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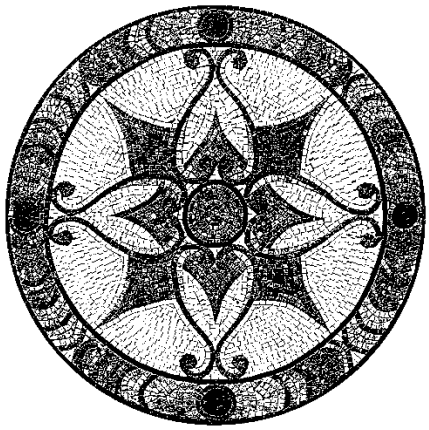

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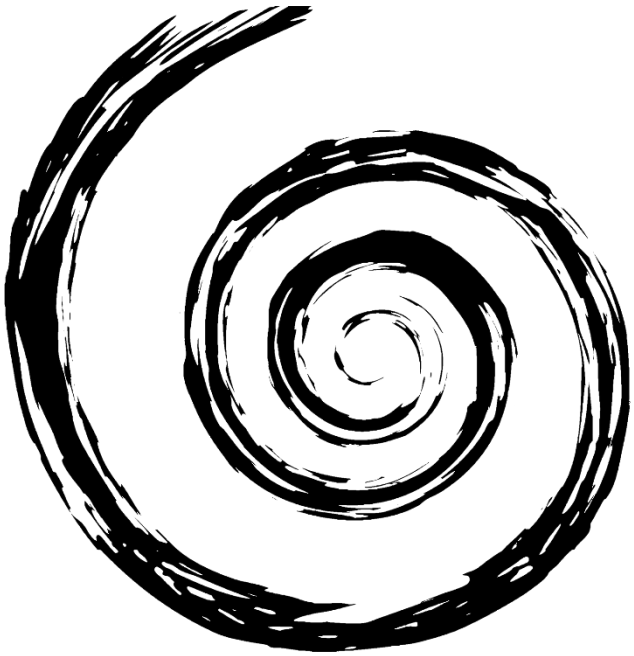


QUE SAIS-JE
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"Parce que c'estoit luy": On Michel de Montaigne's Ontic Disruption of Sexual Taxonomies and the Individuality of Lovers

J. Edgar Bauer,
Ph.D., University of Wroclaw, Poland
j.edgarbauer@t-online.de

Abstract:

Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) contended that "Nature has committed herself not to make any other thing that was not different." On this assumption, the diversity and variability of sexuality instantiates the principle of Nature's continuous *branloire* and gives the lie to the regnant scheme of binary sexual distribution. As a result of Montaigne's Heraclitean approach of reality, the hypostatized categories of man and woman subtending the sexual bipartition of humanity become the internalized poles of the male/female opposition that configure the uniquely nuanced sexuality of the individual. Against this backdrop, Montaigne's love of Étienne de la Boétie (1530-1563) emerges as the supersedure of the age-old distinction between same-sex and other-sex configurations. Signally, womanizing Montaigne gave a tense response to the question as to why he loved La Boétie: "Because it was he."

Keywords: androgyny; bisexuality; binary sexuality; friendship; homosexuality; human form; individuality; sexual love; sexual diversity and variability; transsexuality; strategies of power

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

William Shakespeare: *Hamlet.*
(Shakespeare, 1996, p. 226 [5, 1, 174-175])

1. In the possibly most resolute praise of Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) by a contemporary author, literary critic Harold Bloom (1930-2019) contended that Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) "is the mind of our age, as Montaigne was the mind of Shakespeare's" (Bloom, 1994, p. 375). Emblematizing the inquisitive thrust of their respective times, Montaigne and Freud created encompassing bodies of work passionately concerned with all things sexual. Despite sharing concurrent interests, however, the two authors uphold antipodal conceptions of how sexuality deploys its differences. Aside from the contrasting sexual epistemes available to them and the differing theo-political settings in which they lived, Montaigne and Freud advanced very different conceptions of humanity's sexed condition. This dissent becomes especially patent in the way they confronted the chasm that structures the binary differentiation of the sexes. It was their varying preparedness to scrutinize and question the allegedly immemorial template of two mutually exclusive sexes that appears to be at the origin of their profound divergences on sexual matters.

2. While Montaigne and Freud acknowledged the feeble epistemic foundations of sexual binarity, this awareness led to contradictory conclusions. Like Montaigne, Freud left do doubt about the questionable groundwork supporting the dichotomous separation of the sexes, although he embraced, for apparently heuristic or propaedeutic reasons, its generalized societal validity. By 1920, Freud had already admitted in *Über die Psychogenese eines Falles von weiblicher Homosexualität* (On the Psychogenesis of a Case of Female Homosexuality) the insufficient psychoanalytical grasp of the man/woman binary. As he conceded, psychoanalysis is not capable of explaining the essence of what is called "male" and

"female," and thus has to suffice itself with adopting both concepts in the conventional or biological sense as the basis of its work (see Freud, 1980b, p. 280).[1] Openly acknowledging that his approach of sexual difference was merely commonsensical, Freud recurred in *Neue Folge der Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (New Continuation of the Lectures on the Introduction to Psychoanalysis) (1933) to the routine assumption that

> "male and female is the first distinction that you make when you meet another human being, and you are accustomed to making this distinction with unquestioned certainty" (Freud, 1980a, p. 545).[2]

3. At the antipodes of Freud's attempt to find an anchorage for sexual binarity that would consolidate the Oedipal project of psychoanalysis, the defining move in Montaigne's approach of sexuality was to question and leave behind the male/female disjunction that had purportedly determined humanity's self-understanding since times immemorial. Accordingly, Montaigne disseminated throughout his oeuvre doubts about the tenability of the dichotomous model of sexuality, and even raised the discomfiting claim that the *male*/*female* differentiation emerged from a unique, non-dichotomous source in nature predating the pervasive influence of culture and society. Indicatively, Montaigne's overall démarche as regards sexual difference did not rely on a deductive procedure, but on the cumulation of empirical evidence that de-naturalized the man/woman binomial by pointing to the irreducible complexity and diversity of the existing sexual complexions. Following his design to destabilize the sexual dichotomy of old, Montaigne collected cases of non-normative sexualities from the fields of Classical mythology, Renaissance travel reports, European history and the nascent natural

[1] The original German wording of Freud's key passage reads: "Aber das Wesen dessen, was man im konventionellen oder im biologischen Sinne 'männlich' und 'weiblich' nennt, kann die Psychoanalyse nicht aufklären, sie übernimmt die beiden Begriffe und legt sie ihren Arbeiten zugrunde."

[2] "Männlich oder weiblich ist die erste Unterscheidung, die Sie machen, wenn Sie mit einem anderen menschlichen Wesen zusammentreffen, und Sie sind gewöhnt, diese Unterscheidung mit unbedenklicher Sicherheit zu machen."

sciences, all of which were meant to confirm, in the last resort, his core ontic axiom that "Nature has committed herself not to make any other thing that was not different" (III, 13, 1065).[3]

4. Unwittingly marking a contrast to Montaigne's turn of mind, Freud assumed that the observation and study of living nature could assist modern science in providing the empirically based conception of the man/woman dichotomy it lacked. Therewith, Freud was patently ignoring the fact that Charles Darwin's (1809-1882) generalization of human hermaphroditism foreshadowed the universalization of sexual intermediariness propounded since 1896 by Magnus Hirschfeld's (1868-1935) nascent sexology.[4] Having overlooked the nature-based arguments by his two prominent contemporaries, it could hardly be expected that Freud would pay attention to the non-binary approach of sexuality adumbrated three centuries earlier by Michel de Montaigne. In this connection, it is well to consider that the French thinker viewed himself as one of the *naturalists* of his time, as he unequivocally maintains in a passage of his essay titled "De la physionomie" (Of physiognomy): "We naturalists judge that the honor of invention is greater and incomparably preferable to the honor of quotation" (III, 12, 1056).[5] Accordantly, Montaigne's *Essais* and his *Journal de Voyage en Italie par la*

[3] "Nature s'est obligée à ne rien faire autre, qui ne fust dissemblable." All citations from Montaigne's *Essais* are according to the Villey / Saulnier edition: Montaigne, 2021. In this instance, "III, 13, 1065" remits to: Third Book, Essay 13, page 1065. Quotes from Montaigne's one-page preamble to the *Essays* are referenced thus: "Au lecteur, 3." Montaigne's quotations in English translation are included in the main text. The corresponding quotations in the French original are generally appended in footnotes. With minor exceptions, Donald Frame's translation of Montaigne's works has been followed (Montaigne, 2003).

[4] Around 1838, Charles Darwin's noted in his *Notebooks*: "Every man & woman is hermaphrodite [...]" (Darwin, 1987, p. 384 [Notebook D (1838), No. 162]).[4] Many years later, in a letter to Scottish geologist Charles Lyell (1797-1845) of January 10, 1860, Darwin came back to the issue: "*Our ancestor* was an animal which [...] undoubtedly was an hermaphrodite! Here is a pleasant genealogy for mankind.—" (Darwin, 1993, p. 28 / Letter 2647; emphasis in original). As regards Darwin's and Hirschfeld's overarching stance of human sexual difference, see: Bauer, 2010; Bauer, 2012.

[5] "Nous autres naturalistes estimons qu'il y aie grande et incomparable preferance de l'honneur de l'invention à l'honneur de l'allegation"

Suisse et l'Allemagne (literally: Journal of travel to Italy through Switzerland and Germany) provide evidence of his consistent shift away from the cultural ubiquitousness of the disjunctive conception of sexuality. It is thus unsurprising that, true to his empirical naturalism, Montaigne elaborated in *Journal* and in the *Essais* on a well attested occurrence that later medical terminology could have depicted as an unintentionally induced, spontaneous instance of transsexuality.

5. The initial entries of *Journal de voyage*, which were written down by an amanuensis, cover the stretch of the trip as Montaigne and his fellow travelers were still on French territory. One of the entries in this portion, depicts the case of Marie Germain, a young girl who, years earlier, had generated in herself male sexual organs while making large strides (see Montaigne, 1992, pp. 6-7, 325). The event was initially referred to in the entry on Montaigne's visit to the city of Vitry-le-François. Eight years later, however, the passage was incorporated with modifications in the first book of the *Essais*, which include the indication that such female-to-male transmogrifications were "frequent" (I, 21, 99)[6] among the girls of the region. In accordance with his overall design to de-naturalize sexual binarity, Montaigne downplays the striking occurrence of sex changes by suggesting their relative foreseeability within the order of nature. What Montaigne considered an empirically ascertainable change of an individual's sexuality as confirmed by ecclesiastical and medical authorities, eventually found in the *Essais* a quasi-mythological correlate in the figure of Tiresias, the blind Apollonian seer of Thebes. As the foremost transsexual personage of Greek legendary history, he was transformed into a woman by the goddess Hera for a period of seven years. According to a passage Montaigne adduces from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Tiresias "had been a man as well as a woman" (III, 5, 854),[7] thus successively experiencing the carnality of male and female love. Conspicuously, a further passage in the *Essais* dispenses with the element of temporal succession altogether, positing the simultaneity of the two sexes in the

[6] "frequent"

[7] "avoit esté tantost homme, tantost femme"

ancient seer. For Montaigne, the occurrence appears to become less astounding against the backdrop of his reference to a far away country in which human beings "are all androgynes" (II, 12, 525).[8]

6. Within Montaigne's corpus, the counter-exemplarity of Marie Germain's sexual transmogrification signals the beginning of his empirically focused detachment from the dichotomous scheme of sexual distribution. In this context, the phenomenon of transsexuality is not associated with monstrosities, miracles, or performances of the devil. Rather, it is meant as a demonstration *ad oculos* that even the alleged fixity of the sexual hiatus stands under the aegis of nature's universal Becoming. The theoretical scope and relevance of the issue is suggested in the *Essais*`s version of the original report, when Montaigne attempts to provide an etiological explanation of Marie Germain's sexual transformation by invoking the natural powers of the human imagination. As Montaigne contends, in order to avoid the recidivism of phantasmal obsessions among certain females caused by their lack of a penis, the desiring imagination proceeds "by incorporating, once and for all, the masculine member *in* [such] *girls*" (I, 21, 99; emphasis added).[9] Since, on Montaigne's assumptions, the "infinite power of nature" (I, 27, 180)[10] harbors a limitless arsenal of unrealized possibilities, the imagination chooses one that could substitute Marie Germain's phantasmal penile fixation by the carnal reality of a penis and testicles.[11] Even if this explicatory attempt may appear to be exaggeratedly fanciful to contemporary tastes, it shows how far Montaigne would go in order to remain within the limits of nature's causality as regards the human sexual order.

[8] "sont tous androgynes"

[9] "d'incorporer, une fois pour toutes, cette virile partie aux filles"

[10] "infinie puissance de nature"

[11] Montaigne's line of argument regarding the imagination's role in choosing an alternative to the usual paths of nature is based, in the last resort, on his conception of a fundamental correspondance between microcosm and microcosm: "der Mensch soll und kann durch Entfaltung aller seiner ihm innewohnenden Kräfte die unendliche Fülle seines eigenen Wesens erreichen, die der Fülle und dem Gefüge des Makrokosmos entspricht" (Friedrich, 1967, p. 31).

7. While *Journal* seems to consider the case of Marie Germain as an extraordinary event, this is not Montaigne's final word on the issue. At first, the figure of Marie Germain suggests an unheard-of breach of the static male/female chasm, as it points to the vital dimension in which the alleged immutability of the sexual opposites is transformed into the beginning and end of a genital transmogrification. What Montaigne termed nature's unceasing *branloire* dissolves the schematic separation of the sexes that pervades culture, allowing for the transformation of femaleness into maleness within the same human individual. The apparent exceptionality of the event begins to evanesce when mention is made of similar occurrences among girls in the area. In principle, the broadening scope of the transsexual phenomenon converges with Antiquity's acknowledgement of the human potentialities that subtend Tiresias' transsexual status. By going beyond the ambit of ascertainable biographical realities to that of semi-mythological lore, Montaigne reinforces the anthropological impact of transsexuality in cultural history as a path toward the philosophical scrutiny and rejection of sexual binarity.

8. Montaigne considered that the main weakness of the regnant distributive scheme of sexuality resides in the nature-averted hiatus that disjoints its two alternatives. Thus, countering the male/female binary, Montaigne begins by ascertaining nature's *branloire* at the heart of the separating line between Marie Germain's sexes. Consequently, *her* initial female sexuality is left behind to make room for the new stasis of *his* male condition. A parenthetic change thus transmogrifies one permanent sexual configuration into another, in a way that excludes sexual changeability once the *telos* of the transformation is achieved: Marie Germain overcomes *her* femininity once and for all in order to become a man *tout court*, that is, without any tangible, anatomical/physiological traces of *his* past sexual becoming. Being a man purports for Marie Germain attempting the impossible elision of the omnipresent sexual *branloire* from the horizon of his attained masculinity. While not directly tackling the unnaturalness of this elision, Montaigne envisaged the possibility of avoiding final sexual closures when suggesting that the man/woman

disjunction is basically the result of cultural arbitrariness. Lastly, Montaigne's path toward the determination of the individual's sexuality supplants the man/woman disjunction by the conjunction in all factually existing humans of male/female components. Strangely enough, this internalization of the sexual polarity resonates with Montaigne's make-believe reference to androgynes in faraway regions of the earth.

9. Montaigne could not have seriously challenged the biblically anchored notion of sexual binarity without becoming the victim of persecution by the Catholic church's Holy Inquisition. To avoid the inconvenience, he wittingly framed the surmised implication that human beings are androgynes not within the context of European history and civilization, but in a distant, phantasmagoric world which included nations where people lacked heads or featured their eyes and mouths on their chests (see II, 12, 525). Needless to say, Montaigne readily shared strategies of geographical and/or temporal defamiliarization that were often displayed in literary or pictorial figurations of utopian or kakotopian content since the times of visionary painter Hieronymous Bosch (c. 1450-1516) (see Jacobs, 2000; Koldeweij, 2001). Therewith, Montaigne sought to disguise contentions that would have been unavowable in the philosophical or essayistic framework of the texts he published. As Montaigne decided to outline his ingenious dismantlement of the disjunctive model of sexual distribution toward the end of the essay "Sur des vers de Virgile" (On some verses of Virgil), he had good reasons for framing it in what he self-derogatively termed a "notable commentary, which has escaped from me in a flow of babble" (III, 5, 897).[12] Montaigne was thus disowning the critical scope of his own statements, despite the groundbreaking consequences they would imply if taken seriously. It is well to remind that Charles Darwin's contention to the effect that all men and women are hermaphrodite was made public without hazard for the author nearly three centuries after Montaigne's speculations on the universal nature of human androgyny.

