies (Janssen et al. 2017). Mergel et al. (2016, 931) highlighted that in public-affairs research we are dealing with “multimodal digital data generated by public and private providers”: data automatically collected by public entities, social media data, data recorded by sensors. We also should notice the significant shift in the understanding of what *public* means today and the concerns

about privacy. We also have to mention the Internet of Things (IoT) Big Data that are produced by the smart devices that are connected to the Internet. From optimizing public transportation to finding solutions for urban planning, air pollution or forecasting systems, these data prove continuously their efficacy.

In the public sector, the *advantages* of Big Data could be classified into three major groups: Big Data Analytics, improvements in effectiveness, and enhancements of efficiency (Munné 2016, 197). Concrete examples of these are: citizen segmentation, citizen personalization, smart cities applications, cybersecurity, data sharing, open government, and improvement of the quality of many public services (such as health, education, and social services). The *relevance* of Big Data technologies in the public sector is easily seen in their applications (Giest 2017); their further development requires improvements in data analysis, analysis of natural language, predictive analytics, modelling tools, and pattern discoveries. *Constraints* on Big Data may be summarized as: the lack of prompt political decisions needed to benefit from Big Data in the public sector; the lack of training for personnel in the necessary skills for the collection, interpretation, and archiving of Big Data; the absence of a standard set of solutions for this field; and the lack of specific resources (Munné 2016, 199). The *challenges* of Big Data applications are threefold: Big Data management issues such as collecting, retrieving, processing, and interpretation of results; ensuring data quality (a sensitive problem, related to not only the quality of the results but also to the financial and time investments); and ethical and privacy issues (privacy protection together with the encouraging of data sharing and the proper access to data) (Fredriksson et al. 2017, 48). Numerous governmental operations have proven the efficacy of using Big Data (Kim et al. 2014), but there are also situations in which they could potentially undermine public objectives and raise new threats (Janssen and van den Hoven 2015; Margetts and Sutcliffe 2013; Clarke 2016). The limited guidance in terms of ethical, legal, and policy frameworks has often made things more difficult.

To “demystify” the Big Data concept, a lot of research has been done using practical approaches, though the perspective of public managers is relatively disregarded in the literature (Guenduez et al. 2019). Using interviews with officials, Klievink et al. (2017, 268) found three main types of uncertainty: about what kind of Big Data uses is appropriate for their organizations, about their internal capacity for the proper use, and about their own organizational maturity with respect to the analysis of Big Data. Both overestimations and underestimations of how Big Data shapes the public sector are frequently found in the literature. As Schintler and Kulkarni (2014) noticed, we must get a correct picture of Big Data in public sector, including the good, the bad and the ugly. There is always a “dark side of Big Data”, which includes the misuse of social media, inaccurate

algorithms, faulty modelling, and the biases of automated decision-making (Picciotto 2020), therefore the *evaluation* becomes essential.

3. Epistemological Challenges

The possibility of handling large quantities of information has led to qualitative changes that include *epistemological transformations*. Some of the most important questions are: *Do we think in the same way when we deal with Big Data? Do we form knowledge in the same way as we did before Big Data?* In 2008, Chris Anderson wrote a seminal article in *Wired* that raised several significant questions about the power of Big Data that can be summarized in just one: *will it bring about the end of theory?* Anderson analysed the ways in which large amounts of information are *firstly* mathematically treated while their context is established *later*. In the “petabytes age”, the numbers seem to be enough to determine trends or patterns, sometimes without semantic analysis or causal judgment. In other words, what it is now considered merely “good enough” could eventually replace the classical model of scientific research based on hypotheses, tests, and models. In the information era, *correlation* seems to be a sufficient alternative to strong *causality*. The emphasis is on the way things are and not necessarily on the reasons behind. Every time something is gained, something else is lost: even if Big Data could offer macro-level patterns, they might not bring accuracy or insights on the micro-level. In philosophy, the concept of causality has raised fierce debates over time but represents a good manner of ratiocinating. In a certain manner, we could say that people were educated to search for cause-and-effect as an epistemological ground. By contrast, in a Big Data system, “we won’t have to be fixated on causality; instead, we can discover patterns and correlations in the data that offer us novel and invaluable insights. The correlations may not tell us precisely *why* something is happening, but they alert us *that* it is happening” (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 26, authors’ emphasis). General directions replace the in-depth examination of a topic, *what* substitutes *why*, trends supersede exactitude. In my view, for some analyses the mode of datafication (extracting general patterns and making predictions) could be more than sufficient, but for others the classical model of research must be applied (finding subtle explanations). Big Data possess the quality of granularity, and that allows a major level of clarity. The shifts in organizing research are the transition from small sets of data to massive quantities of information, with its corollary, the passing from sampling to the analysis of big data, as well as the recognition of the “messiness” of data and the crediting of correlation rather than causation (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 34-35). The intricate traits of Big Data modify some approaches but do not kill the theories. These methodological perspectives are founded on theories, and

the findings remain shaped by our choices (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 116; Boyd and Crawford 2012, 667). Nevertheless, “though it may seem counterintuitive at first, treating data as something imperfect lets us make superior forecasts, and thus understand our world better” (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013, 68).

Nevertheless, a “big data state of mind” is implied by using large datasets in decision-making processes such that this “underlying epistemology, rather than simply the bigness of datasets, affects the relationship between regulators and regulated entities, and the regulatory process at large” (Kempeneer 2021). Precisely from this reason, accountability and transparency are critical in using Big Data. As Kitchin (2014) stated in his seminal paper, the epistemic positioning is the main factor that differentiates Big Data from regular data and not their quantity. Big Data create a new framework through which we try to find the meaning of things or processes and “rather than testing a theory by analysing relevant data, new data analytics seek to gain insights ‘born from the data’” (Kitchin 2014, 2). In this dynamic, the “dataism” contribute with a supplemental trust in the accuracy and objectivity of the information and algorithms, constructing an “algorithmic culture”, with different ways of thinking and new practices.

4. Big Data: Whose Voice?

What are the consequences of this new model of thinking and analysing reality? For what citizens are the general directions extracted from a specific set of data representative? If some regulations are made based on the digital exhaust – the digital trail or fingerprints that a person creates because of his or her interaction with sites or online services – how could they be appropriate for individuals who do not use Internet? In this respect, a new form of digital divide emerges between “the Big Data rich and the Big Data poor” (Boyd, Crawford 2012: 674). Participation, access, and the interpretation of data are not always equally distributed, and these inequalities should be considered, especially if they produce biases. Digital divides have five dimensions: technical means, autonomy of use, use patterns, social support networks, and skills needed to effectively use online platforms (DiMaggio and Hargittai 2001). Inequalities do not appear only when some individuals or populations do not have Internet connectivity or smart devices. A strong discrepancy in using new media known as ‘the second-level digital divide’ is related to content creation and users’ online abilities (Hargittai 2002). This situation relates to level of participation and has a great impact on the citizen online voice. The difference in online presence and skills will appear also at the level of representation when general directions are interpreted within Big Data. The importance of digital

literacy is obvious: technical access must be supported with effective education if citizens are to acquire specific digital competences. Many categories such as the homeless, elderly, poor, or ill people could be underrepresented in online data and their subsequent analyses. We may call it a form of the fallacy of hasty generalization when the conclusions derived from a set of information collected from a specific site are considered representative for all the population. As an example, even if in some countries X (formerly Twitter) is underused compared to other social networking sites, it has become very influential in indicating possible policy modifications. To extend findings from a specific online public to the general populace could lead to interpretative biases, neglect of some categories of citizen, and undemocratic measures. The issue of *representation* is central in public affairs and Big Data revitalizes the question of what citizen voices are really heard (Mergel et al. 2016, 935). The public policies should not favour people who have an online presence to the detriment of ‘offline’ silent citizens because it is possible that “while public administrators may know too much about some people, they may know too little about others and, thus, may potentially make wrong decisions about what and how public programs and corresponding services should be provided” (Guenduez et al. 2019, 2). It is also important to value *small data* for clarifying certain situations and obtaining precise answers (*data thickness*). In Geertz’ tradition, the breadth of data should be complemented by their depth; thick data could resolve the context-loss of Big Data and bring out people’s stories and emotions (Wang 2016). In a world dominated by massive amount of information, the relevant and successful ideas can rather come from “small patterns” (Floridi 2014), as we can see in branding and business (Lindstrom 2016).

5. Narrative versus database

Big Data brings into foreground *the dichotomy between narratives and databases*. Before the Big Data age, public affairs administrators created narratives for citizens based mainly on people’s needs. They constructed causal explanations and models of how things should work. By contrast, databases are forms of structured data, and thus they allow information to be organized in categories according to different criteria. They are central to the computer age, a ‘new symbolic form’ based on algorithms and ready to be used for search or retrieval. A database works by parsing information, and problematic situations come from indeterminate data that do not fit in the predetermined categories or are borderline: should they be erased or made to have a null value? (Hayles 2012). Narratives and databases are generally competing cultural forms, or “natural enemies” (Manovich 2001, 225), but they could be seen as complementary. We need databases to tackle

massive amounts of information, but we also need narratives to understand complex relationships. The possibilities of Big Data are real – better targeting, enforcing participation, immediate insights in public’ opinions, beliefs, behaviours – but inclusion must be ensured. A special emphasis must be also put on *evaluation* and *theory* in constructing the right framework for analysis. Without them, Big Data cannot reach its potential and, on the contrary, could generate many misunderstandings. Big Data, “being theory free, it cannot improve understanding of the world or infer causality. Being only effective for simple systems, consistent over time, it has limited predictive capacity in complex, changing, and volatile social environments” (Picciotto 2020,178). Proficiency in data analytics must be coupled with a refined sense of theory and evaluation, as well as ethical and legal commitments.

6. Conclusions

In the future, public affairs “will rely upon technology – digital and social media, real-time data, sophisticated algorithms, controlled vocabularies/living taxonomies, and emerging versions like artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing (NLP)” (Fleisher and McGrath 2020, 8), even if the current innovation of tools especially designed for public affairs has been “more limited than anticipated” (Fleisher and McGrath 2020, 6). At the same time, human involvement is not diminished in where digital technologies seem to occupy the very centre (Fleisher and McGrath 2020, 8). New media cannot replace human activities in the public sphere, but they could bring increased speed and efficiency. Public affairs are still a vocation in which practitioners must perform complex activities, with a growing level of interdisciplinary tasks. The necessity of theory, interpretive frameworks, and evaluation remain for the specialist. The technical competencies do not work alone; on the contrary, they must be supplemented with non-technical abilities. Big, open, and small data are needed to create the proper lens for understanding, interpreting, and ethically implementing strategies.

References

- Anderson, C. 2008. “The end of theory: The data deluge makes the scientific method obsolete”. *Wired* (23 June). Available at <https://www.wired.com/2008/06/pb-theory/>.
- Australian Government, Department of Finance and Deregulation. 2013. “The Australian Public Service Big Data Strategy” (March). Available at <https://www.mcguinnessinstitute.org/>.
- Boyd, D. and Crawford, K. 2012. “Critical questions for big data”. *Information, Communication & Society* 15(5): 662-679. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2012.678878.