10. Against the backdrop of his overarching aim to de-naturalize (and de-sanctify) the cleavage that time-honored

[12] "notable commentaire, qui m'est echappé d'un flux de caquet"

traditions have erected between individuals trained to regard themselves as being either *men* or *women*, Montaigne's *flow of babble* emerged as a self-derogatory hint at the way universal Becoming introduces diversity and complexity in the alleged binarity of the sexual. Although an umbrella concept corresponding to *sexuality* was not available to Montaigne, and despite the limited analytical tools he had at his disposal, Montaigne became an attentive describer of the societal imbrications and configurations that derive from the biological set-up of the sexed individual. Accordingly, the *Essais* as well as *Journal de voyage* includes remarks on non-normative sexual orientations, such as male and female homosexuality (see Montaigne, 1992, pp. 118 & 6), pederasty ("licence Grecque") (see I, 28, 187-188), sexual relationships between humans and animals (see II, 12, 472), and even necrophilia (see III, 5, 882). Montaigne's design in this context was not merely to arouse curiosity, but to convey the consequences of Nature's commitment to the promotion of differences among all the sexual emergences it brings about (see III, 13, 1065). It hardly needs stressing that the spectrum of sexual variability Montaigne uncovered became the backbone of his critique targeting the sexual binomial as the basis of Christianity's reductive view of man.

11. Despite his rejection of Christianity's anthropological fixations, Montaigne carefully avoided discussing scholastic speculations on man, adducing that, as regards theology, "I understand nothing" (II, 12, 440).[13] This assertion was obviously only a pretext for not touching on issues directly dependent on the Church's magisterial authority. In truth, though, Montaigne was intimately cognizant of Roman-Catholic dogmatic teachings, as he had undertaken in younger years the painstaking task of translating into French the *Liber creaturarum* (1434-1436), an encyclopedic treatise by early fifteenth-century Catalan philosopher and theologian Raymond Sebond. With his translation, Montaigne was responding to his father's wish to read in French Sebond's voluminous work, which in time became better known as *Theologia naturalis* (see Sebond, 2022b). For someone so

[13] "qui n'y sçay rien"

deeply interested in issues of sexual difference as Montaigne was, the book proved to be a copious source of information about the Catholic conception of the "First Man" and his role in Christian *Heilsgeschichte*. At its core, Sebond's treatise advanced the idea that man is, with regard to the corporeal and spiritual perfection of his original condition, "the true and living image of God" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 291).[14] With the progress of time, however, as the evil spirit seduced the first woman, and she, in her turn, "our common father" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 556),[15] he lost his unsullied creational mark. While he had initially acquired his soul and body from God, in post-lapsarian times human beings received their stained bodies from the fallen first man, and only their souls without mediation from the Creator (see Sebond, 2022a, p. 291).

12. In his theological compendium, Sebond briefly mentions several spinous issues touching on humanity's paradisiacal existence, but circumvents dealing with them in depth, possibly to avoid incurring in conflict with the magisterium of the Chruch. On the subterfuge that "it would take too long to deal here" with such issues (Sebond, 2022a, p. 535),[16] Sebond eludes discussions that could potentially destabilize the coherence of his own theological stance. Thus, while generally assuming that "every man, inasmuch as he is man, bears in him the image of his creator" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 292)[17] and that the male/female hiatus belongs to the divinely intended order of creation, Sebond effectively excludes from the horizon of his elucidations the question as to whether the godly paradigm encompasses the man/woman pattern of sexual differentiation. Sebond's implicit answer would appear to be in the negative, if one considers his masculinist references to the sex/gender marks of the trinitarian God: The *Father* generates a being that is "just the same" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 161)[18] as himself, namely the male *Son*, and even the *Spirit*, the third in the godly group, assumes a preeminently phallic

[14] "la vraye et vive image de Dieu"

[15] "nostre commun pere"

[16] "il seroit trop long de traicter icy"

[17] "tout homme, entant qu'il est homme, porte en soy l'image de son createur"

[18] "toute pareille"

function as impregnator of a virgin that gives birth to the God Incarnate. Montaigne, whose book translation was basically an act of love for his aging father (see II, 12, 439), never went on to examine the fundamental mysteries of the trinity and incarnation. Such a demanding task, he deemed, was assuredly beyond his scholarly competence and interests.[19]

13. The masculinist ideology that subtends the theology of the Trinity and that Sebond took over from Church tradition led to the prioritization of the First Man over the First Woman, even when it came to the corporeal transmission of the consequences of the initial sin: it was "our first father" (Sebond, 2022a, p.748),[20] who became the "author of the first offense and of our original blemish" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 541).[21] The preeminent role of the male human being concerning the etiology of humanity's flawed condition is a continuation of the Trinity's quintessential masculinism within the creational ambit *sub signo peccati*. The implicit outcome of Sebond's exaltation of maleness even in its sinfulness, however, did not hinder his antifeminist propensity to declare that, despite Adam's culpable primacy, it was the First Woman who sinned the most, and therefore "the measure of the punishment of the woman was, without comparison, greater and almost double" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 542).[22] Notwithstanding the often periphrastic nature of Montaigne's translation of *Liber creaturarum*, it was not the place for him to hint at his critical views on Sebond's anthropological premises, especially those concerning sexual difference and the etiology of sin. In the *Essais* themselves, however, there are passages that clearly counter Sebond's principle of the universal scope of the original punishment that derives from the premise that "we all

[19] Notwithstanding his general reluctance to engage in theological issues, Montaigne eventually wrote the long essay "Apologie de Raymond Sebond" between 1575 and 1576, where he attempted to sidestep matters accessible only through divine revelation.

[20] "nostre premier pere"

[21] "autheur de l'offense premiere et de nostre originelle macule"

[22] "la mesure de la peine [est] sans comparaison plus grande et quasi double en la femme"

proceed, without doubt, from the same stem and universal father" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 541). [23]

14. The topos of the phallic privilege governing the post-lapsariangenealogy of man as well as the topos of nudity depicted in the Book of Genesis played central roles in Sebond's reconstruction of biblical ur-history. Both issues left traces in Montaigne's thought, inasmuch as he was intent on critiquing and surpassing them. Thus, in the already mentioned Virgil essay, Montaigne suggests a purely naturalistic, non-theological pattern of sexual origin according to which the emergence of the male and the female excludes the burdens of chronological or axiological asymmetries. A comparable hermeneutic shift is ascertainable when Montaigne tackles with the issue of nudity. In chapter 274 of *Théologie naturelle*, Sebond explains that "stripped and deprived from his natural embellishment that was his wellbeing, he [our first father] found himself naked and forced to borrow alien clothes" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 647).[24] As Sebond further details: "He shed his own and ordinary attire, to disguise and adorn himself shamefully and indecently" (Sebond, 2022a, p. 647).[25] While Adam's nakedness is conceived of by Sebond as a passage from his lost natural bliss to the attempt to cover up his degradation, Montaigne's de-theologized grasp of nudity does not presuppose a paradise lost nor a guilt-laden search for its ever-inadequate replacement. Rather, being "completely naked" (Au lecteur, 3)[26] constitutes from the start of the *Essais* a desirable and actualizable condition that has been perverted by the norm of the so-called public reverence society imposes on its members. Signally, Montaigne prolongs his comparative, relativizing gaze on the uses and conventions of nudity in the essay "Des cannibales" (Of cannibals), where the savage nations are depicted as being "quite close to their original naivety"[27] (I,

[23] "nous sommes sans doute tous partis d'une mesme tige et d'un general pere"

[24] "desvestu et despouillé de son natural ornament qui estoit le bien estre, il [nostre premier pere] se trouva nud et pressé d'emprunter des accoustremens estrangers"

[25] "Il quicta son habillement propre et ordinaire, pour se travestir et bigarrer indignement et indecemment"

[26] "tout nud"

[27] "fort voisines de leur naifveté originelle"

31, 206) and governed by natural laws, which have been "very little bastardized by our own" (I, 31, 206).[28]

15. For Montaigne, wearing "no clothing" (I, 31, 206)[29] or waging war "totally naked" (I, 31, 208)[30] were tokens of the fulfilling unadornment he missed in the culture in which he was raised. In a striking move toward disidentifying himself from the civilizational patterns of his ascendency and surroundings, Montaigne remarks with regard to the cannibals: "We can thus call them barbarians, in view of the rules of reason, but not in view of us, who surpass them in all kinds of barbarity" (I, 31, 210).[31] In the context of these elaborations, however, Montaigne does not attribute to the cannibals a conception of sexual difference that could serve as corrective to the dichotomous paradigm. On the contrary, Montaigne regards them as a masculinity-centered society, whose elders suffice themselves with preaching to the people "valor against the enemies and friendship toward their wives" (I, 31, 208).[32] Montaigne comes back to the issue shortly after,[33] but has nothing to say about their lack of a sexual conception that would correspond to what he intimates toward the end of the Virgil essay. As regards the issue of costumes in general, however, the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" (Apology for Raymond Sebond), aside from briefly mentioning the case of the Cannibals (see II, 12, 541 & 581), remarks that "we see in this world an infinite difference and variety due solely to the distance in place" (II, 12, 525)[34] and that "in these new lands that our fathers have discovered [...] everything is different" (II, 12, 525).[35] On the issue of alternative forms of

[28] "fort peu abastardies par les nostres"

[29] "nuls vestemens"

[30] "tous nuds"

[31] "Nous les pouvons donq bien appeller barbares, eu esgard aux regles de la raison, mais non pas eu esgard à nous, qui les surpassons en toute sorte de barbarie"

[32] "la vaillance contre les ennemies et l'amitié à leurs femmes"

[33] Montaigne underscores that the Cannibals' ethical science is based on "resoluteness in war and affection for their wives" / "la resolution à la guerre et affection à leurs femmes" (I, 31, 208).

[34] "Nous voyons en ce monde une infinie difference et varieté pour la seule distance des lieux"

[35] "en ces nouvelles terres que nos peres ont decouvert [...] tout y est divers"

corporeal sexuality, Montaigne, relying on the authority of Plinius and Herodotus, points to universal androgyny (see II, 12, 525) and other sexual configurations that are as astounding as the transmogrifications of Tiresias.

16. Montaigne's focus on non-normative forms of sexuality, his lack of interest in scrutinizing in depth the dogmatic fundamentals of the religion to which he publicly adhered, and his marked curiosity for non-European civilizational processes indexed areas of potential conflict with the self-understanding of sixteenth century Roman Catholicism. This notwithstanding, he unequivocally declared in the essay "Des prières" (Of prayers) that it is "the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, in which I die and in which I was born" (I, 56, 318).[36] Accordant with his confessional stance, Montaigne was a staunch supporter of the maintenance of the traditional *modus vivendi*. In an age of religious wars, he feared that any attempt to question and destabilize the socio-political consensus would bring about disastrous consequences. In this regard, the early essay titled "De la coustume et de ne changer aisément une loy reçeüe" (Of custom, and not easily changing an accepted law) points out at first: "it seems to me that all peculiar and out-of-the-way fashions come rather from folly and ambitious affectation than from reason" (I, 23, 118).[37] In the immediate continuation of the sentence, however, the essay depicts the attitude of the prototypical sage in a way that is consonant with Montaigne's own personal stance:

> "the wise man should withdraw his soul within, out of the crowd, and keep it in freedom and power to judge things freely; but as for externals, he should wholly follow the accepted fashions and forms" (I, 23, 118).[38]

17. Throughout Montaigne's life, his public signs of piety reflected his irreproachable conformity to the uses and laws of Catholic France. His remarks on religious orthopraxis,

[36] "l'Eglise catholique, apostolique et Romaine, en laquelle je meurs et en laquelle je suis nay"

[37] "il me semble que toutes façons escartées et particulieres partent plustost de folie ou d'affectation ambitieuse, que de vraye raison"

[38] " le sage doit au dedans retirer son ame de la presse, et la tenir en liberté et puissance des juger librement des choses; mais, quant au dehors, qu'il doit suivre entierement les façons et formes receues"

however, betray a constant concern about demarcating a private sphere, where he could scrutinize and eventually reject those same laws he so meticulously observed. Keeping in mind the wide gap between his public and private postures is of the essence when assessing the subtly formulated views Montaigne interspersed in his oeuvre that contradicted Catholic officialdom. As regards matters of sexual behavior, Montaigne could easily pretend a degree of conformity to Church teachings. It was more difficult however to disguise his actual contentions when discussing the ontological underpinnings of his sexual anthropology or his attempt to overcome the biblically sanctioned scheme of male/female distribution. Phrases like "The world is but a perennial movement [branloire]" (III, 2, 804)[39] or "Stability itself is nothing but a more languid motion" (III, 2, 805) [40] reflect his thoroughly Heraclitean stance as opposed to the creational ontology of Roman Catholicism and its sanction of the binomial sexual order. Against this backdrop, it becomes apparent that the episodic "flow of babble" mentioned in the Virgil essay was meant to mollify the discomfiting consequences of his attempt to dissolve the societal validity of the hiatus between man and woman.

18. Despite his occasional deployment of strategies of disguise, Montaigne straightforwardly articulated his principled rejection of Christianity's self-understanding when contending that "We have no communication with Being" (II, 12, 601).[41] In its consequence, Montaigne's critical premise signaled his dismissal of the claims raised by the Christian revelation. Considering his uncompromising standpoint, it strikes as an understatement when, in his *Essais sur les Essais*, Nouveau Roman author and art critic Michel Butor (1926-2016) suggested that Montaigne "never really had at heart" the Christian faith (Butor, 1968, p. 134).[42] In this regard, German Romanist scholar Hugo Friedrich (1904-1978) was more to the point when outrightly asserting that Montaigne had not been a Christian (Friedrich, 1967, p. 270; see also Conche, 2011, pp.

[39] "Le monde n'est qu'une branloire perenne"

[40] "La constance mesme n'est autre chose qu'un branle plus languissant"

[41] "Nous n'avons aulcune communication à l'estre"

[42] "n'avait jamais eue vraiment à cœur"

129-141). Nevertheless, Friedrich deemed apposite to nuance his assertion by conceding that the thinker's "own distance to Christianity" (Friedrich, 1967, p. 275)[43] resulted from his approach of faith "as a theoretically assessed possibility, which was no more a transformative force" (Friedrich, 1967, p. 102).[44] More attuned to Montaigne's fundamental religious critique, French structural anthropologist and philosopher Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) appraised his formulation concerning the lack of communication with Being as "possibly the strongest that one can read in the whole of philosophy" (Lévi-Strauss, 1991, pp. 284).[45] Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss remarked that, as regards Montaigne's thought in general, "Western philosophy often overlooks its radical intention (it could have been better understood by the Far East)" (Lévi-Strauss, 1991, p. 286; see Bakewell, 2011, pp. 37-38; Comte-Sponville, 2020, pp. 615-622).[46]

19. On the assumption that Montaigne had rebuffed any *theoretical* accommodation with the premises and pretensions of the Christian religion, Lévi-Strauss propounded an interpretation of his oeuvre that undermined the cogency of the one advanced by British Renaissance scholar and Anglican cleric Michael Andrew Screech (1926-2018). The author of a widely read translation of the *Essais* (see Montaigne, 1991), Screech stroke a more conciliatory tone in his approach of Montaigne's attitude toward Christianity. Besides admitting that "Montaigne firmly limits his natural philosophy to the sublunary matters, restricting them therefore to the world of constant flux," Screech aimed at "showing how consonant with Christian doctrine Montaigne's concern with perennial flux can be" (Screech, 1991, p. 82, note 1). Screech's heuristic assumptions certainly facilitated his literary and historical scrutiny of the *Melancholy* leitmotiv in the *Essais*, but they failed to offer any reasons for suggesting that, in Montaigne's worldview, there are cosmic ambits that escape the

[43] "seine eigene Ferne zum Christentum"

[44] "als eine theoretisch gewürdigte Chance, aber nicht mehr als verwandelnde Kraft"

[45] "la plus forte peut-être qu'on puisse lire dans toute la philosophie"

[46] "la philosophie occidentale méconnaît souvent l'intention radicale (elle eût été mieux comprise par l'Extrême Orient)"

pervasiveness of Becoming. Moreover, Screech appears to have overlooked that, from a strictly Montaignean perspective, supernatural revelation does not supersede or supplant the "science [...] of the in-science [ignorance]" (III, 12, 1057),[47] the gnoseological position embraced by the thinker in accordance to his ontic realization of universal *branloire*. In this context, truth does not emerge as the possession of an accepted heavenly gift, but as the pursuit of an endless quest for knowledge.

20. Montaigne's adherence to Roman Catholicism was not an issue of personal acceptance of ultimate truths, but of mere obedience to the Church's established power. Within the theo-political framework of a Church that expected from him at least nominal submissiveness to her magisterial authority, Montaigne sought to accommodate the freedom of thought he was unwilling to relinquish. Accordingly, he readily paid lip service to Catholic dogma, and at the same time excused himself from discussing its claims by alleging incompetence in theological matters. In the public eye, Montaigne remained his life long an obedient believer subjected to the religious and civil authority of his time, although he was actually denying this authority the right to constrain in any way the freedom of his private thoughts.[48] In accordance with his outspoken "disgust with innovation, regardless of the countenance it may adopt" (I, 23, 119),[49] Montaigne willingly praised the virtues of Christian civil obedience, declaring that

> "The Christian religion has all the marks of the outmost justice and utility, but none more apparent than the precise recommendation of obedience to the magistrate and maintenance of the government" (I, 23, 120).[50]

[47] "science [...] de l'inscience"

[48] The issue was soon to become a cornerstone of the Enlightenment's nascent political philosophy envisaged, among others, by Baruch de Spinoza (see, for instance, Yovel, 1992, pp. 151-152).

[49] "degousté de la nouvelleté, quelque visage qu'elle porte"

[50] "La religion Chrestienne a toutes les marques d'extreme justice et utilité; mais nulle plus apparente, que l'exacte recommandation de l'obéissance du Magistrat, et manutention des polices"

These asseverations, however, did not hinder Montaigne from invoking the magisterial authority of the Church to underpin an understanding of credal adherence that would allow for its principled dismantlement within the strict limits of the individual's privacy.

21. As regards the religious obedience due to the established authorities, the essay "De l'art de conferer" (On the art of discussion) written between 1585 and 1588 points out with enviable clarity and mordant irony:

> "What I myself adore in kings is the crowd of their adorers. All deference and submission is due to them, except that of our understanding. My reason is not trained to bend and bow, it is my knees" (III, 8, 935).[51]

The crucial distinction the passage lays out resonates with the stance Montaigne attributes to his *frère d'alliance* Étienne de La Boétie (1530-1563) in the essay "De l'amitié" (On friendship) published in 1580. As Montaigne underscores, La Boétie, despite advocating complete liberty of thought for the individual, acknowledged the need "to obey and submit most religiously to the laws under which he was born" (I, 28, 194).[52] At first sight, it would appear that Montaigne shared La Boétie's view that the decisive criterium for determining one's obedient allegiance is the place of birth. Montaigne himself, however, eventually questions and relativizes this norm in the name of a higher sapiential stance. In this context, Montaigne adduces Socrates' paradigmatic answer to the question as to where he came from:

> "He replied not 'Athens,' but 'The world.' He, whose imagination was fuller and more extensive, embraced the universe as his city" (I, 26, 157).[53]

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[51] "Ce que j'adore moy-mesmes aus Roys, c'est la foule de leurs adorateurs. Toute inclination et soubmission leur est deuë [aus Roys], sauf celle de l'entendement. Ma raison n'est pas duite à se courber et flechir, ce sont mes genoux"

[52] "d'obeyr et de se soubmettre tres-religieusement aux loix sous lesquelles il estoit nay"

[53] "Il ne repondit pas: D'Athenes; mais: Du monde. Luy, qui avoit son imagination plus plaine et plus estanduë, embrassoit l'univers comme sa ville"

22. Socrates' retort to the query about his birth and provenance implies a critical shift from the particularism of customs to the universality of reason. As a citizen of the world, the Socrates evoked by Montaigne undermines the significance of geographic origination by drawing attention to the individual's cosmic anchorage. By so doing, Socrates resets the issue of insightful rationality not only independently of the subject's private inwardness but also beyond the exteriority of the established powers. Leaving behind the tacit acquiescence to the parochialism of power, Socrates pleads for reinstating the universality of *physis* (nature), which the many *nomoi* (laws) often pretend to supersede. From Montaigne's perspective, Socrates, whom he once apostrophized as "such a holy image of the human form" (III, 12, 1054)[54], emerges as the universal hero of cosmic Becoming, which—as the negation of the statism of Being—becomes the source of sagacious lucidity. Regardless of the advantages that Montaigne, as *homo politicus*, may have attributed to the permanence of the societal reality, as a philosopher, he could not dispense with the insight into the quintessential mutability of every form of order. It is thus not by chance that Montaigne rigorously upheld and respected the laws and customs of his country of birth, but at the same time consistently directed his anthropological gaze to the theoretical untenability of their universalization.[55]

23. Montaigne's thought is constellated by a fundamental tension between the awareness of the all-too human need for fixed points of orientation and reference and the grasp of inescapable Becoming. Considering the strife between the desire for life-preserving permanence and the inescapable factuality of *branloire*, Montaigne scrutinized the alleged constancies upheld by metaphysical worldviews, religious soteriologies and the politics of power maintenance, pointing to their paradoxical foundation in the absent perpetuity they crave after. This recurring anamnesis of the lacking grounding

[54] "une si saincte image de l'humaine forme"

[55] In his elaborations on "Critique et éloge de la coutume," included in his volume *Montaigne. Des règles pour l'esprit*, Bernard Séve has pertinently pointed out in this regard: "D'une certaine façon, toute coutume est une bizarrerie fixée. Cette bizarrerie fixée protège l'esprit à la fois contre toutes les autres bizarreries qu'il pourrait rencontrer ou inventer, et contre la tentation d'aller errant d'une bizarrerie à l'autre" (Séve, 2007, p.187).

was an admonishment to his reading audience, but also a self-critical corrective of the tendency to forget that time dents from within one's dearest beliefs and persuasions. It was thus a testimony to his philosophical lucidity to confront the ill-founded transtemporal claims of the religion to which he adhered. Since Protestantism had no better means than Catholicism for coping with the challenges posed by the universal *panta rhei*, clear-sighted Montaigne had no reason to abandon the societal faith in which he had been raised and which he viewed as the one in which he wanted to die. Montaigne deemed that by acknowledging the factual religious authority regnant in his country of birth he was entitled to upheld privately, and thus without hypocrisy, a worldview that sapped at their core the metaphysical premises on which Catholicism based the universality of its soteriological claims.

24. Since Montaigne's Catholicism was a matter of conformity to his fatherland's established power, there appears to be no contradiction between his external religious practice and the dissenting ontic views he disseminated throughout his writings for those capable and willing to read him attentively. Against the backdrop of France's troubled sixteenth century, it was significant that he affirmed without subterfuge his Catholicism (see I, 56, 318), especially if one considers that his was "a religiously divided family" (Frame, 1994, p. 35). While the inimical relationships between Catholicism and Protestantism determined the spiritual landscape where Montaigne had to position himself, both options were commensurable in the sense that they shared the notion that personal salvation was attainable by becoming a baptized Christian. Despite their principled convergence on this issue, the two concurring forms of Christianity presented themselves as being mutually exclusive alternatives when it came to the effective configuration of the path to salvation they offered. This rift marked the religious history of Montaigne's maternal family, although it was not the one, which, in spite of its visibility, had the strongest impact on his self-understanding. Montaigne's mother, who was a devout Catholic, had to accept the conversion to Protestantism of two of her children, Thomas (1534-1602) and Jeanne (1536-1597) (Millet, 2018, p.1566). Beyond experiencing first-hand the internal strife between two

basically comparable forms of Christian appurtenance, Antoinette de Montaigne embodied the mostly hidden presence of Jewishness in a self-declared Christian family.

25. Rejecting the Paulinian spiritualization of Jewish contents that allowed for the universalistic claims of the nascent Church, mainstream Judaism in the Christian era continued to maintain as one of its constitutive tenets the notion of "carnal election" (see Wyschogrod, 1983, pp. 175-177; Bauer, 1990, pp. 330-341). Unlike the patrilineal conception of Jewish descent upheld by the Karaite form of Judaism, Rabbinical Judaism assumes the Jewishness of a child if born from a Jewish mother, regardless of the religious affiliation or beliefs of the father.[56] Against this backdrop, the often discussed question among present-day Montaigne scholars as to whether Montaigne could be considered a Jew in the strict sense of the word, is hinged on the halachic status (as defined by the Jewish Oral Law) of the mother. While deciding this critical issue at the present stage of Montaignean studies would be premature, the broader question concerning the influence of Judaism on Montaigne's self-understanding and worldview by way of his maternal family's ascertainable *converso*/*Marrano* (or, in Catalonian: *chueta*) ascendency appears to be gaining momentum within Jewish cultural studies. This notwithstanding, twentieth century scholars have at times not only denied the Jewish descent of Montaigne's mother, or at least her awareness of having such an ascendency, but have also overlooked Montaigne's early societal and pedagogical exposure to the Jewish/Marrano milieu of Bordeaux and Southern France. It is thus unsurprising that hardly any attention has been paid to the Jewish scope of Montaigne's moving testimony concerning Étienne de La Boétie's deathbed reversion to the faith of the Jewish Patriarchs.

26. Albert Thibaudet (1874-1936), a prominent early twentieth century Montaigne scholar and the co-editor of his

[56] For an authoritative statement on Karaite patrilineality, see the brief chapter "Who is a Jew? Matrilineal or Patrilneal?" published in *The Karaite Korner*: https://www.karaite-korner.org/karaite_faq.shtml. The *English Wikipedia* offers an informative entry on "Matrilineality in Judaism" from a historical perspective: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matrilineality_in_Judaism.

Œuvres complètes issued in the *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade*, noticeably remarked that "the drop of Jewish blood"[57] recognizable in "the mobilism of Montaigne"[58] was also manifest in the work of Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and Marcel Proust (1871-1922) (Thibaudet, 1963, p. 18). Despite its biologistic undertone and its condescending use of "drop" (*goutte*) in reference to the *converso* history of Montaigne's maternal family, Thibaudet's observation has the merit of foreshadowing the pronounced interest in Montaigne's Jewish roots in later decades. Perhaps more importantly, his remarks appear to hint at the link between Montaigne's intellectual mobility and the central notion of *branloire* that determined his ontological outlook (see, for instance, I, 20, 95 & III, 2, 804). Thibaudet's aperçus contributed to ensuring for Montaigne a place in Jewish intellectual history along with other towering figures, who, despite their Christian assimilation, safeguarded a clear awareness of their Jewishness. Given Thibaudet's considerations, it is not totally surprising that Montaigne's contacts with Jews and his outspoken interest in Jewish customs and ritual life—evinced, for instance, in his *Journal de voyage* (Montaigne, 1992, pp. 62, 102-103, 104, 120, 215, 288)—have nurtured speculations about a presumed crypto-Jewishness he may have shared with Marranos of previous generations, including those in his own maternal lineage.

27. Not seldom, Montaigne scholars have discussed his general approach of Judaism, while circumventing the issue of his personal bonds with Jews, a religious group generally despised by his contemporaries on both sides of the sixteenth-century religious wars. This avoidance strategy eventually proved to be untenable as non-Jewish scholars became increasingly aware of the Iberic-*marrano* ascendency of Montaigne's mother, Antoinette de Montaigne, née de Louppes (ca. 1510-1601) (see Frame, 1984, pp. 16-17; 21-23). This realization, which might have sound outlandish at first, acquired some degree of plausibility upon considering Montaigne's social closeness to Marranos throughout his life. The epitome of this proximity was the fact that, as noted by

[57] "la goutte de sang juif"

[58] "le mobilisme de Montaigne"

Donald Frame (1911-1991), Montaigne's foremost twentieth century biographer and translator (Montaigne, 2003), the French thinker became in 1583 "the godfather of a namesake, Michel, born six days earlier to two Marranos of Portuguese descent, Diogo and Guiomar (Leao) Dacosta" (Frame, 1984, p. 17). This kind of religious involvement on the part of Montaigne is significant, especially if one considers that, in the first book of the *Essais*, he pointed out to the fact that, to avoid being expelled from Portugal, "some [Jews] made a show of changing religion" (I, 14, 53).[59] As Montaigne further underscored, most Portuguese regarded these Christian proselytes with suspicion, as they were unsure about "their faith, or that of their race [i.e., descendants], even today, a hundred years later" (I, 14, 54).[60] Although this larval anti-Semitic attitude was possibly also ascertainable in Montaigne's own Catholic environment, it appears to have had no incidence on his personal approach of Jews and New Christians. This is hardly surprising, given the Marrano origins of his mother, to whom he had, it must be said, a relationship that cannot be considered cordial (see Frame, 1984, pp. 25; 27-28).

28. Contravening the views of some contemporary historians, present-day French Renaissance scholars generally accept the premise of Montaigne's Jewish descent, which Donald Frame had advanced on the basis of extensive research work carried out by Jewish historian Cecil Roth (1899-1970), "the leading authority" on the family of Montaigne's mother (Frame, 1984, p. 333; see Roth, 1937-1938). The question, however, as to whether Montaigne himself was cognizant of his Israelite ascendency continues to be debated. Even among scholars who consider that Montaigne was aware of his Jewishness, the issue has been raised as to whether his presumed Jewish self-understanding had an incidence on his oeuvre. In this connection, a thought-provoking entry on "Juifs/Judaïsme" included in the *Dictionnaire Montaigne* and penned by Daniel Ménager refers to a "deranging coincidence" (Ménager, 2018, p. 1020)[61] uncovered by Sophie Jama in her 2001 book on *L'Histoire juive de Montaigne* (see Jama, 2001,

[59] "aucuns [Juifs] firent contenance de changer de religion"

[60] "la foi desquels, ou de leur race, encores aujourd'hui cent ans apres"

[61] "coïncidence troublante"

pp. 21-27). As Ménager resumes Jama's arguments in this regard, the preamble of the *Essais* was dated on March 1, 1580, the exact date of the celebration of Purim, the 14 of Adar, according to the Hebrew calendar. As a commemoration of the story of Esther, who obtains the pardon of those condemned by the Persian monarch Ahasuerus, Purim is not only a feast of hope, but a kind of Jewish carnival during which children wear masks. Since, as Jama suggests, these masks could be interpreted as a reference to the hidden identity of the *Marranos*, the date chosen by Montaigne could be a hint to the mask he had to wear to both conceal and intimate his true cultural and religious belonging.[62] Hoping that a deeper study of the *Essais* will offer in the future irrefutable signs of Montaigne's Jewish outlook, Ménager underscores the need to focus on what the Montaignean commentatorial style may owe to the tradition of the Jewish *Midrash* (Ménager, 2018, p. 1020; see Adler, 1963, pp. 40-44).

29. In the period between the publication of Frame's volume and that of Ménager's dictionary entry, Madelaine Lazard issued a Montaigne biography in which she contends that "the Jewish origins of the de Louppes family are highly probable" (Lazard, 1992, p. 43).[63] Contrasting with Lazard's detailed elaborations on the issue, Arlette Jouanna asserted in her 2017 biography that "nothing attests in the author of the *Essais* to the consciousness of a possible Israelite ascendency" (Jouanna, 2017, p. 24).[64] Against the backdrop of these conflicting views, Daniel Ménager's mention of a possible connection between Montaigne and the Jewish textual heritage of post-biblical times

[62] As regards the rôle of masks in Jewish/Marrano intellectual history, see the excellent chapter "Marranos in Mask and a World without Transcendence: Rojas and *La Celestina*" in Yirmiyahu Yovel's book *Spinoza and Other Heretics* (Yovel, 1992, pp. 85-127). Although the first volume of Yovel's work is mainly focused on Spinoza and the seventeenth century Jewish Amsterdam, the mentioned chapter deals with *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea* (better known as *La Celestina*), a work published in 1499 and attributed to Fernando de Rojas (ca. 1465/1473-1541), a descendent of Jews converted to Christianity (on this issue, see also Infantes, 2010, pp. 11-103). As the title of Yovel's chapter conveys, Rojas' work confronted issues that were also crucial to Montaigne's worldview.

[63] "les origines juives de la famille de Louppes sont fort probables"

[64] "rien [...] n'atteste chez l'auteur des *Essais* la conscience d'une eventuelle ascendence israélite"

is significant. Tackling the thorny issue of Montaigne's presumed indebtedness to parts of the Oral Law, however, presupposes clarifying the question as to how someone like Montaigne, who, if at all, only had a very limited access to the original Jewish sources, could have been influenced by the literary form and/or intellectual contents of those texts. As Ménager admits, the research work concerning a possible impact of the Midrashic sources on Montaigne is, "at this point, only at its beginning" (Ménager, 2018, p. 1020).[65] Since no definitive answers can be expected for the time being, it is apposite to at least recall some ascertainable biographical facts that could contribute to a better societal contextualization of the matter. The perhaps most consequential of these facts was Montaigne's exposure at a young age to the *marrano* and New Christian intellectual subculture, which had been historically shaped by strategies of disguise as a means of survival (see Yovel, 1992, pp. 114-115).