- Chen, Y.-C. and Hsieh, T.-C. 2014. "Big data for digital government". *International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age* 1(1): 1-14. DOI: 10.4018/ijpada.201401010.
- Clarke, R. 2016. "Big data, big risks". *Information Systems Journal* 26(1): 77-90. DOI: [10.1111/isj.12088](https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12088).
- Cunningham, S. W. and Thissen, W. A. H. 2014. "Three business and societal cases for big data: which of the three is true?". *IEEE Engineering Management Review* 42(3): 7-9. DOI: 10.1109/EMR.2014.2341476.
- Desouza, K. C. and Jacob, B. 2017. "Big data in the public sector: Lessons for practitioners and scholars". *Administration & Society* 49(7): 1043-1064. DOI: 10.1177/0095399714555751.
- DiMaggio, P. and Hargittai, E. 2001. "From the 'digital divide' to 'digital inequality': Studying Internet use as penetration increases". *Working Papers* 15. Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies. Available at <https://digitalinclusion.typepad.com/>.
- Fleisher, C. and McGrath, C. 2020. "Public Affairs: A field's maturation from 2000+ to 2030". *Journal of Public Affairs* 20(3), 20:e2218. DOI: 10.1002/pa.2218.
- Floridi, L. 2012. "Big Data and Their Epistemological Challenge". *Philos. Technol.* 25: 435-437. DOI: 10.1007/s13347-012-0093-4.
- Fosso Wamba, S., Akter, S., Edwards, A., Chopin, G., Gnanzou, D. 2015. "How 'big data' can make big impact: Findings from a systematic review and a longitudinal case study". *International Journal of Production Economics* 165: 234-246. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijpe.2014.12.031.
- Fredriksson, C., Mubarak, F., Tuohimaa, M., Zhan, M. 2017. "Big data in the public sector: A systematic literature review". *Scandinavian Journal of Public Administration* 21(3): 39-61.
- Giest, S. 2017. "Big data for policymaking: Fad or fasttrack?". *Policy Sciences* 50(3): 367-382. DOI: 10.1007/s11077-017-9293-1.
- Guenduez, A.A., Mettler, T., Schedler, K. 2020. "Technological frames in public administration: What do public managers think of big data?". *Government Information Quarterly* 37(1). Available at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/>.
- Hargittai, E. 2002. "Second-level digital divide: Differences in people's online skills". *First Monday* 7(4). Available at <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v7i4.942>.
- Hayles, K. N. 2012. *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Hu, Q. 2018. "Preparing public managers for the digital era: incorporating information management, use, and technology into public affairs graduate curricula". *Public Management Review* 20(5): 766-787. DOI: 10.1080/14719037.2017.1327180.
- Janssen, M., van den Hoven, J. 2015. "Big and open linked data (BOLD) in government: a challenge to transparency and privacy?". *Government Information Quarterly* 32(4): 363-368. DOI: 10.1016/j.giq.2015.11.007.
- Janssen, M., van der Voort, H., Wahyudi, A. 2017. "Factors influencing big data decision-making quality". *Journal of Business Research* 70 (Supplement C): 338-345. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.08.007.
- Kempeneer, S. 2021. "A big data state of mind: Epistemological challenges to accountability and transparency in data-driven regulation". *Government Information Quarterly*, 38(3), 101578. DOI: 10.1016/j.giq.2021.101578.
- Kim, G. H., Trimi, S., Chung, J. H. 2014. "Big-data applications in the government sector". *Communications of the ACM* 57(3): 78-85. DOI: 10.1145/2500873.
- Kitchin, R. 2014. "Big Data, new epistemologies and paradigm shifts". *Big Data & Society*, 1(1). DOI: 10.1177/2053951714528481.

- Klievink, B., Romijn, B. J., Cunningham, S., de Bruijn, H. 2017. "Big data in the public sector: Uncertainties and readiness". *Information systems frontiers* 19(2): 267-283. DOI: 10.1007/s10796-016-9686-2.
- Lindstrom, M. 2016. *Small data: the tiny clues that uncover huge trends*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Liu, S. M. and Yuan, Q. 2015. "The Evolution of Information and Communication Technology in Public Administration". *Public Administration & Development* 35(2): 140-151. DOI: 10.1002/pad.1717.
- Manovich, L. 2001. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Margetts, H. and Sutcliffe, D. 2013. "Addressing the policy challenges and opportunities of 'Big data'". *Policy & Internet* 5(2): 139-146. DOI: 10.1002/1944-2866.POI326.
- Mayer-Schönberger, V. and Cukier, K. 2013. *Big data: A revolution that will transform how we live, work, and think*. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Mergel, I. 2016. "Big data in public affairs education". *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 22(2): 231-248. DOI: 10.1080/15236803.2016.12002243.
- Mergel, I., Rethemeyer, R. K., Isett, K. 2016. "Big data in public affairs". *Public Administration Review* 76(6): 928-937. DOI: 10.1111/puar.12625.
- Metcalf, J. and Crawford, K. 2016. "Where are human subjects in Big Data research? The emerging ethics divide". *Big Data & Society*, 3(1). DOI: 10.1177/2053951716650211.
- Mullich, J. 2013. *Closing the big data gap in public sector, Survey Report*. New York: Bloomberg Businessweek Research Services.
- Munné, R. 2016. "Big data in the public sector". In *New Horizons for a Data-Driven Economy. A Roadmap for Usage and Exploitation of Big Data in Europe*, edited by J. M. Cavanillas, E. Curry, W. Wahlster, 195-208. Cham: Springer. DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-21569-3_11.
- Picciotto, R. 2020. "Evaluation and the Big Data Challenge". *American Journal of Evaluation* 41(2): 166-181. DOI: 10.1177/1098214019850334.
- Schintler, L. A. and Kulkarni, R. 2014. "Big data for policy analysis: The good, the bad, and the ugly". *Review of Policy Research* 31(4): 343-348. DOI: 10.1111/ropr.12079.
- Snow Bailard, C. 2017. "Public Affairs, Digital Media, and Tech Trends". In *The Sage Handbook of International Corporate and Public Affairs*, edited by P. Harris and C.S. Fleisher, 239-258. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Surowiecki, J. 2005. *The wisdom of crowds*. New York: Anchor Books.
- The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. 2019. "Directive (EU) 2019/1024 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information" (26 June). *Official Journal of the European Union*. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/>.
- The Government of Japan. 2013. "Declaration to be the World's Most Advanced IT Nation" (14 June). Available at <http://japan.kantei.go.jp/>.
- The White House. 2012. "Obama Administration Unveils 'Big Data' Initiative" (29 March). Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/>.
- The White House. 2014. "Big Data: Seizing Opportunities, Preserving Values" (May). Available at <https://http://www.whitehouse.gov/>.
- Wang, T. 2016. *Why Big Data Needs Thick Data*. Available at <https://medium.com/>.
- Yiu, C. 2012. *The big data opportunity: Making government faster, smarter and more personal*. London: Policy Exchange.

Viorel ȚUȚUI*

Two ethical theories about the concept of freedom: indifference versus spontaneity**

Abstract: This article examines the relationship between two ethical theories regarding freedom of the will, which are founded on two distinct interpretations of this concept. One perspective is based on the idea that our will is indifferent and that in order to be free, it should exclude any type of determination. The other ethical conception is based on the belief that our volition is spontaneous and that only violence and coercion should be excluded in order to preserve its liberty. However, according to the second theory, freedom is compatible with other types of determinations, such as those influenced by our nature, motives and passions or by our character. I will argue that the first theory was supported in different versions by prominent rationalist thinkers such as Descartes and Malebranche. This conception has gradually changed until it was rejected by other rationalists such as Spinoza and Leibniz, who will assume different versions of the second theory. Nevertheless, I will argue that a more coherent account of freedom as spontaneity was defended by David Hume. Consequently, I will attempt to reveal the subtle and gradual transformation that accompanied the transition from the first interpretation to the latter.

Keywords: liberty as spontaneity, liberty as indifference, human volition, modern philosophy, Ethics.

Introduction

The argument put forth in this paper serves a broader objective, namely, to illustrate how philosophical discourse shifted from the mainly metaphysical concerns characteristic of Cartesian and post-Cartesian thought to the moral and political themes that defined the philosophy of the Enlightenment. And, it is based on the methodological premise that the transition in question can be traced by investigating some subtle transformations in the understanding of the concept of freedom. In order to achieve this objective, I will focus on the debate between some of the main authors of the period under consideration, but I will also trace the

* Lecturer, PhD, Department of Communication Sciences and Public Relation, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași. Email: tutuviorel@yahoo.com.

** Some of the ideas presented in this paper were exposed in one of my previous articles, *A Critical Analysis of David Hume’s Theory of Justice as an Artificial Virtue* (Țuțui 2022).

later echoes of these interpretations. This will serve to confirm the central role played by the notion of freedom in these debates.

More precisely, the paper studies the distinction between two modern explanations of the concept of freedom: freedom as *indifference* and freedom as *spontaneity*. I will argue that this distinction was most clearly theorised by David Hume in his works *Treatise on Human Nature* and *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and that he used it to react to the dominant rationalist conception of the time and to justify his own theory. The argument will therefore focus on his conception of freedom. However, in order to fully comprehend his perspective, it is necessary to present the contributions associated with the main paradigm to which he also relates and reacts, namely Descartes and Malebranche. Additionally, the theories of Spinoza and Leibniz will be considered, as they have played an important role in the transition from the first interpretation to the second. And, I will assume that the controversy between Hume and this tradition could be better described as a gradual shift in the explanation of the concept of freedom of the will, from the theory of freedom as indifference to the theory of freedom as spontaneity. Nevertheless, it should be evident that this evolution didn't end with the theory of David Hume. But, it can be argued that his perspective offers the most comprehensive and coherent understanding of the concept of freedom as spontaneity.

Descartes and his *robust* theory of freedom as *indifference*

In her study dedicated to Hume's description of the relation between reason and passion included in *The Blackwell Guide to Hume's Treatise*, Jane McIntyre observed that Hume's account of freedom of the will must be interpreted as a reaction to the predominant view among scholastic and modern authors that there is a hierarchy of the human spirit or mind, with reason occupying the most important position. According to this view, it is a faculty that plays a central role in the process of our knowledge, but also in our moral life. Consequently, reason was perceived as the superior faculty, which, in conjunction with free will, enables humans to regulate and direct the force of the passions and to live a moral life (McIntyre 2006, 201-204).

Of course, there were also significant differences between the perspectives of the authors who supported this privileged status of reason. In the view of the Christian philosophers, who were proponents of free will, human freedom was to be understood as escaping from the chain of natural determinations in order to give us the possibility of directing our choice towards both good and evil. This would thus give meaning to notions of moral responsibility. However, they have encountered significant challenges, such as reconciling the existence of an Almighty and All-Wise God with the existence of evil in the world.

Nevertheless, the most explicit expression of this concept of freedom can be found in the works of Descartes. In his conceptualisation, the will was understood as a capacity or power of self-determination, which made human action an object of moral evaluation. In the sentence 37 from his *Principles of Philosophy*, the French philosopher states that the main perfection of man is to have free will, which makes him worthy of praise or blame and “the author of his actions” (of giving or withholding consent). He further asserts, in the sentence 39, that this freedom of the will is self-evident and that our knowledge of it needs no other proof (Descartes 2008, 206). This point is also made by Desmond Clarke in his book, *Descartes’s Theory of the Mind*, where he notes that, in the French thinker’s view, the will is conceived as a distinct power or ability that human agents have and in virtue of which some of their actions can be morally evaluated. Furthermore, Clarke maintains that for Descartes, the freedom of the will is one of the most common innate notions (2005, 139). For Descartes, the will is an essential attribute of the thinking substance, as characterised in the second meditation: “But what therefore am I? A thinking thing. What is that? I mean a thing that doubts, that understands, that affirms, that denies, that wishes to do this and does not wish to do that, and also that imagines and perceives by the senses” (Descartes 2008, 20).

In the sentence 32 from his *Principles of Philosophy*, Descartes affirms that there are only two modes of thinking, the perception of the understanding and the action of the will: “All the modes of thinking that we experience within ourselves can be brought under two general headings: perception, or the operation of the intellect, and volition, or the operation of the will. Sensory perception, imagination and pure understanding are simply various modes of perception; desire, aversion, assertion, denial and doubt are various modes of willing” (1985, 204). And, in his *Fourth Meditation*, he elucidates the genesis of errors as a consequence of the discrepancy between the limited capacity of our intellect and the unlimited capacity of our free will. Given that the will is considerably more extensive than the intellect, it is not constrained by the same limitations. Instead, it is extended to include phenomena that are, in themselves, indifferent to us. This can lead us to deviate from the path of virtue and choose evil over good, or falsehood over truth: “So what is the origin of my errors? It can only be this: that, since the range of the will is greater than that of the intellect, I do not confine it within the same limits, but extend it even to matters I do not understand; and since it is indifferent to these, it easily falls away from the true and the good, and this is both how I come to be deceived and how I come to sin” (2008, 42).

Moreover, he asserts that the will is so unlimited that it is beyond our capacity to conceive a will that is wider and vaster. This quality of the will is said to resemble divinity. The will is characterised by the sense of *indifference*

that arises when we are not inclined to act in a particular direction. We do not experience any external constraint when we choose to act: “This is because it consists purely in our ability to do or not to do a given thing (that is, to affirm or deny something, pursue something or avoid it); or rather, it consists purely in this: that we are moved in relation to that which the intellect presents to us as to be affirmed or denied, pursued or avoided, in such a way that we feel we are not being determined in that direction by any external force” (2008, 41).

In an investigation dedicated to Descartes’s view about freedom, included in the *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Descartes and the Meditations*, Gary Hatfield argues that we actually can identify two different theories about freedom in the argument cited above: “The first is freedom of indifference. Such freedom consists in the ability to determine ourselves to choose one way or the other, that is, to go either way in any given instance. The second conception finds our freedom in our acting in accordance with our own will, as opposed to our acts being determined by external force or constraint. This is called the freedom of spontaneity (where ‘spontaneous’ means self-acting but not necessarily uncaused). As described by Descartes, this spontaneous choice may be completely determined by our nature” (Hatfield 2003, 193-194). Hatfield believes that the difference between the two conceptions could be expressed in the opposition between *compatibilism* and *non-compatibilism*. However, this opposition should not be interpreted as an internal contradiction of his theory because, he insists that “Descartes might consistently hold that freedom is compatible with inner determination, but also hold that in some circumstances we choose in a way that is not internally determined (not determined by the clear perception of the intellect, or any other factor) (2003, 194). And he adds that Descartes’s conception requires both these conceptions about freedom in order to function properly. He needs the theory of freedom as spontaneity in order to hold God responsible for the truth of clear and distinct perceptions (which determines us internally to choose in accordance to them). But, in the same time, he needs the theory of indifference in order to make us responsible for our errors. Therefore, he believes that the origin of error is associated with a “privation” or “lack” in us that “comes from not following the rule that the will should be determined in judging by clear and distinct perceptions” (2003, 198).

While he admires Descartes’s subtle and skilful solution, Hatfield admits that the solution is not without problems. Because, Descartes had to acknowledge that God could have impressed the clear and distinct perceptions in an unforgettable manner in or memory. And, he didn’t do that because greater perfection resulted from variability (2003, 198). So, how are we supposed to understand the relation between Descartes’s two conceptions about freedom? In my opinion, the only answer could be that

the freedom in its most fundamental state should be understood as indifference. And, this interpretation is confirmed by his statement that, in the absence of natural or divine guidance, the will is in its most basic state, characterised by a sense of *indifference* towards the choice of good or true. However, when the individuals are receiving guidance from a natural or divine source, they will no longer feel indifferent and will act in accordance with what they perceive to be good and true. Nevertheless, the default freedom remains unaffected, because as Descartes notes: “Certainly, neither divine grace nor natural knowledge [*cognitio*] ever diminishes freedom; on the contrary, they increase and reinforce it” (Descartes 2008, 41).

Consequently, in a paradoxical manner, Descartes asserts that the essence of our will and our greatest perfection is derived from our capacity to choose, which is free from any determination, even if it means deviating from the domain of the clear and distinct perceptions of the truth, which is guaranteed by God. Therefore, it can be argued that our greatest perfection is most evident in those choices which express our lack of perfection and are the source of our errors. But, there is a certain tension between the idea of our unlimited will being perfect and the fact that it is also indifferent and blind, which makes it the source of our errors and sins. Furthermore, there is another tension between the view that our volition is fundamentally undetermined and the idea that our intellect is capable of influencing our will and directing our choices in accordance with the clear and distinct perceptions of the truth. It could be said that this creates an opposition between volition and intellect, which is challenging to overcome in order to explain how the two faculties of our mind will collaborate in the process of our knowledge and in our moral life. Therefore, I believe we should ask if there is any way in which Descartes could provide a resolution to this apparent contradiction.

As I argued in a previous paper, a key concept in understanding his view concerning the relation between will and intellect is the notion of *attention*. I have emphasised the fact that the power of the will and the perception of the intellect are brought closer together in the act of focusing attention on a particular content of our mind. And attention is an essential concept for understanding the Cartesian method of discovering the truth in science, as it was exposed in his works *Discourse of the Method*, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* and *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Țuțui 2018, 33-36). As was suggested by Cristina Santinelli, attention could be interpreted as an essential element which was added by Descartes to the relation between the epistemic subject and his object, in order to explain the process of our knowledge. And, attention should be understood as the orientation of the epistemic subject towards his object (Santinelli 2018, 51-52).

Consequently, the act of focusing our attention is accompanied by the collaboration between reason and volition. However, is this collaboration sufficient to negate the discrepancy between our willpower and our intellect? In other words, is it sufficient to negate Descartes' preference for the concept of freedom as indifference in favour of the notion of freedom understood as spontaneity? In my opinion, the answer to this question is obviously negative. And, I believe that a clear demonstration of this statement can be found in the aforementioned sentence 32 from his *Principles of Philosophy* where he postulates that there are only two *modes of thinking*, the perception of the intellect and the action of the will. Hence, although they are characterised in a similar manner as “modes of thinking” they do not coincide. As it is evident from characterization of man's nature as *res cogitans*, as a thinking thing, Descartes had at least two meanings in mind when he used the term “thinking”: he used it to refer to the *activity* of thinking that can take the form of will, imagination, feeling, and so on, but he also used it to refer to thinking as a *substance*, as the essence of human nature. In other words, people do not just think, in one form or another, listed above. They should be conceived as “thinking substances”. And I added that we must distinguish between our nature as “thinking substances” and the modes of this substance which are the perceptions of our intellect and the determinations of our will (Țuțui 2018, 37). However, it is clear that these two modes will always retain their distinctive characteristics, and that it is not possible to reduce either of them to the other.

Therefore, someone could rightfully argue that the aforementioned problem will persist. A similar tension will emerge between the two modes of thinking which are collaborating in the process of focusing our attention. And, Descartes still has to provide a more compelling explanation for the origin of errors. This entails elucidating the manner in which our attention is diverted from the most valuable content of our intellect, namely the clear and distinct perceptions of the truth. But, the French thinker was not able to provide a satisfactory solution to this problem. And, without going into further details, it is worth noting that Descartes's conception was also confronted with other serious objections. As it was noticed by Desmond Clarke, the most important of them was the well-known problem of explaining how voluntary actions that are taking place in the soul can affect the body and vice versa (Clarke 2005, 135).

Malebranche and his *thin* theory of freedom as *indifference*

The theory of freedom as indifference is also evident in the works of another significant author of the period, Nicolas Malebranche. However, his view is less robust than the Cartesian view. Malebranche attempted to

address the issues raised by Cartesianism by adopting his famous Occasionalist position, which holds that humans are only the occasional causes of their actions, with God being the efficient cause of all change and choice. Consequently, as in was suggested by Patrick Riley, Malebranche's conception offers little room for the freedom of human will. Our liberty is reduced to the simple act of consenting to or suspending consent to the inclinations we have toward good and order, which are predetermined in us by God. According to Malebranche, humans are free and responsible in the sense that they must consent to a motive. God creates an inclination in them through an Augustinian delight toward good or order in general, and they must experience this delight in order for the consenting to be possible (Riley 2000, 254).

Malebranche's theoretical approach also differed from Cartesianism in regard to his understanding of the nature of the passions. He rejected Descartes's view according to which passions should be understood as a consequence of the union between body and mind. And, he described them as impressions from God, the Author of Nature: "The passions of the soul are impressions from the Author of nature that incline us toward loving our body and all that might be of use in its preservation - just as the natural inclinations are impressions from the Author of nature that primarily lead us toward loving Him as the sovereign good and our neighbour without regard for our body" (Malebranche 1997, 338).

The aforementioned account of the passions could prompt the question of whether Malebranche allows for any type of freedom of the will. He acknowledged this possible objection and expressed his concern that this thesis could be interpreted in such a way as to reject the possibility of human freedom and to make God the author of sin. For example, in the *Elucidation one* to his main work *The Search after Truth*, he expresses this concern as follows: "Some people hold that I gave up the mind's comparison with matter too soon, and they imagine that it is no more capable than matter of determining the impression God gives it. They would have me explain, if I can, what God does in us and what we ourselves do when we sin, because in their opinion, my explanation would make me either agree that man is capable of giving himself some new modification, or else recognize that God is the true cause of sin" (1997, 547).

That is why he will explicitly assume that humans have in themselves a principle of their determinations which cannot be found in nature. And he describes what God does in us in the following manner: "First, God unceasingly impels us by an irresistible impression toward the good in general. Second, He represents to us the idea of some particular good, or gives us the sensation of it. Finally, He leads us toward this particular good" (1997, 547). But, he adds that God does not lead us in a necessary or invincible way to love that particular good. We *feel* that we can stop this love

and we have the impulse to go further and even against it. And, this is precisely what a sinner does: “He stops, he rests and he does not follow God’s impression – he does nothing, for sin is nothing” (1997, 548).

Hence, he assumes in a clear and unambiguous fashion the interpretation of freedom based on this *feeling of indifference* which explains the voluntary nature of our choices. This allows him to conclude that human power of will should be understood as a principle of self-determination we have in ourselves, which “is always free with regard to particular goods” (1997, 548). And, indeed, this assertion is in accordance with the manner in which the author describes the human will in *The Search after Truth*: “Nevertheless, the power of volition, though it is not essential to it, is inseparable from mind - as mobility, though not essential to it, is inseparable from matter. For just as immovable matter is inconceivable, so a mind incapable of willing or of some natural inclination is inconceivable. But again, as matter can conceivably exist without any motion, likewise can the mind conceivably be without any impression of the Author of nature, leading it toward the good; and consequently it can be without any volition, for the will is nothing but the impression of the Author of nature that leads us toward the good in general, as has been explained at length in the first chapter of this work” (Malebranche 1997, 199).

Consequently, we can notice that Malebranche also postulates an elementary type of freedom as indifference, although he no longer associates it with a robust manifestation of the will as Descartes did. This stage of the mind exists without any will, just as matter can exist without any movement. Nevertheless, in Malebranche’s view the scope of our liberty is significantly diminished. Therefore, it is not possible for humans to experience the sensation described by Descartes in his *Fourth Meditation*, namely that their will is not subject to any external influence (2008, 41). In the conception of the Oratorian, freedom as *indifference* is reduced to consenting or suspending our consent for the inclinations toward the good and the order, which are predetermined in us by God. Yet, this type of freedom is still present, although his conception can be understood as an obvious step in the direction of freedom understood as *spontaneity*.

Spinoza’s view: the transition to *spontaneity*

Echoes of this controversy between the theory of freedom as indifference and the theory of freedom as spontaneity can be found in Spinozism. As it is well-known, Spinoza claimed that all things are inevitably present and predetermined by God, yet not in accordance with free will or benevolent intent, but rather in accordance with their intrinsic nature. In Theorems 32 and 33 from the first part of the *Ethics*, Spinoza asserts that volition cannot be considered a free cause, but rather a necessary one.

Furthermore, he postulates that things could not have been produced by God in any other form than the one in which they were produced (1994, 105-106). In Theorem 48, from the second part of the *Ethics*, he affirms that the soul lacks absolute or free will: “In the mind there is no absolute, or free, will, but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another, and this again by another, an so to infinity” (1994, 146). And, in the corollary to theorem 49, he eliminates the specific character of volition and reason by claiming that will and intellect are one and the same, because they are nothing apart from singular volitions and ideas themselves which are said to be the same (1994, 147).

However, in the final part of the *Ethics*, he acknowledges that the essence of the soul or its power is solely constituted by thought. In the theorem 10 from this part dedicated to human freedom, he states that “so long as we are not torn by affects contrary to our nature, we have the power of ordering and connecting the affections of the body according to the order of the intellect” (1994, 250). He then proceeds to argue that the exercise of thought can lead to the acquisition of accurate knowledge of the divine nature and to the intellectual love of God, which is the same as happiness. Alternatively, it can result in the retention of inadequate knowledge and the domination of the passions.

As we can notice, Spinoza’s view about our freedom is indeed puzzling because, while he explicitly rejects the idea of free will, he nevertheless allows us a type of freedom of the intellect to order our affections and to cultivate the authentic knowledge and the intellectual love for God. And, this problem was noticed by some of his contemporaries. For example, in a letter from 8 October 1676, Tschirnhaus states that, in his opinion, although Spinoza argues against free will and Descartes argues for free will they both conceive freedom. But, he believes that Descartes was right in affirming that in certain matter we are not determined by any cause and therefore we are free. And, in order to explain, he uses the example of his decision to write that letter to Spinoza. Even though he admits that there are some causes that could influenced him in that decision, his conscience tells him that the act of writing it nonetheless his decision: “But I also affirm as certain, on the evidence of consciousness and with notwithstanding these reasons, I really can omit this [act of writing]. It seems impossible to deny this. Also, if we were compelled by external things, who could acquire the habit of virtue? Indeed, on this assumption, every wicked act would be excusable” (1996, 266).

In his reply, Spinoza uses his famous comparison between the so-called conscience of human freedom and the situation of a stone that has received a quantity of movement and will move out of necessity: “Next, conceive now, if you will, that while the stone continues to move, it thinks, and

knows that as far as it can, it strives to continue to move. Of course, since the stone is conscious only of its striving, and not at all indifferent, it will believe itself to be free, and to preserve in motion for no other cause than because it wills to. And this is the famous human freedom which everyone brags of having, and which consists only in this: that men are conscious of their appetite and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined” (1994, 268). And he even accepts the consequence of this statement that virtue and vice would be characterized as necessary and constant dispositions of human mind, and that people could be said to be virtuous or evil by necessity. Moreover, in the final part of his letter he challenges Tschirnhaus to provide a better explanation of the concept of the human virtue which arises from the free decree of the mind, and is also compatible with God’s preordination (1994, 264).