30. The seven-year-old Montaigne initiated his formal education in 1540 at the Collège de Guyenne, an enlightened institution that included in its curriculum optional Hebrew courses (Ford, 2018, p. 339) and was run, at least in part, by Portuguese New Christians (Jama, 2001, pp. 88-90; Nakam, 2002, p. 64). Signally, Donald Frame mentions among the many Iberic Marranos, who decided to settle in Bordeaux, "André de Gouvéa, Principal of the Collège de Guyenne, and his colleagues Fernandès Dacosta, Jehan Gelida, Mathieu and Jean da Costa" (Frame, 1984, p, 20). Comparable cultural influences appear to have been at work during Montaigne's higher education. As generally assumed, he pursued law studies between 1548 and 1550, possibly at the University of Toulouse. In any case, Montaigne was closely associated with the intellectual atmosphere of the southern French city (Frame, 1984, p. 44). Toulouse, where his maternal family had settled toward the end of the fifteenth century and where his mother was born (see Frame, 1984, p. 23), eventually became a "center of New Christian ferment and heterodoxy" (Goitein, 2007, vol. 14, p. 453). The cultural mark of the city was at least in part the result of decades-long efforts by prominent Portuguese Jews and *conversos* to make accessible in their new homeland

[65] "pour l'instant, n'en est qu'à ses débuts"

the rich Talmudic and Kabbalistic heritage they had brought along with them. In view of Tolouse's lively atmosphere of intercultural exchange, the chances are that, as Daniel Ménager has suggested, the Midrash possibly influenced Montaigne's commentarial form of composition, thereby implicitly bringing up the question as to whether a simultaneous reception of specifically Jewish contents and patterns of thought also took place.

31. For Montaigne, his encounter with Étienne de La Boétie became a watershed moment in his erotic life. In his *Testament* of 1563, the year of his passing, he epitomized the younger Montaigne as "his intimate brother and inviolable friend" (La Boétie, 1892, p. 428).[66] Acknowledging the significance of their bond, French Renaissance scholar Géralde Nakam pointed out that "there is no subject matter in French literature that would be more illustrious, and less well-known than the friendship of Montaigne and La Boétie" (Nakam, 1993, p. 118).[67] As regards the religious self-identification of the latter, Sophie Jama has argued that it is impossible to ascertain whether La Boétie was a Jew at heart, a New-Christian or a Marrano: "We know very little about La Boétie to tell who he really was" (Jama, 2001, p. 133).[68] Although more information on the religious background of La Boétie and his family would certainly be desirable, there is evidence that in his deathbed he conveyed his desire to dissociate himself from Catholicism and die "under the faith and religion" of Moses (Montaigne, 1985c, p. 1358).[69] Jewish medical historian and ophthalmologist Harry Friedenwald (1864-1950) saw in his utterances the proof of La Boétie's astounding reversion to the Mosaic faith. As the American scholar pointedly contended, La Boétie's pronouncement "is clearly the confession of a Marrano or secret Jew" (Friedenwald, 1940, p. 145). Considering that Montaigne cites La Boétie's words in a long letter addressed to his father, a version of which he eventually published,

[66] "son inthime frère et inviolable amy"

[67] "Il n'y a pas, dans la littérature française, de sujet plus illustre, et moins bien connu, que l'amitié de Montaigne et de La Boétie"

[68] "Nous savons trop peu de chose sur La Boétie pour dire ce qu'il en fut vraiement"

[69] "soubs la foy & religion"

Friedenwald underscored that the document's "very minute details, without any comment [...], suggest the deep interest and sympathy of both the father and the son and their recognition of its significance" (Friedenwald, 1940, p. 145; see Nakam, 1993, p. 240; Nakam, 2002, p. 99; Jama, 2001, p. 133).

32. Friedenwald's contention regarding La Boétie's return to Judaism is noteworthy for its unequivocal argumentation and the textual evidence adduced in its support. It is regretful, however, that more recent research on La Boétie and the Montaigne/La Boétie friendship has hardly assessed the stance Friedenwald so forcefully articulates. In Jean-Michel Delacomptée's commentary to Montaigne's letter, for instance, no mention is made of the scope and import of the Jewish issue in La Boétie's final pronouncements (see Delacomptée, 2012, p. 58). Similarly, in one of the few book-length biographies of La Boétie, French Renaissance historian Anne-Marie Cocula—following in this point the lead of Donald Frame (see Frame, 1984, pp. 76-80)—offers no discussion of the historiographical perplexities related to La Boétie's abjuration of Christianity and his final embracement of the faith of Israel (see Cocula, 1995, pp. 140-142). Although Géralde Nakam in her 1993 volume on Montaige explicitly remits to Friedenwald's take on La Boétie's religious reversion (Nakam, 1993, p. 240), she does not discuss the consequences of the agonizing man's intent to die as a Jew after spending his life as a Catholic. While Nakam forgoes analyzing the impact of La Boétie's resolve on Montaigne, Sophie Jama in her 2001 book on Montaigne offers no definitive answer to the question concerning La Boétie's religious appurtenance. Interestingly enough, the unqualified terms *Jewish* or *Christian* are not among the alternatives Jama considers. Instead, she appears to ponder about the appropriateness of designations like Jew *at heart*, *New*-Christian, or the derogatively connoted *Marrano*.

33. The chances are that Sophie Jama could have avoided in 2001 her conceptual irresoluteness concerning La Boétie's religious stance, had she scrutinized Montaigne's *Lettre à son père sur la mort d'Étienne de La Boétie* in light of Friedenwald's 1940 contention that the prematurely deceased had been a "secret Jew" (Friedenwald, 1940, p. 145), a phrase that avoids the pejorative connotation resulting from the

semantic association of the word *marrano* with pigs. In principle, the Jewishness Friedenwald attributes to the gravely ill La Boétie appears to be that of a *baal tschuva* (repentant), whose reversion—not conversion —to Judaism presupposes the gift of having been born a Jew. In the last resort, the halachic concept appears to be the most appropriate to designate La Boétie's final religious stance as documented by Montaigne's *Lettre à son père*. The semantic scope of the Rabbinical term certainly assumes the factuality of a Jewish birth and could imply some degree of Jewish socialization. Thus, when dealing with La Boétie's mention of the historical tradition that began with Moses and eventually reached the shores of France, Sophie Jama drew attention to the parallelism between the historico-religious outline advanced by La Boétie and the genealogical take on the transmission of the Oral Law in the first chapter of the Mishna treatise titled *Pirkei avot*, "Teachings of the Fathers" (see Jama, 2001, p. 133).

34. The significance of the parallel to which Jama refers becomes more evident if one considers La Boétie's other declarations cited in the published excerpt of the letter Montaigne wrote to his father.[70] Therein, Montaigne details that La Boétie, after hearing Mass, addressed the following words to the priest and those present in his chambers:

> "'[...] I declare that as I have been baptized, as I have lived, so I want to die in the faith and religion which Moses first planted in Egypt, which the Patriarchs then received in Judea, and which, from hand to hand, in the progress of time, has been brought to France'" (Montaigne, 1985c, p. 1358).[71]

The words pronounced by La Boétie after the Christian rituals had been performed are noteworthy on several

[70] The complete title of the extract reads: "Extraict d'une lettre que Monsieur le Conseiller de MONTAIGNE escrit à Monseigneur de MONTAIGNE son père, concernant quelques particularités qu'il remarqua en la maladie & mort de feu Monsieur de La BOÉTIE" (see Delacomptée, 2012, pp. 18, 20).

[71] "'[...] Je proteste, que comme j'ay esté baptizé, ay vescu, ainsi veux-je mourir soubs la foy & religion que Moyse planta premierement en Ægypte: que le Peres receurent depuis en Judee, & qui de main en main par succession de temps a esté apportee en France.'"

accounts. The citation clearly distinguishes between how La Boétie had lived and how he wants to die. As a severely ill Catholic that had confessed his sins and attended Mass, La Boétie reminds his reduced audience that he had once received the sacrament of baptism from the Church whose representative was present at his bedside. But he also conveys that his past Christian allegiance was at odds with the "faith and religion" under which he wanted to die and from which all Christian references appear to be lacking. Instead of invoking the authority of Christ, the Church founders, or the *sucessio apostolic*a, La Boétie refers to the tradition that was initiated by Moses, continued by the Patriarchs, and brought to France by those transmitting the Jewish heritage through the centuries. These three fundamental layers of transmission correspond, in Sophie Jama's view, to the pattern of historical reception of the Oral Law as depicted in *Pirkei avot*.[72]

35. It goes without saying that La Boétie's words concerning his return to the religion of Moses constitute a consequential corrective to the commonplace assumptions about his Catholic appurtenance. For the sake of clarity, however, it should be noted that a few pages earlier, La Boétie professed his Catholic faith without mentioning his design to revert to Judaism. Indeed, in the context of his initial bid to call for a priest, La Boétie declared:

> "Having set my estate in order, now I must think of my conscience. I am a Christian, I am a Catholic; as such I have lived, as such do I intend to end my life. Let a priest be sent for, for I will not fail in this last duty of a Christian" (Montaigne, 1985c, pp. 1352-1353).[73]

[72] Sophie Jama writes: "[…] cette ultime profession de foi de La Boétie ressemble à ce passage essentiel des Maximes des Pères (I,1) du Talmud où l'on peut lire que 'Moïse a reçu la Loi sur le Sinaï et l'a transmise à Josué. Josué l'a transmisse aux anciens, et le anciens aux prophètes; et ceux-ci à leur tour l'ont transmisse aux membres de la Grande Assemblée […]'" (Jama, 2001, 133).

[73] "Ayant mis ordre à mes biens, encores me faut il penser à ma conscience. Je suis Chrestian, je suis Catholique: tel ay vescu, tel suis-je deliberé de clorre ma vie. Qu'on me face venir un prestre, car je ne veux faillir á ce dernier devoir d'un Chrestien"

While in this passage La Boétie asks for a priest that would perform the Church's rites for the dying, the more elaborate depiction of the scene referred to earlier (see Montaigne, 1985c, p. 1358) details what he told the priest as he was done with his ritual intervention and was about to leave. What could be prematurely interpreted as a Gentile finale portraying La Boétie clinging to the spiritual comforts of the Church, was, in truth, just the preamble of a forceful recantation of his lifelong Christian adherence for the sake of his allegiance to his Mosaic origins. Considering that Montaigne most probably ignored or repressed relevant details concerning La Boétie's life and ascendency that could throw a shadow of doubt on his idealizing portrayal of the deceased friend, it is all the more striking that Montaigne offers definitive insights into La Boétie's ultimate Jewish reversion, although he was certainly aware that by making it public, he was not furthering the reception of his friend's ideas and poetic work in the Christian world.[74]

36. Of the two passages relating to what La Boétie told the priest in his bed chamber, the second one mentioned in Montaigne's letter reflects more accurately the intense seriousness of the circumstances. It hints at La Boétie's religious self-understanding in a way that counters the image of Catholic fidelity he had projected throughout his life. The depiction of La Boétie's final embracement of the *successio Judaica* has the aura of reliable accuracy, as it remits to the covenantal role of the Mosaic Torah that has been passed on "from hand to hand" (Montaigne, 1985c, p. 1358).[75] By mentioning La Boétie's religious reversion, Montaigne was performing a courageous act of piety to the memory of the

[74] The focus on La Boétie's reversion to Judaism in the present context should not mislead to the assumption that recantations of Catholicism were a seldom phenomenon among Marranos or New-Christians. The sociological scope of the issue within the West-European Sephardic communities is reflected in the halachic discussions on the "forced apostates" who accepted baptism in exchange for remaining alive (see אנוסים ('Anusim), (5734 / 1974)). As regards the secrecy surrounding the lives of the Crypto-Jews—as the Marranos have also been called—and its repercussions even in the present, see: Gilitz, 2002, especially pp. 35-96.

[75] "de main en main"

friend who had recanted Christianity in order to reclaim his birthright as a Jew. Bearing witness to these unusual occurrences in a private letter that was eventually published with minor revisions (see Montaigne, 1985a, p. 1718 [*Lettres*, p. 1347, note 1]), was something Montaigne could not have taken lightly. Well aware of the import of transmitting the Jewish heritage, Montaigne handed down to posterity the defining verities of La Boétie's religious belonging without seeking to explain or justify. Considering the backdrop of his maternal family history, it is regrettable, however, that Montaigne's personal involvement in conveying the contentious issue of La Boétie's Jewishness has hardly received scholarly attention. Indicatively, neither Donald Frame (see Frame, 1984, pp. 76-80) nor La Boétie's biographer Anne-Marie Cucula (see Cucula, 1995, pp. 140-142) raised the issue in their respective discussions of the final hours of Montaigne's *frère d'alliance*.

37. Regardless of the theological and historical categories deployed for designating the outcome of La Boétie's religious trajectory, his deathbed declarations and their transmission to posterity allow to infer a lively and diverse social field of intellectual interaction among the Christianized heirs of Jewish scholarship and traditions. Provided that they would not explicitly question the Christian doxa, baptized Jews and their descendants were tolerated by State and Church. Notwithstanding the ever-present risk of being persecuted and murdered, these Christian proselytes not seldom discussed alternative conceptions of salvation history out of the sources of post-biblical Judaism, which influenced the *converso* subculture that obviously shaped La Boétie's religious awareness. Against this backdrop, it could be expected that Talmudic patterns of thought had an impact on how Jews coped with the challenges of their exilic existence, as suggested by La Boétie's creative appropriation of *Pirkei avot*. The chances are that this path of influence also left its traces in Montaigne's reconceptualization of sexual difference toward the end of his Virgil essay. On this assumption, it is worthwhile considering whether the theoretical thrust of Montaigne's "flow of babble" was actually foreshadowed in the Midrashic

reference to the notion of human androgyny enunciated by Rabbi Yirmiyah ben Elazar:

אָמַר רַבִּי יִרְמְיָה בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, אַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס בָּרָאוֹ, הֲדָא הוּא דִכְתִיב זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא

(*Genesis Rabbah*, 8, 1)

> "Rabbi Yirmiyah ben Elazar declared: In the hour when the Holy One, blessed be He, created the first human, He created him as an androgynous, as it is said, 'male and female He created them.'"

38. The ascertainment of conceptual or structural correspondences between two texts does not necessarily imply the existence of genealogical nexus between them. However, given the disruptive relevance of the two passages under discussion, it would appear that their affinity was more than mere historical coincidence or convergence. Rabbi Yirmiyah's teaching on the androgyny of the first human being is part of a collection of ancient homiletical-rabbinical interpretations of the *Book of Genesis* called *Genesis Rabbah* (ca. 300-500 C.E.). Signally, the passage quoted above deploys the Hebrew transliteration (אַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס) of the Greek word for androgynous: ἀνδρόγυνος. This non-mainstream, but authoritative understanding of creational Adam as an androgyne appears to have been echoed in Kabbalistic interpretations of *Genesis* 1: 27, which underscored the double-sex nature of the divine "image" (צֶלֶם) that served as model for the Creation of the First Human Being (see Ginsburg, 1920, pp. 91-92; 114-118; Idel, 2005, pp. 59-63; Sameth, 2020). It is thus safe to assume that the scope of influence of Rabbi Yirmiyah's conception of androgynous Adam went far beyond the circles of Talmudic scholars and their students. Its critical edge against traditional patterns of strict dichotomic sexuality certainly found an empathetic reception in Kabbalist circles, which eventually became paths of transmission for speculative Jewish contents concerning the sexuality of prelapsarian Adam. Although it cannot be excluded that Montaigne came in contact with Rabbi Yirmiyah's disruptive conception of Adamic androgyny

through intermediaries, it should not be overlooked that he nowhere referenced Jewish textual sources in support of his own dissenting sexual views.