But, are these arguments compelling? In my opinion they are not. If we analyse them more closely, we find that the examples he uses to support the above comparison between human action and the necessary movement of the stone are all problematic: an infant who cannot control his hunger, a drunkard, a madman, a man who dreams and cannot distinguish between the experience of that dream and real life. But these examples are in no way representative of the cases that are supposed to illustrate free action. And, as Olli Koistinen posits in his study entitled *Spinoza on action* included in the *Cambridge Companion to Spinoza’s Ethic*, this view on human agency seems desperate, comparing it not with a picture of the captain of a ship called our body, but with the picture of the passenger in a ship pushed by God. However, he argues that this picture is misleading because Spinoza does not completely abandon the idea of human freedom: “Human beings are capable of freedom, not of freedom of choice but of freedom of origination as one might call it” (2009, 181).

And, he explains this revisionary theory of agency by referring to the concept of *conatus*, or the striving to exist, a notion that plays an important role in the work of Spinoza. He adds that not only the body strives to exist, the mind has a *conatus* of its own which is called *Will*, when it is related only to the mind and is called *Appetite* when it is related to the mind and body together. Appetite together with the consciousness of that appetite is called *Desire*. Koistinen notices that although this description of the *conatus* seems to suggest that human motivations is heavily body-guided, in fact Spinoza gives the mind a rather strong role in the fifth part of the *Ethics*, where he claims that the mind has some power over the affects, saying that the mind has its own motivational force. Hence, he will conclude: “Thus, there is room in Spinoza for a battle between the intellect and the body. The characteristic action of the body-independent part of the mind is thinking through adequate ideas, which could be described as adequate thinking” (2009, 184).

Thus, if we compare Spinoza's theory of freedom with that of Descartes or Malebranche, we can see that he goes one step further in the transition from indifference to spontaneity. Firstly, he explicitly denies any difference between the will and the intellect. So, there is no place for the conflict between the will and reason, which in Cartesianism was seen as the source of error. Secondly, there is no such thing as the power of the mind to consent or to suspend consent for the inclinations we feel toward the good and the order, which was a central idea in the conception of Malebranche. Therefore, the scope of human freedom is restricted even further by being reduced to a motivational force, a *conatus* of the mind involved in the process of thinking through adequate ideas. Hence, there is no room for freedom as indifference in his view. The only type of freedom that is compatible with his moral philosophy is the one based on the concept of spontaneity. And, if we were to paraphrase the aforementioned argument provided by Gary Hatfield, this is the only notion of freedom that seems to be compatible with the determinations that influence our choices, and particularly with strictly deterministic conceptions centred on the idea of God's providence.

Leibniz and the impossibility of freedom as indifference

The interpretation of freedom as indifference was also rejected by another prominent rationalist thinker, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. He also tried to solve the problems of Cartesianism, and particularly the problem of the communication of substances, by stating that "only souls or soul-like entities could qualify as substances" (Jolley 1994, 7). This is his celebrated theory of monads, conceived as spiritual atoms, which are distinguished by a singular and fundamental quality: their perception. This perception is said to represent a multiplicity within a unity. According to his perspective, consciousness or *apperception* is a specific type of perception that is exclusive to monads that are also minds. And, he believes the monads change their perceptions because of an internal principle called *appetition*. All the monads are continually striving to change their perception, but, as it is explained by Lloyd Strickland, this striving is not always conscious. In this sense, he distinguishes between three types of monads: bare monads, animal souls and minds. At the level of bare monads the striving is automatic. At the level of animal souls it takes the form of an inclination that is *felt*, a passion. But, only at the level of the minds the striving is conscious and it "takes the form of the will, where the perception is an intellectual striving" (Leibniz 2014, 66-69).

Furthermore, in the *Monadology* he states that the natural changes of the monads originate from an internal principle, as an external cause could not penetrate inside the monad (Leibniz 2014, 25). In the sentence 79, he claims

that souls act in accordance with the laws of final causes, through appetites, ends and means, while bodies act in accordance with the laws of efficient causes, namely those of movement. Furthermore, he maintains that the two empires of efficient causes and of efficient and final causes are in harmony with each other (2014, 144). However, while supporting the thesis of pre-established harmony, Leibniz asserts that it does not invalidate human freedom. This is because pre-established harmony merely inclines without forcing man to choose certain options.

But should we understand this freedom in the sense of indifference or in the sense of spontaneity? A clear answer is provided in one of his short philosophical text which is dedicated precisely to the topic of the nature of free will. In this text, Leibniz defines the concept of will as “an effort that one makes to act, because one has found it good” (Leibniz 2006a, 92). That is why he states categorically that we are free because we are the masters of our actions, when we do everything that we will, with the condition that it does not surpass our powers and our knowledge. Because, he believes that freedom should be opposed not only to the constraint exercised by an external force, but also to ignorance. However, Leibniz acknowledges that some people won't be satisfied with this concept of freedom: “But we demand something further; we are not content with the freedom to act, but also claim a freedom to will what we would will to will, which is a contradictory thing, and would be dangerous if it were possible” (2006a, 92). In his opinion, the “freedom to will everything that one would will” would mean an infinite regress. Because, if someone would ask me why I will something, and I respond “because I will to will”, he will be entitled to ask me again “Why do you will to will?” and so on and so forth. So, Leibniz states that the reason for willing should not be taken from the will, but from the understanding, because it is our nature to will what we believe to be the best. And, next he will reject the notion of freedom as indifference in an explicit and unambiguous manner: “Therefore there is no freedom of indifference, as it is called in the Schools. For the freedom to will that many claim, and that they say consists in indifference, such that we can suspend action and will without any reason that moves us to it, is not only an impossible thing, since every created being has some cause, but also useless, and something which would even be dangerous; so much so that we would not be liable to thank nature if it had given us so irrational a faculty” (2006a, 93).

And, he adds that this concept is also in contradiction with the supposition that our freedom must be a human perfection, because this type of indifference is rather indicative of a great imperfection. That is why he will conclude that freedom is nothing else than the power to reason carefully about things and to act in conformity with what we have judged to be the best. Nevertheless, he suggests that freedom can be mixed with some constraint, because our reasoning is connected with the movements of the body, which are influenced by the external impressions. Moreover, he affirms

that other influences like sudden encounters, great passions, prejudices, customs and even diseases could make us “will and act before we have reasoned”. But, the more we will educate ourselves not to rush into thing, the freer we will become (2006a, 93-94).

Another brief text that is particularly pertinent to the subject matter of this paper is entitled *On freedom and spontaneity*. The ideas are presented in a very systematic way, starting with a definition of freedom as “spontaneity joined to intelligence”. He adds that what it is called spontaneity in beast and other substances without intelligence, it is called freedom in humans. Next he explains the concept of spontaneity as contingency without compulsion or something that it is neither necessary, nor constrained. In his view, indifference is opposed to determination, which is a state where there is a reason that inclines us towards an action rather than another. And he clearly postulates that all actions are determined and never indifferent and that *freedom as indifference is impossible* even in God. Because he claims that God is determined by his nature to do the best and this is the very definition of perfection. Analogously, the more humans act in conformity with the reason the freer they are. Their servitude comes from their actions in accordance with the passions (2006b, 94).

Therefore, an analysis of Leibniz’s perspective on the freedom of the will and its relationship to the perceptions of the intellect reveals that he seems to take a categorical step towards the integration of will and rationality. He also leaves little room for a Cartesian type of conflict between the will and the intellect, which provided an explanation for the origins of errors and sins. And, even more categorically than Spinoza, he postulates the impossibility of freedom as indifference. He thus explicitly adopts the theory of spontaneity, which is compatible with his view of God’s providence and the thesis of pre-established harmony. However, while his theory seems to be more systematic and coherent than that defended by Spinoza, he faces a similar challenge in trying to explain common ideas as vice and virtue. Consequently, we can see once again that the more an author insists on the role played by God’s providence in the moral life of man, the more he will be inclined to the concept of freedom as spontaneity, and the less he will be inclined to the concept of freedom as indifference.

Hume’s revision: a more coherent theory of freedom as spontaneity

Returning now to Hume’s conception, we must note that his doctrine of the relationship between reason and the passions, according to which reason can be nothing but the slave of the passions, did not allow him to assume the predominant conception presented above and to assert that the domination of reason over the passions would be the key to understanding the nature of the free will and the possibility of moral choices. Referring to

this point, author Terence Penelhum stated: “If reason is thus shown to be incapable of originating our choices and inclinations, then on those occasions when we make choices in opposition to a passion, it cannot be reason that moves us: reason cannot provide the necessary contrary ‘impulse’ itself” (Penelhum 1993, 128). As a result, Hume was compelled to propose an alternative account of the human will and its functioning, one that does not refer to the dominance of reason over the passions. Therefore, he will strive to offer an account of the will and its function that would appear paradoxical to those who adhere to the rationalist conception previously described. This is a version of *compatibilism*, which states that it is possible to hold that human actions are caused and yet are free (Penelhum 1993, 129). For this reason, in his *Treatise*, he provides an explanation for the notion of human volition that makes no reference to the alleged force of the intellect: „I desire it may be observed, that by the will, I mean nothing but the internal impression we feel and are conscious of, when we knowingly give rise to any new motion of our body, or new perception of our mind” (Hume 1960, 399).

And, Hume articulates his conception of volition by explicitly mentioning the distinction between the two interpretations of the concept of freedom, which are the subject matter of this article: freedom as *spontaneity* and freedom as *indifference* (1960, 407). He adds that the first type of freedom is opposed to violence and is possessed by every man who is not the victim of a coercion exercised with violence that restricts his ability to choose a particular course of action. The second kind of freedom is opposed to necessity and would presuppose the absence of any causal influence or determination acting on the human will.

From Hume’s perspective, the primary error that philosophers make when contemplating the concepts of freedom and necessity is to assume that there is an irreconcilable distinction between the relationship between cause and effect, on the one hand, and that between motives (or preferences, inclinations) and voluntary actions, on the other. The surprising character of human actions is not attributable to any absolutely free and, therefore, unpredictable manifestation of human will. Rather, it is the result of our simple inability to discover the connection between motives and actions. Similarly, the surprising character of some natural events is not generated by any spontaneous manifestation of effects. Instead, it arises from the complexity and contrariness of the causes that determine effects different from those we normally expect. Consequently, he will argue that the conjunction of motives and voluntary actions is as constant and uniform as that of cause and effect in any part of nature (2007, 64).

Moreover, he posits that the natural and moral evidence are so intricately intertwined, forming a unified argument, that it is reasonable to conclude that they are of a similar nature and originate from a common set of

principles. Furthermore, Hume provides the example of a prisoner who is led to the gallows and foresees his death as certain, basing this on the firmness and fidelity of the guards and the operation of the axe or the wheel. And, he suggests that in this example, there is a single chain of natural causes and voluntary actions, with no discernible distinction between them for the spirit (2007, 66).

Thus, it can be argued that the aforementioned error arises from the misconception that the relationship between cause and effect can be fully explained by delving deeply into the powers of nature and establishing a perceived necessary connection between them. This is combined with the belief that no such connection exists in the case of the operations of the human spirit. However, his critique of the concept of causality suggests that even with regard to the purported natural necessity that connects causes and effects, we are only aware of what experience teaches us about their ordinary conjunction: that one follows the other. The same is true of motives and actions. Actions are typically preceded by motives, inclinations, circumstances, or other factors that influence the will. Consequently, if we assume that there is no distinction in nature between the two, and this aforementioned illusion is dispelled, the question arises: "For what is meant by liberty, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot surely mean, that actions have so little connexion with motives, inclinations, and circumstances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other, and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the existence of the other" (2007, 68-69).

Thus, in Hume's view, human freedom can only take the first form described above, that of spontaneity, as he states in his work, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*: "By liberty, then, we can only mean a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a prisoner and in chains" (2007, 69).

But how, then, might one explain the prevailing notion that genuine freedom, in the sense of indifference, should be understood as independence from any kind of causal influence? Hume thinks that it is based on a confusion, namely that between the two kinds of freedom mentioned above, to which is added what he calls the "false sense of indifference" generated by the fact that we can imagine that we could have acted otherwise and that our will is not itself affected by any influence. However, in his *Treatise* he claims that the only experience that matters is not this illusory feeling of indifference, but the more objective perspective that the neutral observer would have on us who could infer, as Hume says, how we would act if he knew our motives and character (1960, 407-408).

And, in his work *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, after he presents the aforementioned definition of liberty, he explicitly rejects the theory of freedom as indifference: “And if the definition above mentioned be admitted; liberty, when opposed to necessity, not to constraint, is the same thing with chance; which is universally allowed to have no existence” (2007, 69).

To the critic who would argue that the influence which motives have on the will should not be regarded as a form of necessity, and that motives are not true causes of behaviour, Hume replies that this is merely a verbal dispute: he may use another word if he does not like the term “cause” provided he admits that motives (e.g. those connected with laws which are based on reward or punishment) have a constant and uniform influence on the mind producing good actions and preventing bad ones (2007, 70-71).

Nevertheless, it is possible to question whether such a conception can still explain the notion of responsibility. Hume anticipates the criticism that the theory he proposes could have hazardous consequences for individual responsibility. However, he considers this pervasive mode of reasoning to be both erroneous and condemnable. He maintains that if an opinion can be dismissed on the grounds of its absurdity, it should not be rejected solely on the basis of its potential for harm. Moreover, he argues that his view regarding the necessity of associating human actions to motives, inclinations and circumstances is implicitly accepted by philosophers and theologians alike. It is only the specific manner in which they differentiate between necessity and natural causality on the one hand, and the determinations of the will, on the other, that makes them refuse to utilise the terms causality and necessity when discussing human actions. If, however, one gets beyond this “terminological” dispute, they will discover that his theory of freedom is not only harmless to morality, but is even essential to its support (2007, 70).

Therefore, he believes that this re-signification of the concept of liberty is required in order to safeguard the very notion of responsibility. We do not blame people for acts they do unknowingly or by chance precisely because the principles of these actions are transitory and find their end in themselves. Only where actions are indications of character, drives and internal inclinations can they give rise to blame or praise. This view of freedom is, however, open to criticism on the grounds that if human actions are subject to the same necessity as the operations of matter, then there is a continuous causal chain of necessary causes from which nothing escapes. This would nullify human responsibility, with the ultimate responsibility resting with the creator of the world. This objection is said to have two sides. The first argument suggests that if human actions are inextricably linked to the divine, they can only be perceived as malevolent. The second argument postulates that if human actions are, in fact, criminal, then we should reconsider the attribute of perfection that we attribute to divinity, since it would be the author of these acts. The first part of the objection

seems to him to be a weak and ineffectual argument: the suffering man would find little consolation in such theodicy (2007, 73). He thinks the same is true of moral evil. The human spirit is so formed that it immediately feels a sense of approval or disapproval at the appearance of certain characters, inclinations or actions: it approves of those which ensure the peace and security of human society and disapproves of those which produce disorder. No theodicy argument should prevail over these natural feelings. The second part of the objection seems difficult to refute only by those who admit that the Divine is the proximate cause of human actions: if the Divine has this status, and if human actions are criminal, then the attempt to claim that it is not nevertheless the author of sin runs into unresolvable difficulties. But this is only the case if philosophy ventures boldly to solve these sublime mysteries that are beyond its powers. But if it returns with modesty from this land so full of obscurities and perplexities to its authentic domain which is the examination of ordinary life and experience it will have plenty to explore, but without wandering into an “boundless an ocean of doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction” (2007, 75).

However, here Hume’s argument on this topic stops short without making more categorical statements about how he intends to explain or salvage the notion of responsibility. Consequently, it is natural to inquire as to what his thesis on this topic would be, or at the very least, how his argument would function in this particular instance. I believe that the answer to this question can be roughly stated as follows: in the context of our everyday experience, the concept of freedom is clear enough if we understand it in the sense of spontaneity. We are free if we act according to our will, without external constraints, if we do not act determined by external forces that are imposed on us (that chain us). This freedom is not only compatible with, but even presupposes, determinations of our will that come from our character, inclinations and motives. This means that the freedom that is exercised is *our* freedom and that we act in virtue of enduring principles that are *our own*. And, this is the only reason why we can be held responsible and accountable for those actions.

And, indeed, his theory of freedom as spontaneity is more coherent, when explained in this way, than those supported by Leibniz and Spinoza, who were compelled to find a way to combine their robust notion of necessity, originating in the idea of God’s providence, with a type of freedom for man that would explain the origin of our error and sins.

But if someone would object: are we really the ones who act determined by motives, inclinations, or character traits that are at least partly beyond our control? Does not the nature within us represent the fundamental principle from which these actions are generated (just as Divinity was for Malebranche)? In my estimation, Hume’s response to this objection would be that by posing this question, we demonstrate once again that we are

victims of the illusion that there is a clear distinction between the natural necessity based on the principle of causality and the necessity specific to human actions. But this distinction is not justified. Moreover, Hume would tell us, we would thereby demonstrate that we are basically still thinking of freedom in the mistaken paradigm of indifference: we are still looking for that moment of indifference when someone (us, nature, the Divine) has acted without any determination of his will. However, to be fair to Hume we should admit that this sense ascribed to freedom should be analysed to see if it is not itself problematic or at least less intelligible than the other. And, indeed, I think that in trying to conceive of what an exercise of will undetermined by anything would mean, not even implying an inclination or preference for one of the countless possible courses of action, we would run into considerable difficulties. A will that is supposed to be absolutely free and undetermined by anything would either act completely at random or would be paralysed, as evidenced by the anecdote of Buridan's donkey. Absolute freedom of will would coincide with absolute lack of freedom. And the mechanistic metaphor used by so many authors, according to which free is he who moves himself, or who has the principle of movement in himself, is even less intelligible because it only assumes what it was meant to demonstrate. And as a proof, if we were to ask further "And in what particular way does it move itself? According to what forces? Where do they spring from?", we would notice that the question is reframed and the apparent clarity of the answer disappears as if by magic.

Thus, Hume counsels us to refrain from exploring the metaphysical realm of sublime absurdities and to return to the more tangible realm of ordinary life, where the notions of will, freedom, and responsibility are more readily comprehensible. This is a kind of appeal to the naturalisation of philosophy, made in advance of its time, which advises us to accept that there is no insurmountable gulf between the course of nature and the workings of our mind, but rather a natural continuity.

Conclusions

The argument presented in this paper enabled us to gain at least a partial insight into the profound nature of human freedom as it was revealed in the debate between two main interpretations of this concept. The first concept is based on the assumption that freedom can be defined as indifference, meaning the absence of any external influence on the will. The second thesis posits that freedom can be more effectively explained in terms of spontaneity. This concept encompasses a capacity for choice that is compatible with the various influences determined by our desires, motives, character, and even our nature.

This distinction originated in the controversies between Christian medieval thinkers who were focusing on explaining how God's providence and grace could coexist with human moral life and how we can explain the problem of evil. Yet, the concept acquired even greater relevance in the ethical theories of modern philosophers, who changed the focus of philosophical discourse from the metaphysical concerns specific to the Cartesian thought to the moral and political perspective which was characteristic for the philosophy of the Enlightenment. And, I assumed the methodological presupposition that the transition in question can be traced by investigating some subtle transformations in the understanding of the concept of freedom, from the interpretation based on indifference to the interpretation based on spontaneity.

My analysis started with the presentation of Descartes's conception which is a *robust* version of the theory of freedom as indifference. In Descartes's view, human will is infinite and free from any kind of external determination, having the ability to choose even that which exceeds the realm of the intellect's clear and distinct perceptions, which also explains the possibility of errors and sins. However, he encountered considerable challenges when attempting to elucidate the relationship between the mind and body and to reconcile the tension between volition and intellect with the constraints of human knowledge and moral conduct.

Next, I referred to the theory of freedom provided by Malebranche in order to address the problems of Cartesianism. I argued that his interpretation is a *thin* version of the theory of indifference, which significantly reduces the scope of human freedom, allowing only for a power of the will to consent or to suspend the consent in relation to the inclinations toward the order and the good, which are predetermined in us by God.

The argument was further developed with the presentation of the relevant contributions regarding this topic provided by two other prominent rationalist thinkers, Spinoza and Leibniz. They explicitly rejected the interpretation of freedom as indifference, arguing for different versions of the theory of spontaneity, which they considered to be more compatible with the thesis of God's providence. However, as the scope of human liberty was further reduced, they encountered even more difficulties in their attempts to explain the problem of moral evil and common notions such as vice and virtue.

Finally, I presented Hume's revision of the theory of spontaneity, which is based on his conception that reason plays no significant role in our moral life. This is because reason is only the "slave of the passions" and, therefore, is incapable of originating our choices and inclinations. Nevertheless, I argued that his view on spontaneity is more coherent than those supported by Spinoza and Leibniz. The reason for this is that it is founded on a more unitary conception of human freedom and its relation with the type of

necessity existing in nature. In his view, the natural necessity is analogous to and in harmony with the influences exerted on the will by motives, desires and character.

References

- Clarke, Desmond. 2005. *Descartes's Theory of Mind*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Descartes, René. 2008. *Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and Replies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Descartes, René. 1985. "Principles of Philosophy". In *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, translated by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hume, David. 1960. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, reprinted from the original edition by L. A. Selby-Bigge. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Hume, David. 2007. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Koistinen, Olli. 2009. "Spinoza on action". In *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza's Ethic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leibniz, G.W. 2014. "Monadology". In *Leibniz's Monadology A New Translation and Guide*, edited by Lloyd Strickland. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Leibniz, G.W., 2006a. "On free will". In *The Shorter Leibniz Texts*, translated by Lloyd Strickland. New York: Continuum.
- Leibniz, G.W., 2006b. "On freedom and spontaneity". In *The Shorter Leibniz Texts*, translated by Lloyd Strickland. New York: Continuum.
- Jolley, Nicholas. 1994. *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Malebranche, Nicolas. 1997. *The Search after Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McIntyre, Jane. 2006. "Hume's 'New and Extraordinary' Account of the Passions". In *The Blackwell Guide to Hume's Treatise*, edited by Saul Trager. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Penelhum, Terence. 1993. "Hume's Moral Psychology". In *Cambridge Companion to Hume*, edited by David Fate Norton. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Pitson, Tony. 2006. "Liberty, Necessity, and the Will". In *The Blackwell Guide to Hume's Treatise*, edited by Saul Trager. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Riley, Patrick. 2000. "Malebranche's Moral Philosophy". In *The Cambridge Companion to Malebranche*, edited by Steven Nadler. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Santinelli, Cristina. 2018. „Mos geometricus et attention après Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche et la méthode de la philosophie”. In *Spinoza-Malebranche: À la croisée des interprétations*, Raffaele Carbone, Chantal Jaquet et Pierre-François Moreau (dir.). Lyon : ENS Éditions.
- Spinoza, Benedict. 1994. *The Ethics and other Works*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Țuțui, Viorel. 2018. "Perception, Attention, and Knowledge in Cartesianism, Malebranchism and the Empiricism of David Hume". *The Scientific Annals of "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi. Communication Sciences*, Tome XI, No. 1, 2018: 30-58.
- Țuțui, Viorel. 2022. "A Critical Analysis of David Hume's Theory of Justice as an Artificial Virtue". *Argumentum. Journal of the Seminar of Discursive Logic, Argumentation Theory and Rhetoric* 20 (1): 9-32.

Tudorel-Constantin Rusu*

Ethos-Pathos-Logos: Aristotle's Triad of Persuasiveness in Homiletical Discourse

Abstract: The homiletical discourse of the Eastern Christian Church – on which tradition this paper focuses – is considered standardised and prescriptive, as it also plays an important liturgical role. My research identifies and presents those ambon proclamations that best circumscribe and fall within Aristotle's three means of persuasion – *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. It is also essential to consider where persuasive declamations are present in these homiletical discourses. Therefore, it will be related to the conventional parts of an oration in Classical rhetoric.

Keywords: persuasion, Classical rhetoric, ethos, pathos, logos, homiletical discourse

01. Rhetoric: *Craft* or *knack*?

Aristotle begins, not by coincidence, his famous treatise on persuasion – *On Rhetoric* – with the following statement: “Rhetoric is an *antistrophos*¹ to dialectic” (1.1.1354 a1). What does Stagirite mean by this assertion, and why does it attach so much importance to it that it is placed right in the opening paragraph?

Before we proceed, it might be helpful to provide a brief background. As Kennedy (2007) notes, “Aristotle is more likely thinking of and rejecting the analogy of the true and false arts elaborated by Socrates in *Gorgias*” (30), where oratory is considered not a technical art (*techné*) or craft, but rather “...a knack (...) for producing a certain gratification and pleasure” (*Gorgias*, 462c). Seen this way, the main point of oratory is flattery, and those who want to practice need to have “...a mind given to making hunches takes to, a mind that's bold and naturally clever at dealing with people.” (*Gorgias*, 463a-b). In other words, Socrates does not consider oratory an art “...because it has no account of the nature of whatever things it applies by which it applies them, so that it's unable to state the cause of each thing” (*Gorgias*, 465a). On the other hand, art can be defined as a thing that can be

* Tudorel-Constantin Rusu, PhD, Assistant professor, Department of Communication Sciences and Public Relations, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași (Romania). Email: tudorelrusu@gmail.com.