39. At this point, it is apposite to examine more closely Montaigne's complex take on sexual difference. In accordance with his overarching postulate concerning the pervasiveness of *branloire*, Montaigne sought to overcome the fixity of the man/woman paradigm prevalent throughout cultures and regarded by the Catholic Church as the only sexual-distributive scheme corresponding to biblical revelation. Montaigne's critical stance effectively undermined not only the sexual binarity propagated by the Christian worldview, but also the mutually exclusive constructs of other-sex and same-sex sexualities. Moreover, having renounced advocating any specific template for the conjunction of the sexes, Montaigne sufficed himself with countering the reductive perception of sexual diversity and variability, which cultures have enforced as a means to achieve their socio-political aims. As a consequence of having observed and assessed existing sexual forms that unequivocally escape the binary pattern, Montaigne sought to dissipate the delusion of stable sexual-categorial subsumptions at odds with the universal transmutabily that frames and sustains the ciscendent aims of history. Montaigne's axiom concerning the impossible identity between the simplest of separate things obviously maintained its validity when considering beings with the complexity of humans. This line of argument, which has at times been associated with Montaigne's nominalist proclivities, allows to envision the sexed individual as a unique emergence in the continuous deployments of Nature that supersedes the socio-cultural consolidation of categorial sexual groups. As already suggested, uncovering the ontic vacuity of such subsumptions is the result of the awareness that no two distinct sexed individuals could share the same categorial identity.

40. From Montaigne's perspective, the all-pervasive principle of *branloire* becomes especially manifest when the corporeal roots of sexuality give rise to deviant or monstruous forms that falsify the phantasmal idea of a permanently fixed sexual order. The notion of two mutually exclusive and stable sexes exemplifies the mirage of sexual constancy, which, in

Montaigne's view, constitutes a societally sanctioned paradigm without any factual reality to support it. Moreover, the insufficiencies of the postulatory male/female combinatory, on which all known forms of civilization rely, become apparent as soon as a suppletory ambit of same-sex (i.e., male/male or female/female) sexualities is acknowledged, which, lacking reproductive prospectives, are generally excluded from the map of desirable sexual conjunctions enabling collective survival. Although Montaigne mentions in *Journal de voyage* the execution of several same-sex dissidents, he abstains from critiquing the legally sanctioned practice, which, on principle, contravenes the ascertainable sexual variation and diversity throughout nature. Having established the general axiom of uniquely configured sexual constitutions escaping categorial subsumption, Montaigne opts for leaving it to the reader to reject the prevalent incapacity of civil and ecclesiastical authorities to accommodate all the existing variations of sexuality within the order of the body politic. As Montaigne observed first-hand, these same authorities generally welcomed and supported the heterosexual services of prostitutes in establishments specifically designed for that purpose (see, for instance, Montaigne, 1992, pp. 93-94; 126; 187; III, 13, 1086-1087).

41. Instead of affirming the purportedly self-evident binarity of the sexes that Church and civil law sanction, Montaigne raises the claim that "males and females are cast in the same mold"[76] and that "except for education and custom, the difference [of the sexes] is not great" (III, 5, 897).[77] Therewith, Montaigne was propounding his controversial conception that the disjunction of the sexes results primarily from the derivative causalities of history and culture. Given his discombobulating assumptions, it is not surprising that Montaigne sought to sidestep the reactions of the unthinking, but mighty powers that be by recurring to the probed means of self-deprecating sarcasm. Had the Inquisition's watchdogs become aware of the actual theoretical scope of Montaigne's brief elaborations on a radical alternative to the dichotomous scheme of sexual distribution, the horrors it would have been

[76] "les masles et femelles sont jettez en mesme moule"

[77] "sauf l'institution et l'usage, la difference n'y est pas grande"

capable of perpetrating against him would be hardly imaginable. It is thus a testimony to his clear-sightedness concerning the theo-political realities of his time that Montaigne wryly de-potentiated his own critical conception of a common male/female *moule* by depicting it within the framework of what he designated as a "flow of babble" (III, 5, 897).[78] Far from being "impetuous and harmful" (III, 5, 897),[79] his subtending conception of sexuality's *branloire* will eventually evince itself as the *clef de voûte* of his sexual thought.

42. Montaigne exposes the man/woman disjunction as a form of sexual dogmatism whose historical repetitiveness is incapable of hiding its ill epistemic foundations. The alternative Montaigne envisages is not a corrective suppletion of the number of sexes beyond the sexual disjunction, but an open-end model that rebuffs any attempt to reduce any two sexed individuals to an identical category. Notwithstanding their every-day practical value, categorial schemes and subsumptions of sexuality reflect the arbitrary criteria chosen by cultures to obnubilate the perception of the ongoing proliferation of sexualities. Against this backdrop, Montaigne's brief elaborations on the sexual *moule* dispels the notion of sexual difference as a separating line between human groups in order to advance the idea of a uniquely nuanced modulation of the male/female polarity within each human individual. On these assumptions, the notion of "human form," which Montaigne deploys in critical junctions of his thought (see Au lecteur, 3; III, 12, 1054), is neither masculine nor feminine, as it encodes the whole range of sexual variability that every individual actualizes differently. True to his skeptical turn of mind, Montaigne does not replace one sexual dogmatism by another, but dissolves all of them within the framework of an ontic quest toward radically individualized sexualities. Interrupted only by the temporal finitude of the inquirer, this type of critical move has been pertinently depicted by Marcel Conche as the defining mark of Montaigne's thought:

> "The search is all he [Montaigne] aspires to achieve. Not taking over and possessing. Now, searching the true

[78] "flux de caquet"

[79] "impetueux [...] et nuisible"

> always means to doubt, not being certain of anything, never ceasing to question. One is satisfied in philosophy only by exhaustion or stupidity" (Conche. 2015, p. 75).[80]

43. While Montaigne acknowledged in principle the need to move away from finite sexual formations, he had to comply in daily life with the demands of a society organized around the male/female dichotomy and its inherent power asymmetry. Within this societal framework, Montaigne differentiates the passion of male/female love (in form of short-lived relations or marriage) from the spiritual passion that can connect, in his view, two men, but not two women. Notwithstanding his firm rebuttal of the asymmetric relations between older penetrating pederasts and younger penetrated youths (see III, 28, 187-188), the way Montaigne conceptualizes other-sex love does not escape the quandaries of asymmetric power relations. By opposing heterosexual love's "corporeal end, subject to satiety" (I, 28, 186)[81] to the continuous spiritual enjoyment that results from "the convergence of desires" (I, 28, 186)[82] of two male friends, Montaigne admits the need for an axiological order of the erotic passions that subordinates the inherently "fleeting affections"[83] between a man and a woman to the potential perfection of male/male friendship. Accordingly, Montaigne maintains that his friendship with the prematurely deceased Étienne de La Boétie was beyond comparison with the erotic bond with the women in his life: "the first keeping its course in proud and lofty flight and disdainfully watching the other making its way far, far beneath it" (I, 28, 186).[84] As to the cause of the disparity between the two love alternatives, Montaigne points out that

[80] "La quête est tout ce à quoi il [Montaigne] prétend. Non la prise et la possession. Or quêter le vrai signifie toujours douter, n'être assuré de rien, ne jamais cesser d'interroger. On ne se contente en philosophie que par fatigue ou bêtise."

[81] "fin corporelle et sujecte à sacieté."

[82] "la convenance des volontez"

[83] "affections volages"

[84] "la premiere maintenant sa route d'un vol hautain et superbe, et regardant desdaigneusement cette cy passer ses pointes bien loing au dessoubs d'elle"

> "the ordinary capacity of women is inadequate for that community and fellowship which is the nurse of this sacred bond [of friendship]; nor does their soul seem firm enough to endure the strain of so tight and durable a knot" (I, 28, 186).[85]

44. Montaigne's unflattering assessment of women in general takes into account their function as paramours and mistresses in their unsteady relations to men. But it also considers their role as wives within the institution of marriage, which, in his view, is "a bargain to which only the entrance is free [...], a bargain ordinarily made for other ends" (I, 28, 186).[86] Notwithstanding his critique of pecuniary-driven marital arrangements which wives hardly had any means to revoke, Montaigne seemed not to have had second thoughts about the quotidian relegation of women in a male-dominated society. On the assumption that male/female love cannot envisage a form of intimacy beyond sensual/sexual fulfilment, Montaigne suggests that a man could only find the reciprocity of friendship in relationships with other men. Moreover, given the subordinate role of women in heterosexual love, they can only counterbalance the progressive fading of passion in marital life by acquiescing to the growing predominance of their husbands in conjugal affairs. Clearly stressing the male privilege, Montaigne affirms the right of men to enrich their lives through male friendships, but does not even consider the possibility that women could aspire to engage in friendship with other women and thus escape the supremacist claims of the male paradigm. In principle, Montaigne seems to unrealistically expect from women that they undo their subordination to men and relinquish the sexual volatility it provokes before entering the bond of friendship with individuals which society has regarded until now as being either male or female.

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[85] "la suffisance ordinaire de femmes n'est pas pour respondre à cette conference et communication, nourrise de cette saincte couture; ny leur ame ne semble assez ferme pour soustenir l'estreinte d'un noed si pressé et si durable"

[86] "un marché qui n'a que l'entrée libre [...] marché qui ordinairement se fait à autres fins"

45. Contrasting with the exalted traits he assigns to male/male friendship, Montaigne configured his own heterosexual relationships following criteria very different from those he assumed decent women should follow when relating to men. In his writing, nothing suggests that he lived up to other-sex behavioral standards as demanding as those he thought women would have to conform to in order to escape the subserviency of their condition. Given the unquestioned preponderancy of the male in the society in which Montaigne lived, there was no need for him to change anything in his other-sex conduct to be worthy of engaging in a bond of friendship with La Boétie. As already mentioned, their first encounter took place in 1559 (see Magnien, 2018, p. 1030), as La Boétie, Montaigne's senior by two and a third years, had already "married, settled, [and become] an accomplished writer" (Frame,1984, p. 69).[87] As the *Essais* convey in this regard, the friendship between the two men did not hinder them from engaging in numerous heterosexual love affairs:

> "Under this perfect friendship [with La Boétie], those fleeting affections [for women] once found a place in me, not to speak of him, who confesses only too many of them in his verses" (I, 28, 186).[88]

Moreover, it appears that in the worldview of the two friends, the husband's marital infidelities were deemed compatible with the patriarchal subordination in which legitimate wives were held. Even for Montaigne, however, it would have been beyond the bounds of civil decency to question the societal unacceptability of female marital unfaithfulness.

46. The marital and extramarital mores by which La Boétie and Montaigne abided were widely shared by the gentilshommes of Late Renaissance France. Montaigne,

[87] In the last edition of the *Essais* issued in his lifetime, Montaigne was careful to underscore that, by the time he and La Boétie met, "we were both grown men" / "nous estions tous deux hommes faicts" (I, 28, 188).

[88] "Sous cette parfaicte amitié ces affections volages ont autrefois trouvé place chez moy, affin que je ne parle de luy, qui n'en confesse que trop par ces [ses] vers"

however, was an exception among them, inasmuch as he possessed the intellectual audacity to posit a this-worldly erotic order according to which male-male friendship replaced male-female love on the apex of the passional hierarchy. This substitution did not result from the rejection of coital, procreative intimacy on the part of Montaigne, but rather from the axiological preeminence he assigned to the immanent teleology of friendship. In Montaigne's understanding of the male/male bond, the body is not considered an idealized springboard for attaining a Platonic or Christian-transcendental finality, but the condition for experiencing the friend's presence as a source of immediate enjoyment. Male/male friendship is thus no amatory ersatz practice, but a reality in its own that surpasses other forms of erotic engagement. Montaigne's axiological subordination of other-sex sexuality is reflected in a telling passage of his 1585/1588 essay titled "De trois commerces" (Of three kinds of association):

> "[...] out of scorn I did not addict myself much to venal and public intimacies. I wanted to make the pleasure keener by difficulty, by desire, and by a certain glory" (III, 3, 826).[89]

47. Montaigne's conception of the social order delineated in his early essay on friendship organizes sexual difference in a way that not only discriminates against the female condition but also rules out the realization of the male's sexual potentials in non-heteronormative contexts. Since the "holy bond" of friendship is meant to provide solely "spiritual" enjoyment (I, 28, 186),[90] it excludes sexual relations between the males it unites. This precision notwithstanding, Montaigne readily acknowledged its physical dimensions of friendship, but underscored that they do not explain the occurrence of the bond itself and that consequently Étienne de la Boétie's "superficial ugliness" (III, 12, 1057)[91] was not an impediment

[89] " je ne me suis guere adonné aux accointances venales et publiques: j'ay voulu esguiser ce plaisir par la difficulté, par le desir et par quelque gloire"

[90] "saincte couture" / "spirituelle"

[91] "laideur superficielle"

to their amical intimacy. Contrasting it to carnal intimacy, Montaigne highlights that, when passion fades in a relation to a woman, there is nothing left that could be prolonged into a higher form of relationship. Since Montaigne's relation to La Boétie dispensed from the start with the distractions associated to the fulfilment of sexual drives, their friendship cannot be considered a sublimated prolongation of a carnal nexus. Not by chance, Swiss literary theorist and medical psychiatrist Jean Starobinski (1920-2019) depicted the specificity of Montaigne's love for his friend using the expression "commerce spirituel (homosexuel)" ((homosexual) spiritual commerce) (Starobinski, 1982, p. 242).

48. Considering Montaigne's disparaging comments on the incapacity of women to relate to men as friends, it is apposite to note that he relativizes his own assertions when hinting at the dimension of historical futurity of male/female relations. As though seeking to avoid an essentialist stance on women in contradiction with his overarching Heraclitean premises, Montaigne underscores that "this sex *in no instance has yet succeeded* in attaining it [i.e. friendship]" (I, 28,187; emphasis added).[92] His nuanced formulation appears to admit the possibility of a very different outcome at odds with the historical evidence dominant to the present day. This conceivable alternative notwithstanding, Montaigne underscores in the following clause that the old schools of thought were consensually opposed to acknowledging the female aptitude for friendship. Despite this historical reference, however, Montaigne appears not to rule out that women could, on principle, overcome the limitations of their condition by confronting the challenges posed by friendship. Thus, he seems at times to favor the dissolution of sex-specific cultural paradigms in accordance with his Ockhamist-inspired premise that sexed individuals resist categorial subsumptions (see Friedrich, 1967, p. 126; Todorov, 2001, p. 21). In light of this radical claim, even the initial opposition between male/female love and male/male friendship appears to lose, in the last resort, its raison d'être.

49. The principled egalitarianism of uniquely sexed individuals is at odds with the ancient, but in modern times

[92] "ce sexe par nul exemple n'y est encore peu arriver"

still enforceable subordination of women to men prescribed by Paulinian theology. The supersedure of the historical subjugation of women is thus initiated by Montaigne's anthropological postulate of one and the same *moule* for males and females regardless of the eventual differential asymmetries that have emerged in the course of human evolution.[93] Given that the axiological cogency of the initial mold remains impervious to the imponderabilia of historical circumstances, it fosters the acknowledgement and maintenance of the natural variability of sexuality as a consequence of the axiomatic non-identity of any two sexed individuals. In this context, the *branloire* of nature evinces itself as a critical corrective to the sexual and erotic closures, which women have imposed upon themselves to avoid complying with the demanding task of radical individuation that friendship calls for. Since the variability of sexuality is endless, its constriction to the male/female binary (or any other finite pattern of sexual distribution for that matter) lastly purports undoing the Montaignean "human form" that subtends the realization of the individual's sexual uniqueness.[94] By critically dissolving the limits imposed on sexual variability by all known cultures, the *human form* enables friendship between sexually de-categorized individuals seeking no other finality to their relationship than their mutual rejoicement. Despite the idealistic-sounding claim of this assertion, the autotely of amical love remits to its biographical and historical rootage in Montaigne's relationship with Étienne de La Boétie.

50. Since the practicalities of culture can only provisionally repress the unremitting *branloire* of nature, Montaigne's

[93] Among the few authors who have hinted at the scope and import of Montaigne`s contention regarding the sexual *moule* (see III, 5, 897) is semiologist and historian of ideas Tzvetan Todorov (1939-2017). Elaborating on the issue, Todorov points out in *Le Jardin imparfait*: "Il y a un potentiel révolutionnaire dans ces phrases, que Montaigne n'exploite pas; il n'y affirme pas moins l'universalité humaine" (Todorov, 1998, p. 239).

[94] Given that "each man bears the entire form of the human condition" / "chaque homme porte la forme entiere de l'humaine condition" (III, 2, 805), Tzvetan Todorov eventually concludes: "Telle est la leçon de Montaigne: tout homme est un individu inimitable, et pourtant chacun porte en lui l'empreinte de la condition humaine dans son entier" (Todorov, 2001, p. 42).

critique of amatory categorial constrictions was meant to facilitate the transition to the love of friendship as an encounter of two ineffable individuals. This is what Montaigne envisages in the 1580 essay "De l'amitié" (Of friendship), when he details with regard to La Boétie: "If someone presses me to tell why I loved him, I feel that this cannot be expressed" (I, 28, 188).[95] This sentence, which introduces one of the most often quoted passages written by Montaigne, is immediately followed by a terse depiction of the compositional method deployed in the *Essais*: "I add, but I do not correct" (III, 9, 963).[96] In accordance with his remark on the impossibility to explain his love for La Boétie, Montaigne eventually appended in the Bordeaux edition of the *Essais* issued in 1588 a handwritten precision: "except by answering: Because it was he" (I, 28, 188).[97] In a later date, Montaigne made a further addition, which effectively closes his individualizing line of argument: "because it was I" (I, 28, 188).[98] Considering these assertions, it is unsurprising that the man/manly love between the two friends has raised questions about the nature of the physical, but apparently non-sexual component of their relationship. While the depth of their intimacy is clearly suggested in the *Essais*, Montaigne's letter to his father on La Boétie's agony conveys a sense of spiritual finality that has no parallel in his other writings.

51. Montaigne appears to have reckoned with the fact that, of all those present in La Boétie's deathbed chamber, he would be the only one capable of transmitting to posterity his friend's decision to die as a Jew. Montaigne's depiction of the circumstances surrounding La Boétie's religious reversion and death is all the more significant as the *Essais* generally avoid suggesting any personal identification of their author with the history of the Jewish people. While Montaigne "seems consistently sympathetic toward the Jews" (Frame, 1984, p. 17), he did not reclaim for himself the theological forms of permanence and continuity that underpinned La Boétie's

[95] "Si on me presse de dire pouquoy je l'aymois, je sens que cela ne se peut exprimer"

[96] "J'adjouste, mais je ne corrige pas"

[97] "qu'en respondant: Par ce que c'estoit luy"

[98] "par ce que c'estoit moy"

understanding of Jewish redemption. The dissent between the two friends as regards their approach of the Mosaic religion became manifest only after La Boétie's deathbed declarations, which proved to be the cornerstone of Montaigne's attempt to preserve his memory. Despite their differences, La Boétie regarded Montaigne as his "inviolable friend" (La Boétie, 1892, p. 428).[99] Montaigne, on his side, mentions at first that a friendship like theirs occurs "once in three centuries" (I, 28, 184),[100] but then, focusing on its uniqueness, affirms that it "has no other model than itself, and can be compared only with itself" (I, 28, 189).[101] In view of the quasi-fusional bond between Montaigne and La Boétie, legitimate questions have repeatedly been raised in the recent past as to whether their intimacy translated in same-sex activities and, if so, how these should be limned and assessed.[102]

52. As to the role that homosexuality may have played in the relation between Montaigne and La Boétie, Michel Magnian has fittingly argued that

> "in the absence of binding hints, far away from the present trends of the transatlantic critique, the greatest circumspection is required regarding the question of eventual homosexual relations between the two men" (Magnian, 2018, p. 1035).[103]

[99] "inviolable amy"

[100] "une fois en trois siecles"

[101] "n'a point d'autre idée que d'elle mesme, et ne se peut rapporter qu'à soy."

[102] In early sexology, Montaigne was seldom perceived as homosexual. Furthermore, his reconceptualization of sexual difference was ignored. Magnus Hirschfeld does not mention him in his list of famous homosexuals belonging to the Western post-classical period, which is included in his 1914 volume on *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (see Hirschfeld, 1984, pp. 649-673). In English, the historically significant *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* from 1990 comprises an entry on Montaigne depicting him as "a forerunner of modern, age-symmetrical, androphile homosexuality" (Wayne, 1990, p. 832). The encyclopedic volume *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage* features no entry on the French writer (see Summers, 1997).

[103] "en l'absence d'indices dirimants, loin des dérives actuelles de la critique d'outre-Atlantique, la plus grande circonspection s'impose [sur la] question d'éventuelles relations homosexuelles entre les deux hommes"

In Magnian's view, Montaigne evinces at most "une homosexualité de structure" (a homosexuality of structure) (Magnian, 2018, p. 1035), but certainly not a factual one. His assessment thus converges with that of Jean Starobinski, who decades earlier had characterized Montaigne's relation to La Boétie's as a spiritual (homosexual) commerce as opposed to a "liaison charnelle (hétérosexuelle)" (carnal (heterosexual) relation) (Starobinski, 1982, p. 242). Given the lack of evidence that would allow to envisage bolder conclusions, the two scholars sufficed themselves with attributing to Montaigne a homosexuality that remained "structural" or "spiritual." Moreover, considering that no conclusive proves in favor of homosexual acts could be invoked, Renaissance scholar M. A. Screech concluded that "Montaigne's love for La Boétie was in no way physical" (Screech, 1991, p. 53) and that "[t]here is not the slightest hint that the body played any part at all in the genesis or course of their love" (Screech, 1991, p. 54). [104]

53. Despite their efforts to attain conceptual clarity about Montaigne's erotic life, the three scholars failed to analyze the link between Montaigne's views on the pervasive variability and diversity of sexuality and his self-reflective aperçus into the complexity and uniqueness of his own sexual complexion. Since sexual difference, on Montaigne's assumptions, cannot be adequately approached by merely distinguishing sexual groups with shared commonalities, but by grasping the singularly nuanced configuration of the sexual polarity inherent in the individual, the actual reason as to why Montaigne loved La Boétie ultimately escapes categorizations. Against this backdrop, the trite and commonplace query about Montaigne's and La Boétie's sexual self-understanding is eventually cancelled and surpassed in the ambit of the factually unutterable. It would be however misleading to assume at this point that the two friends shared similar onto-theological

[104] Since it is hard to imagine what a fleshless erotic love would be, Screech's assertions were possibly not meant to exclude the carnal condition of the same-sex love between the two men, but the thought of their engaging in sexual activity. In this regard, it is well to note, however, that Montaigne's acknowledgement that La Boétie was ugly (see III, 12, 1057) in no way contradicts the principled possibility of sexual activity between the two friends, especially in view of the pronounced homosocial components in Montaigne's psychic life.

strategies for approaching the real. Despite their indebtedness to the *marrano* heritage, their personal religious positions do not appear to have been compatible.[105] Nothing in Montaigne's biography and oeuvre could be analogized with the "I declare" that introduces La Boétie's deathbed statements on his reversion to Judaism. Montaigne's private disengagement from Christianity did not translate in a desire to embrace historical Judaism.

54. Montaigne's public Catholic observance being in the main a matter of theo-political obedience to the laws of the land in which he lived, he seldom felt the need to mention Jesus or the Apostle Paul in his writings (see Leake, 1981, pp. 660 & 936). It is striking, however, that, among the fifty-seven quotations he instructed to have painted on the tight space provided by the beans and joists of his library's ceiling, a dozen of them were Latin sentences taken from the Book Kohelet (Ecclesiast) (see Montaigne, 1985b, pp. 1419-1427, sentence number 1, 2, 4, 7, 13, 21, 23, 29, 33, 35, 40 42; Legros, 2000, pp. 425-430). From this set of quotes, the thirty-third sentence in the Pléiade edition (and the thirtieth in Legros' volume) cites the well-known last words of the second verse in the initial chapter of the Book Kohelet (Liber ecclesiastes) as reproduced in the Vulgata: "Per omnia vanitas." The first "Biblia ladinada" (Ferrara, 1553), which was primarily intended for reverted Iberic Marranos and had a wide circulation among them even in France, renders the second verse of the original Hebrew text as follows: "Nada de nadas, dixo Koheleth, nada de nadas, el todo nada" (*Biblia de Ferrara*, 1996, p. 1264). Due to their pithiness, the Latin phrase and its Ladino rendition facilitate grasping the scope of the forty-second sentence inscribed on the beams of Montaigne's library. Although Montaigne referenced it as "Eccl., XI," it has no strict correspondence in the Book Kohelet (Ecclesiast) or in the Book Jesus Sirach (Ecclesiasticus). The sentence appears to be rather a periphrastic rendition of the initial *vanitas* leitmotiv, especially if one considers its asseveration that, from all the

[105] Unlike the case of La Boétie, Montaigne's cautious distancing from Christianity was not motivated by any pro-Judaic fervor, but rather by his Hellenic proclivities, reflected in his 113 mentions of Socrates (see Leake, 1981, p. 1177) and 197 mentions of Plato (see Leake, 1981, pp. 972-973).

works of Creation, non is least known to man than what is left behind by the passage of a breeze: "Ex tot Dei operibus nihilum magis cuiquam homini incognitum quam venti vestigium" (Montaigne, 1985b, p. 1424). What can be considered Montaigne's explanatory rendering of the Kohelet leitmotif points to his discomfiting realization that the most insignificant and least perceptible of created things emblematizes the all-encompassing nothingness of everything.

55. The quasi absence of being that remains when winds subside can be viewed as Montaigne's core metaphor for conveying the de-ontologizing intent of his oeuvre. Reflecting this decisive line of thought, the first book of the *Essais* maintains that "We embrace everything, but we clasp only wind " (I, 31, 203).[106] The same connecting thread surfaces in the second book, when Montaigne avers: " We have nothing but wind and smoke for our portion" (II, 12, 489).[107] These assertions are not merely literary digressions of Montaigne's prolific mind. Rather, they highlight what Claude Lévi-Strauss considered Montaigne's most critical lesson: In the absence of communication with Being (see II, 12, 601), man has no way of overcoming the lack of permanence that inheres in himself and in his surrounding world. Given the ubiquitousness of Becoming, nothingness dents from within any form of quiddity man may arrogate to himself. Not assuming make-believe roles played within a universal fake order, the enlightened and self-effacing sage that has left his traces in Montaigne's oeuvre realizes that nothingness subtends his own existence. He thus emerges as the "fool of the farce" (III, 9, 1001),[108] or, in Géralde Nakam's terse phrasing, as a "tightrope walker dancing over the abyss" (Nakam, 2002, p. 192).[109] Against the backdrop of this spectacle, Montaigne was unable to embrace the premises of biblical creationism and soteriology. But he felt free to appropriate the *vanitas* leitmotif and the sapiential text of the Torah it introduces. Not unlike Montaigne, Kohelet advanced the gist of a lucid wisdom vis-à-vis the encroaching edges of nothingness.

[106] "Nous embrassons tout, mais nous n'étreignons que du vent"

[107] "Nous n'avons que du vent et de la fumée en partage"

[108] "badin de la farce"

[109] "Funambule dansant sur le vide"

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Ethics as a Means to Power

Jorn Janssen,
PhD, Goldsmiths, University of London
jjans001@gold.ac.uk

Abstract:
This essay seeks to reconsider the place of ethics within the framework of political realism through an engagement of the politico-theological ideas of Max Stirner. Instead of considering ethics as part of the contexts of action in which prudent political decision-making takes place, Stirner's critique of traditional religious frameworks as inadequate in addressing existential questions lays the groundwork for his conceptualization of politics as an arena for the pursuit of metaphysical meaning. Subsequently, Stirner contends that the absence of objective ethical foundations compels individuals to imbue political concepts with quasi-religious significance, thereby transforming them into sources of metaphysical security. By extension, even though this essay agrees with the realist premise that political decision is never principally based on ethics, the self-induced illusion of ethical realism creates an ever-emerging political force that decision-makers cannot simply navigate with prudence, but must contend with substantively. Yet this very same force allows political mobilization on the basis of framing any political issue as an ethical issue.

Keywords: Political Realism, Ethics, Max Stirner, Political Theology, Soft Power, Power Dynamics, International Relations, Ideological Mobilization

In January 2024, the state of South Africa initiated legal proceedings against the state of Israel at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, citing concerns over Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict. While the specifics of the case are not central to this discourse, the focus here pivots towards the demonstrations outside the courtroom. Protesters, hailing not only from the Netherlands but from various Western countries, congregated to amplify their voices. What renders this protest noteworthy is the absence of a unifying organizational structure among its participants; rather, their convergence stemmed from a shared sense of justice, which they sought to manifest in the political arena by lending support to the South African cause. Such fervor impelled individuals to traverse continents in order to partake in this collective outcry.

Over recent decades, the Western world has borne witness to a plethora of analogous demonstrations, including but not limited to Women's Marches, Black Lives Matter rallies, Climate Strikes, Yellow Vests demonstrations, and assorted nationalist gatherings. While political mobilizations of this nature are not novel, this essay posits that they are poised to assume a heightened prominence. Furthermore, it contends that such mobilizations constitute a distinct form of influence that has thus far eluded comprehensive scrutiny. Ultimately, this essay submits that a deeper comprehension of this form of influence can be gleaned through an examination of the political realism espoused by 19th-century philosopher Max Stirner.

The terrain of political realism is vast and intricate; thus, a thorough exploration thereof risks veering off course from the central thesis of this essay. Accordingly, our inquiry here revolves around the intersection of ethics and politics. Specifically, this essay endeavors to establish the capacity of ethics to wield power within the paradigm of political realism. In pursuit of this objective, the essay commences with a concise survey of the role ethics assumes within political realism. The aim is not to furnish an exhaustive analysis of political realism and its many subtleties, but rather to distill from its certain overarching principles that

will serve as a backdrop for the ensuing argumentation. Given that the argument advanced herein echoes the insights of 19th-century political realist Max Stirner, the subsequent section will furnish a succinct overview of his rationale. Subsequently, the third section will extrapolate the implications of Stirner's discourse on political realism and extend it to contemporary political thought.

1. - Ethics in Political Realism

Political realism, as a philosophical doctrine, is predominantly defined by its negations rather than affirmative propositions. It positions itself in opposition to the optimistic visions of political idealism, critiquing notions of collaboration, collective security, and the attainment of a conflict-free political order. At its core, political realism underscores the primacy of power, self-interest, and pragmatic pursuits in shaping political decisions. It posits that actors within the political sphere prioritize their own interests and endeavor to augment their power and security vis-à-vis others. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita succinctly encapsulates this premise by asserting that "political survival is at the heart of all politics"[1].

Realism acknowledges the inherent presence of conflict and competition among political actors, highlighting the imperative of strategic calculations and foresight in guiding political conduct. While its origins trace back to antiquity, with Thucydides, Hobbes, and Machiavelli often credited as early proponents, a resurgence of interest in realist principles emerged in the aftermath of World War I, amidst mounting disillusionment with prevailing idealistic paradigms. During this epoch, Edward H. Carr aptly synthesized the realist stance on the ethical dimensions of politics, asserting:

1 Bueno de Mesquita B. & Smith A., 2011: 255

> The three essential tenets implicit in Machiavelli's doctrine are the foundation-stones of the realist philosophy. In the first place, history is a sequence of cause and effect, whose course can be analysed and understood by intellectual effort, but not (as the utopians believe) directed by "imagination". Secondly, theory does not (as the utopians assume) create practice, but practice theory. In Machiavelli's words, "good counsels, whencesoever they come, are born of the wisdom of the prince, and not the wisdom of the prince from good counsels". Thirdly, politics are not (as the utopians pretend) a function of ethics, but ethics of politics. Men "are kept honest by constraint". Machiavelli recognised the importance of morality, but thought that there could be no effective morality where there was no effective authority. Morality is the product of power.[2]

The intent of this discourse is not an exhaustive delineation of political realism's philosophical underpinnings, nor an exhaustive appraisal of its merits. Rather, the focus lies on elucidating the role of ethics within this framework. While political realism resists facile definition and principally counters political idealism, the crux of our inquiry here pertains to its distinct emphasis on delineating ethics from political pursuits. Whereas idealism aspires to employ politics as a conduit for realizing ethical ideals in societal structures, realism contends that political decisions must be adjudicated based on their intrinsic merits and the imperatives of power and survival, rather than being subservient to ethical imperatives.

While political realists are not outright dismissive of the pertinence of ethical convictions in politics, there is an evolution in their stance compared to earlier exponents such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Bodinus, or Clausewitz. Twentieth-century realists are more receptive to acknowledging the influence of ethical ideals on political

2 Carr E., 1946: 63-64

behavior. They recognize, as Raymond Guess contends, that "ideals and aspirations influence their behaviour and hence are politically relevant, only to the extent to which they do actually influence behaviour in some way".[3] Realists concede that while political decisions may not be predicated on ethical convictions, the prevalence of such convictions among individuals in society necessitates their consideration by political decision-makers. These ethical convictions, akin to various external factors, become integral components of the "contexts of action".[4]

However, it is crucial to note that the 20th-century resurgence of political realism primarily concerns itself with the dynamics of power among states in the realm of international relations, a distinction less explicitly made by earlier realists. Aligned with Machiavellian principles, contemporary realists endeavor to systematize and scientifically expound upon political dynamics, with international politics proving more suitable to this approach due to its relatively finite number of actors and ascertainable power dynamics. Moreover, realists contend that international politics precludes the establishment of enforceable universal laws, a fundamental distinction underscored by Waltz, who posits that "At the level of the state, an adequate political system permits individuals to behave ethically; a comparably adequate system is not attainable internationally".[5] Reinhold Niebuhr compounds this by arguing that: "All nations, unlike some individuals, lack the capacity to prefer a noble death to a morally ambiguous survival."[6] Nevertheless, even within domestic politics, where the relationship between law and ethics is more intertwined, realists assert that power remains paramount, as the ethical possibilities of a society are circumscribed by the physical power wielded by the state. The dichotomy between domestic and international politics, though emphasized by contemporary realism, does not significantly bear on the argument advanced in this essay.