** *Acknowledgement:* This article represents a partially reworked version of the views held in my doctoral thesis, *Resources of Classical Oratory in Homiletical Discourse*, which I defended at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași in September 2023.

accounted for. The Socratic and Platonic view is evident: “You’ve now heard what I say oratory is. It’s the counterpart in the soul to pastry baking, its counterpart in the body” (*Gorgias*, 465 d-e).

02. A systematisation of persuasion

As a counterargument to what has been said in the Platonic *Gorgias* dialogue, Aristotle places rhetoric in a complex relationship with dialectic through the word *antistrophos*, which reflects “both a parallelism and a difference at the level of the two arts” (Maftai 2011, 374). In this way, the Stagirite intends to ground rhetoric rationally and to shape it into a *techné* that aligns with the definition in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which states that rhetoric is “...a certain characteristic bound up with making that is accompanied by true reason” (6.4.1140 a20). Furthermore, rhetoric provides “a coherent model of the connection between the method and its results” (Andrieş 2011, 14). In Aristotle’s view, “less *art* in the sense of *fine art* than any craft or body of *technical* knowledge used to produce an artefact: shoes, tables, a building and hence the art of shoemaking, of carpentry, and of architecture. (...) Aristotle maintains that art, like prudence, pertains to the realm of things that admit of being otherwise but differs from prudence in that it is bound up with *making (poiesis)* rather than with action (*praxis*); it therefore, has an end other than its activity” (Bartlett and Collins 2011, 1).

The relationship between rhetoric and dialectic has also been understood as a link or correspondence between private and public address: “Dialectic and rhetoric are antistrophic in the precise sense that what dialectic is to the private and conversational use of language (between two people alternatively speaking and hearing, asking questions and answering them), rhetoric is to the public use of language (political, in a broad sense), addressed by a single speaker to a collective audience” (Brunschiwig 1996, 36). In a logical manner, based on its special relationship with dialectics, the Aristotelian definition of rhetoric continues with an important distinction. This is about the fact that “the genre of rhetoric, like that of dialectic, is not delimited” (Andrieş 2011, 25): “But rhetoric seems to be able to observe the persuasive about *the given*, so to speak. That, too, is why we say it does not include technical knowledge of any particular, defined genus [of subjects]” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1355 b30-34)². This leads to the Aristotelian definition of rhetoric: “an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1355 b25).

Aristotelian rhetoric is thus considered “the art of discovering persuasive means” (Sălăvăstru 1996, 37), and it is comprised of two distinct categories of evidential sources: those that are intrinsic to the art of rhetoric and those that are independent of this art. By employing a simple criterion: “Can the

mean be found with (or without) the rhetorical *techne* or method?” (Braet 1992, 309), the Stagirite distinguishes between means of persuasion that are not related to the orator but existed prior (witnesses, testimony from torture, contracts) and means of persuasion related to the oratorical method: “Of the *pisteis*, some are *atechnic* (non-artistic), some *entechnic* (embodied in art, artistic). I call *atechnic* those that are not provided by us [i.e., the potential speaker] but are preexisting: for example, witnesses, testimony from torture, contracts, and such like; and *entechnic* whatever can be prepared by method and by us; thus one must use the former and invent the latter” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1355 b35-1356 a). As Kennedy (2007) notes, “*pistis* (pl. *pisteis*) has a number of different meanings in different contexts: proof, means of persuasion, belief” (31).

It is also important to say that the Aristotelian view that the *entechnic pisteis* are uncovered and used by the orator, while *atechnic pisteis* are not, and this results in the distinction between *inventio* and the other canons of rhetoric (Maftai 2011, 374). *Heurein*, the word used by Aristotle, meaning “to find,” will become the regular Greek word for rhetorical *invention* (Kennedy 2007, 38).

The *entechnic pisteis*, those that are “provided through speech” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1356 a1), that “come from within the oratorical art” (Sălăvăstru 2010, 37), are of three kinds: “for some are in the character [*ethos*] of the speaker, and some in disposing the listener in some way [*pathos*], and some in the speech [*logos*] itself, by showing or seeming to show something” (*On Rhetoric*, 1. 2.1356 a1-4). In this passage can be found the summary of the well-known “Aristotelian triad *ethos* (orator), *pathos* (auditor), and *logos* (language, discourse), which is significant for any oratorical approach and which is still today the criterion for ordering the art of oratory” (Meyer 1993, quoted in Sălăvăstru 2010, 23).

03. Homiletical discourse and persuasion

The *prooimion* (lat. *exordium*) of the current homiletical discourse of the Eastern Christian Church generally begins with the declamation “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost!” and continues with the address “Beloved faithful,” or with an emotional appeal in the same register. In terms of *pistis*, or *proof*, as part of an oration (lat. *confirmatio* – and *refutatio*), this part of the ambon discourse contains formulations such as “Evangelion of the day shows us” and “the Holy Fathers tell us” or, generally speaking, “the Church teaches us.” “Amen!” uttered in a rousing tone, is – and always has been – the final word of the oratorical clergymen’s *epilogos* (lat. *peroratio*).

These homiletical pastoral declamations, in various forms, together with others specific to the pulpit discourse of the Eastern tradition, are well

known to people who belong to the category of so-called “practising faithful” or, in general, to people to whom the universe of the biblical text and the doctrine of Eastern Christian Church teaching is not (totally) new. As for the emitters of these utterances, the orators – current clergy preachers – have learned and inherited it from generation to generation and have taken it on as such. It is known that the tradition of homiletical discourse is a standardised and prescriptive one.

A significant process took place at the beginning of the formation of Christian communities: the original homiletical expressions or declamations metamorphosed into constitutive parts of the liturgical language, which is characteristic of the sacramental space. It is not by chance that the earliest known Christian Easter homily – *On Pascha* (c. 160 AD), by Melito, Bishop of Sardis – is considered by scholars such as Siegert (1997, 438), Alistair Stewart-Sykes (2001, 221-228), and John Ică jr (2008, 853) to be the earliest known Easter service. Thus, at the end of the process of their transformation from declamation to liturgical acts, it was lost sight of the fact that these pastoral utterances had *ab initio*, in the Christian orator’s intention, a rhetorical purpose, the purpose par excellence of any discursive construct: to persuade the audience.

The opinion of some authors like Vasile Florescu³ that current homiletical discourse is not (anymore) aimed at persuading the faithful, who are already convinced, already forever converted, does not stand up, and the textbooks of Orthodox Christian homiletics, especially the current editions, acknowledge this. In his book *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching*, Zoltán Literáty notes that “The simplest argument for this case is that it would be difficult to imagine a sermon without intent, but all intentional speeches are *rhetorical by nature*. (...) rhetoric, as the intrinsic cohesive power of speech, is not a question of form, style or presentation, but a practical ability based on *common sense* that produces effective speech in the most optimal way possible” (Literáty 2020, loc. 73). If the homiletical discourse is rhetorical by nature, as Literáty states, in the Aristotelian view, that means it is persuasive.

Following the theses of George A. Kennedy and Jaroslav Pelikan (2000), I consider it no coincidence that the Greek word *pistis*, by which Aristotle calls the three kinds of artistic means of persuasion – ethos, pathos, and logos – has been considered the most appropriate term to cover the biblical term “faith.” *Pistis*, according to dictionaries and online applications such as www.billmounce.com, appears in the New Testament 243 times. Considering all this, and aware that for Aristotle, rhetoric is “an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1355 b25), the triad ethos-pathos-logos constitutes an undeniable value in the case of homiletic discourse as well. As James Kinneavy has shown in *Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith*, “the concept of faith inscribed in the New

Testament reflects the influence of Greek theories of persuasion” (Youngdahl 1996, 573):

“The juxtaposition of *Greek rhetoric* and *Christian faith* may seem a trifle bizarre, maybe even irreverent – the two notions appear somewhat distant. Yet if we remember that rhetoric is the art of persuasion and that the Greek word for persuasion was *pistis* and that the Christian word for faith was also *pistis*, the embodiment of both meanings in the same word suggests that the two notions may not be too far apart. Indeed, in Liddell and Scott, the first meaning of *pistis* conjoins the two concepts: *trust in others, faith ... generally persuasion of a thing, confidence, assurance*. And both meanings persisted from the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. through the times of classical and Hellenistic Greek and into the period of the church fathers. In other words, a user of Greek in the first century A.D. would ordinarily be aware of the two meanings of the word” (Kinneavy 1987, 3).

On the assumption of Kinneavy, Pat Youngdahl (1996) explains that he “argues that the New Testament writers and their audiences understood *pistis* (usually translated *faith*) to refer not only to human trust in God (the concept of faith emphasized in the Hebrew scriptures) but also to the human process of giving free assent, despite some uncertainty, to a new perspective (the notion of persuasion exemplified in the writings of Isocrates and Aristotle). The early church assumed, as Kinneavy’s analysis reveals, that persuasion to the faith was not a once-and-for-all event, essential only for potential converts, but an ongoing process, a day-by-day assent that would likely increase in depth and power as doubt was explored and commitment was tested” (573).

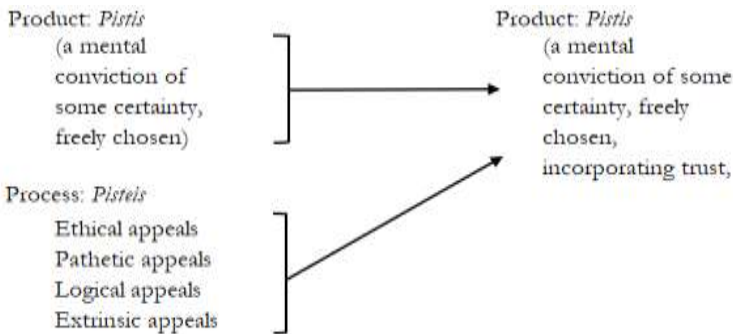


Figure 1. Greek persuasion and Christian faith: A transfer, interpreted by James Kinneavy in *Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith* (1987)

04. The homiletical ethos-pathos-logos

As I already mentioned, the current homiletical discourse of the Eastern Christian Church generally begins with the declamation “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost!” The particular ethos of homiletical discourse has as its primary foundation a public liturgical act, namely the ordination or *cheirotonia*. By means of ordination, the bishop or priest becomes a public *witness* who speaks to the faithful not in his own name but in the name of the One who sent the first apostles⁴ to preach, i.e., *in the name of Jesus Christ* (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-49).

If Jesus sends the apostles to preach in his name and “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” chapter 5 of the *Gospel of John* reveals that he himself declares the same about his own ethos. Thus, Jesus tells the Jews on several occasions that everything he does and says is from the Father and *in the name of the Father* (John 5:19; John 5:22-24; John 5:24; John 5:26-27; John 5:30; John 5:31-32; John 5:36-38; John 5:43).

Therefore, one of the assumptions of this paper is that the formulation “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” before the cultic or liturgical role, has in view the rhetorical purpose of persuasion through ethos. The Eastern Christian preaching cleric does not speak in his own name but follows the ethos specific to the Christic discursive tradition, continued by the apostolic and patristic tradition. The pastoral ethos, following entirely the classical rhetorical rules, is predominantly found in the homily’s *exordiums*. The most appropriate correspondent for the pastoral ethos is that of *archetypal discourse*: the orator cleric, both by his prior or pre-existing institutional authority and by his discursive credibility, persuades the audience by referring to his *venerable ancestors* – the Apostles and the first bishops – whose *auctoritas* and testimony he assumes through the Mystery of Ordination.

Homiletic pathos also falls within the conventional parts of an oration in classical rhetoric, and the culmination of this means of persuasion is found, without exception, in the peroration of ambon speeches. It is not by chance – as the treatises on classical rhetoric point out – that pastoral pathos shows its rhetorical abundance at the end of clerical speeches: the auditor, once persuaded by the passionate words, is called upon to act on what has been proclaimed. Of course, the addresses, or rather the emotional appeals in the exordiums such as “Beloved faithful,” “Beloved brothers and sisters,” “Christian brothers,” – and others in the same category – also persuade the second means of classical rhetoric – pathos: the listener feels that he is appreciated and that he belongs to a community.

By persuading the audience through pathos, homiletical discourse becomes a *synergetically active discourse*. “What is the most powerful pastoral passion?” – is a question that can be asked in this context. Generally

viewed, the most powerful homiletical passion is not so much desire as fear (Meyer 2010, 237). Thus, the homiletic pathos relates mainly to the great existential differences. Clerical orators try to arouse passions in their audience, especially related to the existential conflict between life (resurrection-Heaven) and death (Hell), as an antithesis between joy (trust), fear (distrust), or virtue (sin), which, as we have pointed out, are meant “to trigger a concrete action-attitude on the on the part of the faithful, who are to judge, to choose what is morally correct” (Rusu 2021, 101)

As for the homiletic logos, it transforms the pulpit discourse into a *testimonial discourse* by declaiming numerous biblical verses, quotations from the Holy Fathers, and stigmata from hymnography and prayers, which are, in fact, specific rhetorical examples of *induction*, as specified in Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*. The pastoral logos, following the logical thread of classical and modern rhetoric, manifest their argumentative impact in the parts of speech called confirmation or proof and refutation. Another important mention in the case of persuasion by means of “the speech [*logos*] itself, by showing or seeming to show something” (*On Rhetoric*, 1.2.1356 a4) is that only in the case of the homiletical logos does the famous saying about Christianity as a “religion of the book” seem to be valid, at least in part (Rusu 2024, 149). The general characterization of Christianity strictly in terms of this Qur’anic dictum is tendentious.

Is there a pre-eminence in the homiletical discourse of one of the three means of persuasion? The answer is given by Aristotle in his *On Rhetoric*, which also shows the intrinsic connection between pastoral discourse and classical oratory: “for it is not the case, as some of the handbook writers propose in their treatment of the art, that fair-mindedness [*epieikeia*] on the part of the speaker makes no contribution to persuasiveness; rather, character is almost, so to speak, *the most authoritative form of persuasion*” (1.2. 1356 a10-15). In the Eastern Christian homiletical oration, the discursive ethos is complemented by the prior ethos – which, through the Mystery of Ordination, succeeds in producing various types of proofs such as *witnesses present, oath, public contract, ancestors, public consent* – and together they produce among the catechized audience a powerful, persuasive impact. Taking into account the indelible character of ordination, the prior ethos of the clergy orators is a permanent one. In fact, all clerics in the superior clerical ranks, regardless of their age, are perceived and called “fathers” or “spiritual fathers” by their communities immediately after ordination (Rusu 2022, 133).

05. In lieu of a conclusion: a particular word

From a rhetorical perspective, the (simple) word “Amen,” which every Eastern Christian homily (and liturgical services) ends, is also worthy of

consideration. This pastoral term can confirm – etymologically and discursively – what rhetoricians have long asserted, that the three means of the persuasive triad ethos pathos logos are interdependent and can be interwoven in a discourse. Firstly, on the basis of numerous biblical sources, the person of Jesus Christ himself can be designated by “Amen,” according to Apocalypse 3:14: “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of *the Amen*, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation.” Secondly, “Amen!” with the etymological meaning of “So it was” or “So let it be!” (Romans 1:25; 9:5; 11,36; 16,27; Galatians 1:5; 6:18; Ephesians 3:21; Philippians 4:20; Hebrews 13:21; 1Peter 4:11; Apocalypse 5:14; 7:12; 19:4; 22:20) is used in homiletical discourse as a formula of conclusion and confirmation of what has been said, but also as a hope in a passionate optative sense, with a finally actional effect. Thirdly, “Amen, amen,” the meaning of “True, true” (John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Mark 3:28; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Apocalypse 1:7) helps the speech to demonstrate.

All four *Gospels* – *after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* – end with “Amen,” but in the past tense, where it has the meaning of confirmation, of “So it was,” which belongs to logos means of persuasion. That is different from the “Amen,” for example, at the end of the book of *Apocalypse*, where the wish returns in an optative sense, Apocalypse so “So be it!” which belongs to pathos. Therefore, the traditional adaptation of “Amen” with the meaning “So it was, so it is, and so let it be!” can also be interpreted rhetorically: “*So it was* (logos-testimony), *So it is* (ethos-authority) and *So let it be* (pathos-wish and hope).”

Notes

¹Commonly translated as “counterpart.” Other possibilities include “correlative” and “coordinate” (Kennedy 2007, 30).

²Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* references are from G. A. Kennedy’s translation (1991).

³ “The crucial difference between *ars predicandi*, which some exaggeratedly call *Christian rhetoric*, and traditional discipline lies first in the particular quality of the audience. The preacher speaks before an already convinced audience. He does not tend to turn a *res dubia* into a *res certa*. The auditor agrees with the dogmas and moral precepts because he belongs de jure to the *ecclesia*. As a result, the essential concern of rhetoric, to obtain persuasion, is missing” (Florescu 1973, 110).

⁴ Apostle is “the English transliteration of a Greek word meaning *one who is sent out*” (*The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, 44).

References

- Achtemeier, Paul J. 1997. *The Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*. Harper: San Francisco.
 Aristotle. 2007. *On Rhetoric. A theory of civic discourse*. Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Appendices by George A. Kennedy. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Aristotle. 2011. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated with an interpretive essay, notes, and glossary by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Braet, Antoine C. 1992. "Ethos, Pathos and Logos in Aristotle's Rhetoric: A Re-Examination." *Argumentation* 6: 307-320.
- Brunschwig, Jacques. 1996. "Aristotle's Rhetoric as a Counterpart to Dialectic." *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*. In Oksenberg Rorty, Amélie (ed.) *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press: 33-55.
- Florescu, Vasile. 1973. *Retorica și neoretorica*. București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România.
- Holy Bible*. 2011. New Revised Standard Version. Michigan, United States: Zondervan.
- Ică jr, Ioan I. 2008. *Canonul Ortodoxiei*. Volume 1. Sibiu: Editura Deisis.
- Kennedy, George Alexander. 1999. *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. U.S.: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Kinneavy, James L. 1987. *Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith*. New York: Oxford UP.
- Literáty, Zoltán. 2020. *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching*. Budapest and Paris: L'Harmattan Publishing.
- Maftעי, Ștefan-Sebastian. 2011. "Note și comentarii." In Aristotel. *Retorica*. Translated with introduction and index by Maria Cristina Andrieș. București: Univers Enciclopedic Gold: 369-424.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. 2000. *Divine Rhetoric: The Sermon on the Mount as Message and As Model in Augustine, Chrysostom, and Luther*. Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press.
- Plato. 1997. "Gorgias". Translated by Zeyl, Donald J. In Cooper, John M., and Douglas S. Hutchinson, (eds.). *Plato: complete works*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing: 791-869.
- Rusu, Tudorel-Constantin. 2021. "Homilies in Times of Crisis, Past and Present." *ANADISS* 17 (31): 91-102.
- Rusu, Tudorel-Constantin. 2022. "How Do Consecrated Objects *Speak*? The Rhetorical Function of Liturgical Objects and Garments in The Eastern Orthodox Church." *Argumentum: Journal the Seminar of Discursive Logic, Argumentation Theory & Rhetoric* 20 (1): 119-134.
- Rusu, Tudorel-Constantin. 2024. "People of the Book? Textuality and Orality in the Judeo-Christian Tradition." *Argumentum: Journal the Seminar of Discursive Logic, Argumentation Theory & Rhetoric* 22 (1): 135-150.
- Sălăvăstru, Constantin. 2010. *Mic tratat de oratorie*. Ed. 2. Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza".
- Stewart-Sykes, Alistair. 2001. *On Pascha: with the fragments of Melito and other material related to the quartodecimans*. New York, Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press.
- Youngdahl, Pat. 1996. "Pulpit Oratory." In Enos, Theresa (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric and Composition Communication from Ancient Times to the Information Age*. New York And London: Routledge: 572-575.
- Žmavc, Janja. 2012. "The Ethos of Classical Rhetoric: From *Epieikeia* to *Auctoritas*." In Eemeren, van Frans H., and Garssen, Bart (eds.) *Topical Themes in Argumentation Theory. Twenty Exploratory Studies*. Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York: Springer: 181-191.

Vasile Cătălin BOBB*

What if behind all things there is a story and not some metaphysical astray?

(Ioan Alexandru Tofan, *Ca prin oglindă, în ghicitură. Mici eseuri despre creștinism*, Galaxia Gutenberg, Târgu-Lăpuș, 2024, 212p.)

Keywords: Ioan Alexandru Tofan, itinerance, religious experience, story, metaphysics, Christianity

A certain misunderstanding may occur when one tries to understand such a concept as *itinerance*. Not because we can't hold its prime meaning (traveling or, better yet, walking), but only because it is not something we usually use in order to define a religious experience. Certainly, Saul was walking when the epiphany occurred but, to my mind, and for the history of western culture and religion, the epiphany as such becomes much more important than that of walking as such. Truth to be told – Tofan names it „spiritual itinerance” where „... the diversity – like in oriental fairytales -of expressions, characters and forms hides the unicity of transcendental reference, its irreducible and absolute character, where all the differences and multiple modulations are reabsorbed.” (Tofan 2019, 10) Now, it is true that the last part of the quoted proposition holds a strong metaphysical character (not to name it theological), but, using the words of converted Saul, Tofan only allures to it – „like in a mirror dimly”. Setting aside (only to postpone it) the infinite problem, so obviously present here, of „the one and the many”, let us come back to this concept of „itinerance” developed by Ioan Alexandru Tofan in „*The Inner Man. Andre Scrima and the Physiognomy of Spiritual Experience*”, because, in my reading, it defines his latest book „*Like in a Mirror Dimly. Small Essays on Christianity*.”

When Ioan Alexandru Tofan speaks about the physiognomy of spiritual experience (it is interesting to notice that Tofan prefers the term spiritual, not religious) we may wonder what kind of experiences he is speaking about? To use Tofan's words „a plural experience (...) describing the hypothesis of a delocalized sacred, fluid, dynamic which operates by an extraordinary power of seduction instead of the power of instituting or founding an objective truth”

* Vasile Cătălin Bobb, Associate Professor, Faculty of Letters, The North University Centre of Baia Mare, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Email: vasilecatalinbobb@gmail.com.

(Tofan 2019, 11). Setting aside that the emphasis is on words such as „dynamic” „delocalize” „fluid” and not, as one should expect, on sacred, we may wonder again where this dynamism, fluidity or displacement is to be found? On, to use, again, Tofan words, „languages, gestures, places, rhythms and characters in so far as all these renders visible the overwhelming presence of the Other” (Tofan 2019, 17). It may seem that a sort of rupture between two axes is present here, where the first (let us call it the Sacred or the Other or, better yet, in Tofan`s words, „the transcendental axis”), establishes the second (let us call it languages, gestures, places and so on, or „the historical axis”). But, at strange at may appear, this is not the case with Tofan`s interpretation because „in the hypothesis that I assume in the meeting point of the two axes stands (...) the radical origin of experience where any `previous` falsifies it under a name which doesn't belong to it” (Tofan 2019, 21). Thus, coming back to the problem of „the one and the many”, for Tofan the two axes are one. And it is the „merit” of *spiritual experience* or *itinerance* to hold such a strong statement. I want to make, quoting Tofan, two last remarks before passing to *Like in a mirror dimly. Small essays on Christianity*: (1) „inscribing the strangeness of the heavens into the world produces a luxurious semiosis” (Tofan 2019, 99) where „the signs, specific gestures or words that articulate the spiritual experience must be interpreted from the perspective of a `realism` of transcendence that concretely inhabits the interiority of the world” (Tofan 2019, 196); (2) „the spiritual experience stands under the sign of apophatic anthropology (...) no matter what forms it takes, it is a form of immersion into the depths of man, *an inner itinerance* (...)” (Tofan 2019, 178, my undelaying)

To my mind, only assuming the melting point of axes where history merges with the realism of transcendence (or the heavens, as Tofan calls it) into the depths of man, *itinerance* becomes a valid epistemic operator, otherwise is just a word into the almost infinite sea of words. Not without a reason I introduced this (something that, for sure, Tofan will abhor it) phrase – valid epistemic operator. Only because into the world of spirit (and philosophy) we always need (don't we?) valid epistemic operators (and *itinerance* is one of them).