3 Guess R., 2008: 9
4 Guess R., 2008: 11
5 Waltz K., 2001: 164
6 Niebuhr R., 2008: 39

Therefore, we adhere to Morgenthau's thesis that "Both domestic and international politics are a struggle for power, modified only by the different conditions under which this struggle takes place in the domestic and in the international spheres". [7] Lebow concurs, asserting that "Thucydides and Morgenthau understand politics as a struggle for power and unilateral advantage. The differences between domestic politics and international relations are of degree, not of kind".[8]

The crux of the matter lies in the realist relegation of ethics to the realm of personal conviction, which, in turn, overlooks the significant impact of ethical convictions on political decision-making beyond their mere contextual influence. Niebuhr contends, for instance, that "as individuals, men believe they ought to love and serve each other and establish justice between each other. As racial, economic and national groups they take for themselves, whatever their power can command".[9] Morgenthau similarly argues:

> Realism maintains that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation, but that they must be filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place. The individual may say for himself: "Fiat justitia, pereat mundus (Let justice be done, even if the world perish)," but the state has no right to say so in the name of those who are in its care. Both individual and state must judge political action by universal moral principles, such as that of liberty. Yet while the individual has a moral right to sacrifice himself in defense of such a moral principle, the state has no right to let its moral disapprobation of the infringement of liberty get in the way of successful political action, itself inspired by the moral principle of national survival. There can be no political morality

7 Morgenthau H., 1997: 17
8 Lebow R., 2013: 64
9 Niebuhr R., 2013: 9

> without prudence; that is, without consideration of the political consequences of seemingly moral action.[10]

While realists may suffer from an ill-deserved reputation for cold-heartedness, many harbor strong personal moral convictions. Thinkers like Carr, Morgenthau, and Niebuhr view politics not as a realm solely governed by myopic and psychopathic power pursuits, but rather as a domain fraught with tragic dilemmas. Despite their moral and religious convictions, they have arrived at the sobering realization that the attainment of idealism is elusive within the exigencies of political reality.[11] In this vein, ethics assumes a gentler role, exerting a nuanced influence on political conduct and demarcating soft boundaries therein. Notably, for figures like Waltz and Mearsheimer, the scientific approach to politics, construed as a balance of power, is often motivated by a desire to foster peace in international relations, rather than indulging in utopian reveries.[12] Morgenthau, akin to Machiavelli before him, perceives it as the moral duty of the state to safeguard its citizens, irrespective of the ethical universalism it confronts.[13]

While realists do not discount the significance of morality entirely, they stress that decision-makers must prioritize their survival and security in a milieu where power dynamics invariably eclipse ethical considerations. Moreover, any ethical considerations pertinent to a particular political decision must be filtered through the pragmatic exigencies of the situation at hand. Even fervent political idealists, such as Saul Alinsky, have grappled with this reality, as he acknowledges that "The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as it is. We must work with it on its terms if we are to change it to the kind of world we would like it to be. We must first see the world as it is and not as we would like it to be. We must see the world as all

10 Morgenthau H., 1997: 12

11 Carr E., 1946: 93-94; Morgenthau H. 1945: 10; Niebuhr R., 1949: 6-7

12 Waltz K., 2001: 113; Mearsheimer J., 2018: 1

13 Morgenthau H. 1945: 274

political realists have". [14] Kenneth Waltz offers a succinct illustration of how power constrains the realm of ethics in politics:

> To most people there is nothing immoral about a game of cards, but there is definitely something immoral about cheating at cards. In cards, the code of morals is established by custom and enforced by the fact that anyone who cares to stop playing may do so. In international politics there are some rules of law to guide states both in peace and in war, but if it is found that some states break them, the others cannot simply quit playing the game... The leaders of the state may have to choose between behaving immorally in international politics in order to preserve the state, on the one hand, and, on the other, abandoning their moral obligation to ensure their state's survival in order to follow preferred ways of acting in international politics. The conclusion? Moral behavior is one thing in a system that provides predictable amounts and types of security; another thing where such security is lacking.[15]

The subsequent sections of this essay aim to demonstrate that ethics, far from being subordinate to political power, can indeed serve as a means to power. Inspired by the politico-theological insights of Max Stirner, ethics emerges as a potent political force, whose efficacy augments alongside heightened political consciousness and engagement.

2. - Stirner's Political Theology

In comprehending Stirner's distinctive perspective on political realism, an exploration of his stance on political theology is imperative. Historically, Stirner has been

14 Alinsky S., 1971: 25
15 Waltz K., 2001: 207

positioned either as the final Hegelian, [16] the first main adversary of a young Marx,[17] or the precursor to Nietzsche.[18] Recent scholarship has elevated Stirner as an original thinker, particularly within the realm of (post-)anarchism,[19] and, to a lesser degree, as an early exponent of psychology [20] or existentialism. [21] When interpreting Stirner's oeuvre through the lens of political realism, it necessitates an assimilation of his contributions to these latter two domains, especially political psychology. Stirner discerned a particular psychological phenomenon of paramount relevance to political realism, yet hitherto underexplored.

Stirner lived during an era when many contemporary political ideologies were nascent. Amidst the Young Hegelians, with whom he associated, there prevailed a fervent repudiation of religious authority. Nevertheless, Stirner discerned that "Atheists keep up their scoffing at the higher being, which was also honoured under the name of the 'highest' or *être suprême*, and trample in the dust one 'proof of his existence' after another, without noticing that they themselves, out of need for a higher being, only annihilate the old to make room for a new."[22] Stirner's allusion to the 'need for a higher being' points to a psychological condition endemic to his contemporaries, which he theorizes as a profound existential disquiet, concerning one's purpose, historical and worldly significance, interpersonal connections, and moral conduct—what I term 'metaphysical insecurity'—needing resolution against an ethical framework grounded in metaphysical underpinnings.

However, Stirner identifies a quandary: the more humanity delves into the physical realm, the more apparent it becomes

16 De Ridder W., 2008; McLellan D., 1969; Stepelevich L., 1985; 2020

17 Hook S., 1962; Dematteis P., 1976; Berlin I., 1959

18 Lévy A., 2006; Steiner R., 1960; Glassford J., 1999

19 Arvon H., 1998; Woodcock G., 1962; Koch A., 1997; Newman S., 2001

20 Jansen H., 2009; Jenkins J., 2009; Buber M., 2002

21 Carroll J., 1974; Paterson R., 1971; Camus A., 1984; Read H., 1949; 2015

22 Stirner M., *1995*: 38-39

that objective answers to these existential queries remain elusive. Stirner asserts, "a man is 'called' to nothing, and has no 'calling', no 'destiny', as little as a plant or a beast has a 'calling'." [23] Despite the cogency of this assertion, Stirner observes the reluctance of many to embrace this premise. Consequently, he astutely observes a tendency to seek solace and direction in modern political ideologies as a surrogate for religion, thus elevating certain political constructs—such as equality, freedom, fatherland, or humanity—into quasi-religious ideals divorced from their utilitarian essence, serving as ethical imperatives to be pursued for their intrinsic value.

Fundamentally, Stirner furnishes a distinctive and foundational psychological lens into what is now recognized as political theology. Specifically, Stirner discerns a libidinal impetus towards ethical convictions, which, devoid of ontological substance, emerge as extensions of one's psychological predispositions. As articulated by Stirner:

> Sacred things exist only for the egoist who does not acknowledge himself, the *involuntary egoist*, for him who is always looking after his own and yet does not count himself as the highest being, who serves only himself and at the same time always thinks he is serving a higher being, who knows nothing higher than himself and yet is infatuated about something higher; in short, for the egoist who would like not to be an egoist, and abases himself (combats his egoism), but at the same time abases himself only for the sake of 'being exalted', and therefore of gratifying his egoism. Because he would like to cease to be an egoist, he looks about in heaven and earth for higher beings to serve and sacrifice himself to; but, however much he shakes and disciplines himself, in the end he does all for his own sake, and the disreputable egoism will not come off him.[24]

23 Stirner M., 1995: 288
24 Stirner M., 1995: 37

Although Stirner attributes the deification of political concepts to psychological egoism, he contends that such deification eludes conscious recognition. If one consciously and deliberately chooses which concepts are worthy of worship, than one can just as easily reject them, which renders one's adherence to them meaningless. Instead, these deified concepts must be perceived as an objective *summum bonum*, a supreme good. Consequently, to attain 'metaphysical security,' these deified concepts must transcend human grasp and possess a semblence of being ontologically real. Furthermore, modern political deities, besides being ultimate objectives, forfeit their erstwhile utilitarian essence. Hence, it becomes imperative not only for politics to be oriented towards the pursuit of these ethical ends but also for adherents to renunciate their own sense of self and perceive themselves as instrumental in their attainment, thus assuming the role of heroes. In Jungian discourse, the death of the dragon alone is insufficient; one must actively participate in its slaying.[25]

3. - Stirner's Political Realism

Though rarely discussed in analyses of Stirner's work, except in Marx's original commentary on the work,[26] Stirner's rejection of ethical realism inherently aligns him with political realism, as he explicitly states: "In consideration of right the question is always asked: 'What or who gives me the right to it?' Answer: God, love, reason, nature, humanity, etc. No, only your might, your power gives you the right".[27] Stirner's path

25 Nietzsche F., 1978; Jung C., 1988; 2009; Campbell J., 2008; Peterson J., 1999

26 Marx was the first to comment on Stirner's work and one of the few to acknowledge him as a political realist. However, he erroneously argues that Stirner has contributed nothing new to the realist view since "Machiavelli, Hobbes, Spinoza, Bodinus, and others of modern times, not to mention earlier ones" (Marx K. & Engels F., 1998: 340). In this essay, I am arguing precisely that Stirner presents an original view that is worth further consideration.

27 Stirner M., 1995: 168

to political realism diverges from that of many other realists. In the Stirnerian view, since there is no ethics on any objective sense, it cannot possibly guide our political acts and decision-making. We've established that Stirner's psychological analysis views belief in ethics as a satisfying illusion driven by a libidinal desire for a structured, metaphysical understanding of the world. He discerns a tension between the desire for ethical realism and the world's inability to provide it. Consequently, Stirner identifies in the libidinal pursuit of ethics a means to power. This section aims to explore how Stirner's insights contribute to the contemporary paradigm of political realism.

Previously, we've noted that realists generally view ethics as part of the 'contexts of action,' where it influences decisions indirectly due to the ethical convictions of affected parties. Many realists hold personal ethical convictions but see politics as a tragic sphere where such convictions cannot be realized. From the Stirnerian perspective, political engagement is more than utilitarian; it's a search for meaning. This blurs the lines between ethics and politics, making politics a practical implementation of ethical convictions. Waltz's comparison between international politics and a card game effectively illustrates the utilitarian perspective of the realists, but Stirner sees modern politics as a personal commitment to a deified ethical *telos*. Unlike a game of cards, politics involves fundamental ethical and metaphysical beliefs, and a search for meaning and self-understanding.

Here, I am not implying that political realism overlooks the irrational forces underpinning politics. As Burnham astutely notes, "the Machiavellian analysis... shows that the masses simply do not think scientifically about political and social aims... Beliefs, ideals, do sometimes influence the political actions of the masses; these are not, however, scientific beliefs and ideals, but myths or derivations". [28] The crux of my argument, however, lies in recognizing that unlike a game of cards, politics involves the very essence of one's identity, one's sense of self and search for meaning. Stirner's concept

28 Burnham J., 1943: 194

of political theology extends beyond mere irrational desires projected onto politics; it delves into individuals' most profound ethical and metaphysical convictions and their perception of self.

Given that ethics lacks ontological reality, despite its perceived significance, attempts to pursue it through politics create a potent yet erratic politico-theological force. Importantly, due to the absence of ethical realism, ethical convictions remain fluid, subject to change over time as they stem from irrational desires. As a result, Stirner's politico-theological force emerges as a capricious and aimless entity, disrupting the rational realm of political decision-making akin to a wildfire sweeping through a forest. This force proves unpredictable and resistant to negotiation, lacking discernible leaders akin to a wildfire's absence of control. While political leaders may be involved, they function merely as representatives of deified concepts rather than as charismatic figures leading a movement. Unlike a wildfire, however, political decision-makers *must* confront this force in a substantive manner, navigating its complexities while enacting policies often unrelated to ethics. Nonetheless, decision-makers also *can* make use of this force for their own purposes.

In the contemporary landscape, characterized simultaneously by unprecedented access to information, a recession of national borders, and an erosion of traditional religious frameworks, Stirner's insights into the human condition gain renewed relevance. Secularism has dismantled the once-convenient religious answers to existential questions, leaving individuals to navigate the complexities of existence with newfound autonomy and skepticism. This cultural shift has redirected the search for meaning from the religious to the political sphere. Consequently, the boundaries between domestic and international politics blur, as individuals increasingly identify with global issues transcending geographical confines. Realists, adhering to the classical dichotomy between ethics and politics, confront a paradigm shift wherein the distinction between the two spheres becomes increasingly porous. The 21st-century political

landscape is characterized by the ascendancy of ethical imperatives that are indifferent to national borders. Decision-makers grapple with the ramifications of this ethical conflagration, navigating a terrain where political engagement is imbued with moral significance and ethical considerations pervade every facet of governance. The traditional realist framework, predicated on rational decision-making and power accumulation, struggles to accommodate the evolving dynamics of contemporary politics, where ethical imperatives reign supreme. When politics is considered as practical implementation of irrational ethical convictions, rather than a sphere of rational decision-making for the accumulation of power, then politics is rendered to a contest between good and evil. The ethically driven political force is neither rational, nor can be placated easily.

For example, in his seminal work *The Concept of the Political*, Carl Schmitt delves into the essence of politics by defining it as the fundamental distinction between friend and enemy. Contrary to conventional views that treat politics as a distinct domain, Schmitt considers it as a degree of intensity, asserting that any discernible difference can potentially transform into the demarcation between friend and foe. Notably, Schmitt posits that "the political enemy need not be morally evil or aesthetically ugly; he need not appear as an economic competitor, and it may even be advantageous to engage with him in business transactions".[29] However, the Stirnerian politico-theological lens offers a contrasting perspective. From Stirner's viewpoint, the categorization of an enemy inevitably assumes a moral dimension. If, as Schmitt claims, "the friend and enemy concepts are to be understood in their concrete and existential sense, not as metaphors or symbols",[30] it demands substantial engagement from all that are involved in the dichotomy. Stirner argues that in modern politics, the enemy inherently becomes morally evil as political engagements intersect with the quest for existential meaning.[31] While Schmitt's analysis aligns with conventional

29 Schmitt C., 2007: 27
30 Schmitt C., 2007: 27
31 Stirner M., 1995: 165

notions of political realism, Stirner's perspective reframes the friend-enemy dichotomy within the context of moral absolutism in contemporary political discourse. From the Stirnerian perspective, the *political* enemy thus eventually becomes a *moral* enemy.

Amidst this milieu, the libidinal desire to infuse politics with ethical significance emerges as a potent force shaping political discourse and mobilizing collective action that political decision-makers *can* tap into for an almost inexhaustible source of political energy. Stirner's observations regarding the malleability of ethical beliefs find resonance in contemporary political phenomena, where issues are reframed within an ethical context to galvanize public support and mobilize resources. The concept of 'climate justice' exemplifies this phenomenon, wherein the imperative to combat climate change is recast as a moral duty rather than as something utilitarian, invoking notions of justice and intergenerational equity. The ethical appeal of such causes transcends traditional political divides, mobilizing diverse coalitions and fostering global solidarity in pursuit of shared moral objectives.