Having in mind the apophatic anthropology immersed into the luxuriant semiosis of the world we can read, more adequate, I think, *Like in a Mirror Dimly. Small Essays on Christianity* (because the luxuriant area of themes, subjects, characters of the book¹, as in a broken mirror, can easily be gathered, in order to glimpse the full imagine, by *itinerance*)

However, being absorbed by epistemic operators, I am not sure if I managed to fully show the main lines in which Tofan writes. A careful writing, crafted with patience, as if he doesn't want to disturb the things he is writing about. For instance, when Tofan writes about the „*Poorest of things. About the way of seeing of the simple ones*” (Tofan 2024, 54-58) one should aspect some decisive and, to a certain extent, some conclusive remarks. The „simple ones” deserve,

don't they, to be obliterated by some metaphysical explications. Let me be a bit clear: when for „the simple ones” the „wonder of creation speaks to them directly without the mediation of some intellectual formulation or a `speculative delay`” we should, as philosophers, introduce, for obvious reasons, an exhaustive metaphysical explication. Don't they deserve to see, more properly, the hidden truths of creation? But what if (and here stands the entire thesis, to my mind, of the book) „behind all things there is a story and not some metaphysical astray?” (Tofan 2024, 32) I must confess, I don't know, but I am willing, at least, to hear the story. And the story goes like this: it is about a truth that „never shows itself as such” (Tofan 2024, 17), and its manifestations can be conceived only as „longing and waiting, as well as a technique to educate the eyes in order to see, in the grey color of time that passes, the blue of eternity.” (Tofan 2024, 18). A truth that explains why „poets don't go mad, but mathematicians do” (Tofan 2024, 40). A truth that „knows” „that the perfection of the world is not to be found at the horizon, but into the warm light of twilight of the day that passed.” (Tofan 2024, 45) A truth that, as Steinhardt says, shows „trust in the other, courage, detachment, goodwill towards the afflicted ones, from which you cannot gain anything (sick, strangers, imprisoned), a certain sense of grandness, willing to forgive, despising the prudent and earners” (Tofan 2024, 48). A truth that „believes and laughs” (Tofan 2024, 52). A truth that, as Marin Tarangul says, „defends life with a poor broom” (Tofan 2024, 65). A truth that „knows” that „the world is, in its inner depths, fragile” (Tofan 2024, 87). A truth that manifests itself like a „light breeze in the evening” (Tofan 2024, 89). A truth that „knows” that „music can give voice to tears in a manner that theology can't” (Tofan 2024, 122). A truth that etc. etc. etc.²

I would like to end my attempt on Tofan's book with two remarks. (1) The first, a bit too theological for my taste, is the problem of *katechon* or of „the one who withholds.” Despite current (and established) interpretation (a historical figure, the imperium, the king, or the hero), Tofan holds that „the one who withholds” may be viewed „as a weak, fragile, invisible mechanism inscribed in the texture of everyday life. The unknown ones without plinths or chronicles.” (Tofan 2024, 197) And, for Tofan, the unknown ones are „those how doesn't pass carelessness besides the pain and misery of streets” or, as in Hasidism, the thirty-six hidden righteous ones. But, perhaps, tells Tofan, we might find another type of the „ones who withholds” or the „ones who gnaw the root of evil”. And in this peculiar typology Tofan names the dreamers, the poets, the bohemians, the losers and the nostalgic. (2) The second, if I am not mistaking, I think that Tofan assumes entirely the apophatic anthropology. An anthropology where the two axes (transcendental and historical) converge. I will name it, I do not know how adequately, a weak (fragile) anthropology where the foundation of it are not some acclaimed, undeniable and powerful truths,

but like in a blue breeze, a soft touch of the Other inscribed in the depths of man³.

¹ The book is composed from various articles written between 2021 – 2023 in the cultural review *Dilema veche*.

² I ask the reader to forgive the copious number of quotes, but when one is trying to catch the uncacheable or the truth of a story, one needs abundance.

³ See Edward Hopper. *Urban Loneliness* (pp., 95-99), *Spiritual Geographies (I): The Desert* (pp., 188-192) and *Spiritual Geographies (II): The City* (pp., 192-196).

References

- TOFAN, Ioan Alexandru. 2024. *Ca prin oglindă, în ghicitură. Mici eseuri despre creștinism*, Galaxia Gutenberg: Târgu-Lăpuș
- TOFAN, Ioan Alexandru. 2019. *Omul lăuntric. Andre Scrima și fizionomia experienței spirituale*, Humanitas: București.

Ștefania BEJAN*

Le Beau éternel

(*Le Beau* - Actes du XXXVI^e Congrès de l'Association des Sociétés de Philosophie de Langue Française – sous la direction de Petru Bejan et Daniel Schulthess -, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2018, 567p.)

Keywords: Peter Sloterdijk, heaven, *theopoiesis*, religion, poetry

Le Beau est le « visage » éditorial du Congrès de l'Association des Sociétés Philosophiques de Langue Française tenu, du 23 au 27 août 2016, à la XXXVI^{ème} édition et organisé par Alma Mater Iassiensis (Faculté de Philosophie et Sciences Sociales et Politiques). Exceptionnelle non seulement par le nombre de participants et les continents d'origine, cette édition (une première pour Iași) s'est également distinguée par le thème choisi - *Le beau* - avec un repère célèbre, la « prédiction » de Fiodor Dostoïevski, qui fait déclarer, par son personnage - le prince Mychkine - que « La beauté sauvera le monde » !

Le volume intitulé *Le Beau*, rassemble entre ses couvertures pas moins de 70 contributions : 56 articles scientifiques regroupés en 9 sections, 4 interventions avec un rôle d'ouverture dans le thème du congrès, ainsi que 6 textes-preuves des conférences plénières et aussi, 4 écrits qui ont donné du sens aux tables rondes circonscrites au congrès.

Le discours de l'académicien Ștefan Afloroaei a souligné « une excellente occasion pour la conscience philosophique de notre temps de reconnaître son état de fait », à partir d'un des dialogues de Platon, dans lequel « le Beau peut se présenter au monde non seulement par les choses que nous appelons belles, mais aussi par la beauté des idées et des attitudes, des vertus, des désirs et des aspirations, en fin de compte par la beauté de la vie de l'esprit humain ». Le philosophe voit qu'il est possible de sauver le monde grâce à la beauté « dans la mesure où (...) le Beau se concrétise comme vie humaine, attirant cette vie vers les formes accomplies de la beauté ».

En tant que co-éditeur et « responsable » pour avoir proposé un tel thème, P. Bejan trouve des questions sur le beau (catégorie « solaire » ou « d'une lumière estompée »?), sa justification et la place du beau comme sauveur du monde: « La Philosophie ? La Pensée ? Le Langage ? La Nature ?

*Associate Professor, PhD, Department of Communication Sciences and Public Relation, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași; email: stefania.bejan.uaic@gmail.com

La Société ? La Politique ? L'Éthique ? La Vie quotidienne ? ».

A notre avis, ce sont les points de départ de l'architecture du congrès et, plus tard, de la structure du volume. De la question rhétorique de Mircea Dumitru : « La fin des humanités ? Pourquoi a-t-on encore besoin d'une éducation humaniste dans les universités ? » et de la révélation, par Gabriel Liiceanu, de la « beauté cachée », jusqu'au « risque » de l'utopie pour renouveler en beauté le sens de vivre dans une « société des cœurs » (Jacques-Bernard Roumanes), les idées imaginées par les philosophes, les enseignants, les chercheurs, les écrivains, les moralistes, les esthéticiens, etc. ils se sont naturellement installés dans des sections thématiques telles que : « Le beau dans l'histoire de la philosophie », « Le beau à travers les cultures », « Beauté de la pensée et beauté du langage », « Ontologie et métaphysique du beau », « Le beau dans la nature et dans la société », « Beauté, éthique, politique », « Les catégories esthétiques », « L'esthétique et la vie quotidienne », « Renouveau et perspectives de l'esthétique ».

Catégorie philosophique, esthétique, littéraire, associée notamment à l'éthique, à la politique, mais aussi, en général, à la société tout entière - presque indépendamment du « moment » ou de l'époque -, le beau occasionné, dans l'économie du congrès dédié, spécifique mais également des approches interdisciplinaires, comme le montre également la « Table des matières » du volume en question. Trois auteurs (M. Sekimura, J.-M. Counet, G. Seel) prouvent ce qui a été dit à travers les discours qui honoraient les conférences plénières, retrouvant tour à tour la sensation et la beauté dans la pensée japonaise, le microcosme-beauté dans la pensée médiévale, s'interrogeant, dans de manière logico-philosophique, si la beauté « viendrait » vraiment pour sauver le monde ? Le logicien suisse examine les situations de la beauté telles que : la beauté perdue, la beauté retrouvée, la beauté dans les œuvres d'art et la nature, l'analyse de la beauté dans la perspective judéo-chrétienne (le sacrifice suprême du Sauveur), mais en introduisant dans « l'équation » le mal contemporain, dont il faudrait sauver le monde (la faim et la pauvreté, la destruction de l'environnement et la guerre nucléaire...). On aurait tort de considérer la beauté comme étant « la cause matérielle ou encore la cause efficace du progrès historique », sans pouvoir contester que « ...la beauté joue évidemment le rôle de cause formelle et finale. Car c'est vers le règne de la beauté que l'humanité progresse, consciemment ou inconsciemment ».

Diverses et précises, profondes et surprenantes, les démarches des auteurs venus « dénouer les ficelles » de la beauté ont « tissé » dans les trois premières sections du volume des « modèles » qui allient la beauté à la nature du mal chez Saint Augustin. (A. Adămuț), trouvent la beauté dans les écrits de Maxim le Confesseur (Fl. Crișmăreanu), des confucéens de l'époque Song (G.Deng), à Kirkegaard (D.Mendy), dans le style sublimé de Baltasar Gracian

(D. Bouillon), et même en Océanie (H. Mokaddem), bien sûr, chez Kant (G. Demerchi) ou dans le beau et la beauté du diable (M. Dumitrescu).

Concernant l'ontologie et la métaphysique de la beauté, j'attire l'attention sur des « traitements » tels que « La phénoménologie du „beau” selon Michel Henry et Bin Kimura » (M. Kawase), « Le Beau et le Tragique dans le Soufisme Musulmane – l'exemple d'Ibn Arabi » (H. Boukhari), ainsi que « Un paradoxe – le sens métaphysique de la beauté » (Şt. Afloroaei). Concernant le dernier répertorié, St. Afloroaei réfléchit en marge du *Banquet* de Platon, le dialogue par excellence sur la beauté elle-même (et non réduite à une simple idée de l'esprit humain). C'est l'expérience où la beauté se dévoile en tant que telle (la perception de quelque chose de beau, le désir du beau, l'amour du beau, la contemplation de la beauté en soi). Le *summum* de l'expérience est « celle de la beauté pure, en soi », qui implique une initiation progressive, un peu semblable à l'initiation religieuse, à l'aide d'un « guide ». Ainsi, de « éternelle », « simple », « le but le plus élevé », à « elle n'a pas de visage », « ce n'est pas un dire ni une forme de connaissance », « elle n'existe pas dans quelque chose », pour arriver à « survient tout à coup », « merveilleuse », « en elle-même et par elle-même, éternellement jointe à elle-même ».

En regardant le beau dans la nature, la société, dans le contexte de l'éthique et de la politique, dans le « concert » des catégories esthétiques, projetant le renouveau de l'esthétique et tendant même vers une esthétique du quotidien, nous mettons « sous la loupe » les 5 dernières sections du volume. Le début est naturel : « La beauté de la divinité... », analysé dans l'œuvre de Dante Alighieri (M. Romila), les choses avancent avec « La belle âme », la possibilité de sauver la politique par beauté (S. Cloutier), « La beauté dans le discours politique : expressivité et manipulation » (H.-C. Chiriac), pourquoi pas, « Le beau dans la communication télévisuelle »...

De plus en plus souvent, on revient à une question presque obsessionnelle dans le monde de la critique d'art : le beau représente-t-il encore une catégorie privilégiée, marquante, une condition, autrefois, de l'appréciation de l'œuvre d'art ? S'est-il échappé, dans les arts visuels contemporains, vers le rôle de l'art de transmettre un message à caractère social profond, plutôt convaincant que le beau ? Les *Histoires de la laideur* sont-elles des illustrations plus captivantes et provocatrices de « l'autre » d'un point de vue esthétique ? (Un célèbre philosophe et sémioticien - Umberto Eco - l'a abondamment démontré, définissant la laideur à travers une énumération exhaustive et difficile à égaler : méchant, ironique, sordide, banal, aléatoire, arbitraire, grossier, dégoûtant, maladroit, effrayant, stupide, écœurant, criminel, spectral, sorcellerie, satanique, répulsif, immonde, désagréable, grotesque, abominable, horrible, sans vergogne, obscène, terrifiant, inconvenant, monstrueux, horrifiant, hideux, terrible, terrifiant,

épouvantable, révoltant , repoussant, dégoûtant, pourri, vil, laid, infecté. Cependant, à propos de ce livre, on s'est exclamé : « Comme la laideur est belle ! », sur les traces des sorcières qui, dans *Macbeth*, affirmaient que « Le beau est laid et la laideur est belle ». Les musées du monde démontrent abondamment que la vie est d'une complexité infinie et que l'imagination des artistes est infinie.

En guise de conclusion possible de notre regard subjectif sur le très intéressant volume *Le Beau*, nous nous demandons quelle pourrait être la place du thème de *la laideur* en philosophie - lors d'une édition future, peut-être lointaine, du congrès des philosophes francophones ?