However, this fusion of ethics and politics poses inherent challenges, as decision-makers grapple with the complexities of reconciling ethical imperatives with pragmatic governance. Political issues can be reframed effortlessly as moral quandaries, with ethical appeals justifying contradictory actions such as equality legitimizing inequality or liberty sanctioning oppression. Since ethics lacks an ontologically 'real' foundation, an effective political force can be mobilized as long as its *political* purpose is formulated *ethically*, exemplified by the adaptation of ideas like 'race consciousness' to serve as rallying points for opposing political affiliations. For the better part of a century, we've considered the idea of 'race consciousness,' as purported by the Nazis, [32] as reprehensible, yet nowadays one can find

32 Examples of passages that address the Nazi view of race consciousness can be found in Hitler A., 2018: 326; Hitler A., 2006: 197; Rosenberg A., 1978: 62.

supposed progressives[33] that argue that "there is merit in the proposition that race neutrality is at least an overblown norm; race consciousness may not be the overarching evil it often seems to be" [34] The exact same adaptation of the Marxist idea of 'class consciousness' serves as the same *summum bonum* for political affiliations that consider each other as direct opponents. Consequently, the libidinal desire for ethics identified by Stirner emerges as a potent means to wield political power. Stirner's insights into the malleability of ethical beliefs shed light on the fluid nature of contemporary politics, where ideological allegiances shift and ethical imperatives evolve in response to changing circumstances.

Expanding on these themes, it becomes evident that the convergence of existential yearning and political pragmatism creates a potent brew of ideological fervor and strategic maneuvering. Decision-makers must navigate this complex terrain with nuance and foresight, recognizing the symbiotic relationship between ethics and power. While ethics may lack ontological grounding, its instrumental value in shaping political discourse and mobilizing public sentiment cannot be overstated. As such, political actors must tread carefully, mindful of the ethical undercurrents that animate the political landscape and the potential ramifications of harnessing them for strategic ends. In a world where information flows freely and boundaries blur, the intersection of ethics and politics becomes an ever-evolving battleground where ideals clash and power dynamics play out in intricate and often unpredictable ways.

To enhance analytical precision of this discourse, it is instructive to juxtapose the framework proposed here, which expands upon political realism, with Joseph Nye's concept of 'soft power'. Soft power, as delineated by Nye, extends Carr's division between military power, economic power and power over opinion. Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or

33 Similar cases for race consciousness can be found in DiAngelo R., 2021: 48; Delgado R. & Stefancic J., 2001: 22.

34 Flagg B., 1998: 132

payments".[35] Fundamentally, it denotes a nation's capacity to influence others through non-coercive methods, such as culture, diplomacy, and values, harnessing attractiveness and persuasion to shape the preferences and behaviors of actors in the international arena. Soft power is often wielded through cultural exports, international aid, and diplomatic endeavors, with the objective of attracting and persuading others based on the appeal of a nation's ideas, culture, and policies, thereby shaping their preferences and behaviors. Nye emphasizes that "soft power is not a form of idealism or liberalism. It is simply a form of power, one way of getting desired outcomes".[36]

However, despite the conceptual proximity between Nye's soft power and the framework proposed in this essay, Nye's concept remains firmly entrenched within the confines of traditional political realism. Even when transcending the focus on states in international politics, Nye's concept primarily revolves around influencing the 'contexts of action' within which decision-makers operate, thereby indirectly shaping their decisions. Conversely, the notion presented here underscores a pervasive libidinal impulse to imbue politics with ethical dimensions, transcending traditional power dynamics. Moreover, engagement with this paradigm of ethics-as-politics is not discretionary; its significance escalates concomitantly with the rise of political awareness and participation.

Crucially, the pursuit of ethics-as-politics represents an inherently individual endeavor, in stark contrast to the essentially collective nature of soft power. Realists like Niebuhr, who are cognizant of the individual's role within power dynamics, acknowledge in a similar vain to Stirner the impossibility "of drawing a sharp line between the will-to-live and the will-to-power."[37] The structural realism of Bueno de Mesquita and Smith even radicalizes such realist individualism further when they argue against the likes of Niebuhr that "anyone who thinks leaders *do what they ought*

35 Nye J., 2004: x
36 Nye J., 2011: 82
37 Niebuhr R., 2013: 42

to do—that is, do what is best for their nation of subjects—ought to become an academic rather than enter political life. In politics, coming to power is never about doing the right thing. It is always about doing what is expedient". [38] However, Stirner's analysis of political theology unveils a distinct facet, elucidating a libidinal urge to submit oneself to a *summum bonum*, albeit in an individualistic manner. While this may culminate in collective action among like-minded individuals, such as witnessed in protests, it stems from individual convictions rather than collective directives.

4. - Conclusion

Despite the intricacies inherent in political realism, this essay endeavors to explore a distinct political phenomenon most visibly embodied in protests and gatherings motivated by perceived 'just' causes, drawing participants from across the globe. Through the lens of proto-psychologist Max Stirner's insights, we can elucidate this phenomenon as a departure from viewing politics merely as utilitarian and instead recognizing its fundamental role in the quest for meaning. Stirner discerns a psychological pattern wherein individuals seek to comprehend the world as a metaphysical entity to grapple with existential questions. However, a dilemma arises when this quest for ethical realism confronts the stark absence of such principles in the world, leading individuals to project their libidinal desire for ethics onto their surroundings, thereby interpreting it as ethical realism. Consequently, in the absence of traditional religious frameworks, politics assumes the role of a tangible endeavor to manifest these ethical convictions in reality.

Stirner's assertion that politics cannot be guided by ethics in the absence of ethical realism firmly situates him within the realm of political realism. However, what distinguishes Stirner from other realists is his recognition of the yearning for ethical realism and its translation into a dynamic political force pursuing an ever-evolving *telos*. This politico-

38 Bueno de Mesquita B. & Smith A., 2011: 37

theological force transcends being merely a contextual backdrop for political decision-making, emerging as a potent competitor to traditional political institutions. In an era marked by heightened political engagement fueled by modern communication technologies and increasingly porous national borders, such politico-theological forces are poised to proliferate rather than diminish. Therefore, for a comprehensive and scientifically grounded understanding of politics, the realist framework must encompass an analysis of these forces, acknowledging that while might may indeed make right, faith, to a certain extent, also shapes might.

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THEOPOLITICAL FIGURES

Scripture, Prophecy, Oath, Charisma, Hospitality

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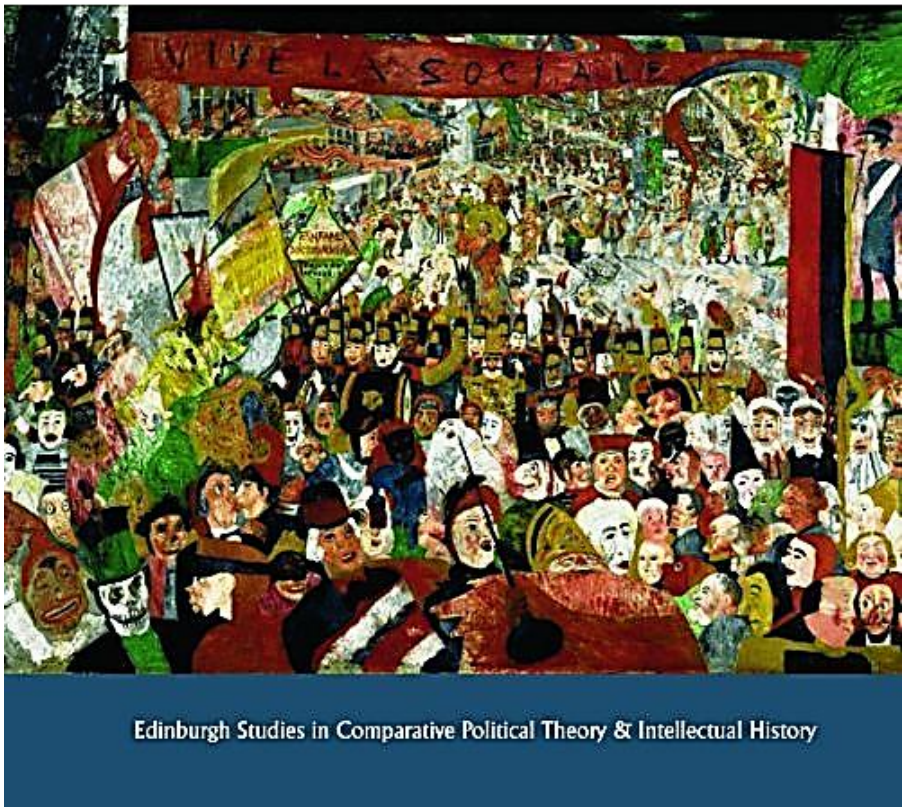

Leadership and power: the psychopathology of Shakespearean Richard III

Antonis D. Papaoikonomou,
Phd, *Lecturer*, *School of Political Sciences*
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
papaoiko@sch.gr

Abstract:

This study delves into the intricate portrayal of power and leadership in William Shakespeare's "Richard III," focusing on the titular character's psychopathology. Richard III is depicted as a quintessential tyrant, whose quest for power is marked by manipulation, betrayal, and ruthless ambition. The analysis examines how Shakespeare crafts Richard's character through a blend of physical deformity and psychological complexity, suggesting that his tyrannical actions stem from a deep-seated need to compensate for his personal inadequacies and societal rejection.

Shakespeare's Richard embodies the traits of Machiavellian ambition, employing deceit and brutality to usurp the English throne. His manipulative prowess and disdain for moral boundaries highlight the corrupting influence of power and the perilous consequences of unchecked political ambition. The study explores the thematic elements of Richard's character, including his relentless pursuit of dominance, his contempt for legal and social norms, and his pathological delight in causing suffering.

Moreover, the paper discusses the historical and cultural context of Richard's characterization, noting Shakespeare's reliance on contemporary beliefs linking physical deformity with moral and psychological flaws. Richard's turbulent relationship with his mother and the societal scorn he

faces due to his appearance are scrutinized as pivotal factors shaping his despotic rule.

In conclusion, this analysis underscores Richard III's role as a symbol of the dangers posed by leaders whose pursuit of power is intertwined with personal pathology. Through Shakespeare's vivid portrayal, Richard III serves as a cautionary figure, illustrating the destructive potential of a leader driven by unbridled ambition and psychological torment.
Keywords: Richard III, Shakespeare, Psychopathology, Tyranny, Leadership, Power

Introduction

"Richard III" is a historical play written by William Shakespeare around 1592-1594. The play is part of Shakespeare's series of history plays that chronicle the Wars of the Roses and the rise of the Tudor dynasty. The plot revolves around Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who is determined to seize the English throne. Richard is depicted as a cunning and manipulative villain who uses deception, betrayal, and murder to eliminate his rivals and consolidate power. He stops at nothing to achieve his goal, including the manipulation of those around him and the murder of family members (Barroll, 1991. Baldwin & Baldwin, 2000. Berry, 2005).

The play explores themes of power, ambition, and the consequences of unchecked political ambition. It is known for its memorable opening soliloquy in which Richard declares, "*Now is the winter of our discontent*," and for its portrayal of one of Shakespeare's most memorable and infamous characters, Richard III. The play concludes with the Battle of Bosworth Field, where Richard faces his final downfall, leading to the end of the Wars of the Roses and the establishment of the Tudor dynasty with the rise of Henry VII.

The play portrays Richard as a ruthless and ambitious ruler who manipulates and murders his way to the throne of England. Richard III's rise to power is marked by cunning political strategies, deceit, and the elimination of rivals (Bloom, 1999). Some key themes related to power in Richard III:

- **Ambition and Machiavellian Tactics**: Richard III is often seen as a quintessential Machiavellian character, employing manipulation, deception, and even murder to achieve his political ambitions. He skillfully uses propaganda, sowing discord among his enemies, and eliminating those who stand in his way.
- **Political Intrigue**: The play is rich in political intrigue, showcasing the power struggles within the royal court. Richard's ability to navigate through these complexities demonstrates the ruthless nature of political maneuvering during this historical period.
- **Usurpation of the Throne**: Richard's ultimate goal is to seize the throne of England. He eliminates rivals, including family members, to secure his position. The play explores the consequences of a leader who attains power through illegitimate means and the impact on the stability of the kingdom.
- **Manipulation and Deception**: Richard III is known for his skill in manipulating those around him. He uses his wit and charisma to deceive allies and enemies alike. The play serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of trusting a leader who lacks moral principles.
- **The Corrupting Nature of Power**: Richard's ascent to power is accompanied by a moral decline. As he becomes more powerful, his actions become more heinous, and he loses touch with any sense of morality. This theme reflects a broader exploration of the corrupting influence of power on individuals.
- **The Role of Fate and Destiny**: The play also explores the idea of fate and destiny, suggesting that Richard's actions are driven by a predetermined path. However, it raises questions about free will and personal responsibility, as Richard actively pursues his ambitions rather than passively accepting his fate.

Richard III and power

In studying Richard III and power, it's essential to consider both the historical context and Shakespeare's artistic interpretation. The play offers insights into the complexities of political power, morality, and the consequences of unchecked ambition (Greenblatt, 1999).

Shakespeare's Richard III portrays in an unprecedented way the characteristics of the tyrant: his boundless self-indulgence, his remorseless violation of laws, his deep pleasure when he causes pain, his pathological desire for power. It is obvious that he suffers from unbridled self-admiration and unimaginable arrogance (Bloom, 1999). He is characterized by an incomprehensible belief in superiority and really thinks he can do whatever he wants without the slightest restriction (Hammond, 1981). He demands absolute submission from his subjects and at the same time is characterized by absolute ingratitude. Simply put, fellow man has no meaning for him, because concepts like charity and dignity he considers to mean nothing.

Along with the above behavior, Richard disgusts the concept of the law and derives satisfaction from nullifying and violating it. Thinking in his capriciously amoral and Manichean way, the world consists of either winners or losers. For him, those who deserve his attention are the winners, to the extent that he can exploit them for his own benefit; on the other hand, the losers deserve only his contempt.

In his case, the question is not wealth. What fascinates and excites him at the same time is the manipulation of people and the exercise of his dominance. He sadistically enjoys seeing his fellow humans suffer. He creates around him a circle of people with similar aspirations even though they are unable to reach his level. They know that this particular man is indeed dangerous, but for their own benefit they help him to conquer supreme power and eventually become king.

The tyrant treats women the same way. They are a means of asserting his rule over people. He knows that they disgust him, yet this fact does not hinder his pursuits or create the slightest guilt. He feels that his time is limited and since in the

end the only emotion he evokes is disgust, he is exhausted and loses power. In the end, what remains is only debris (Kiernan, 1993).

It is known that for the presentation of Richard III, Shakespeare relied on the one-sided and subjective description of Thomas More. However, the sources of his mentally disturbed behavior come from Shakespeare's own perception of the ugliness with which he was born. "*The midwife wondered, and the women cried/ O Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth*!" (The Third part of King Henry the Sixth VI 5.6.74–75).

The reference to Richard's teeth when he was still an infant is typical. It is a property with strong symbolic dimensions "*They say my uncle grew so fast*," his little nephew York prattles, "*That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old*" (The Life and Death of Richard the Third 2.4.27–28). His mother makes constant references to her difficult delivery and to Richard's deformed body. The scheme he uses is this "*anguish, pain, and agony*" (The Life and Death of Richard the Third [Quarto] 4.4.156). "*Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain*," the unfortunate Henry VI reminds his captor Richard, "*And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope/ To wit, an undigested and deformèd lump*" (The Third part of King Henry the Sixth. 5.7.49–51). When the captive king goes on to bring up those teeth "*Teeth thou had in thy head when thou wast born/ To signify thou cam'st to bite the world*"—Richard has had enough. Shouting "*I'll hear no more!*" he stabs his royal prisoner to death (5.7.53–57).

Little by little, everyone realizes that Richard has serious psychological problems, a fact that he himself admits. Various explanations were proposed by his contemporaries for these problems. Others mentioned the deformity of his body (he suffered from kyphosis), others his deformed face. In their opinion, nothing was accidental. Everything for them was divine signs, messages from the universe that meant divine intervention, an event that indirectly indicated the state of his soul (Cheetham & Fraser, 1972). The acceptance of a rather satanic mission is also admitted by Richard himself "*Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so*," he says, "*let hell*

make crooked my mind to answer it" (5.6.78–79). Feeling in himself none of the ordinary human emotions—"*I have*", he says, "*neither pity, love, nor fear*" (5.6.68)—he actively wills his mind to match the stigmatized crookedness of his body.

From the above it appears that Shakespeare accepts the perception of his time that physical deformity corresponds to a mental deformity. In other words, it all comes from a divine intervention that wants to mark the crooked (something analogous to the mark of Cain after killing his brother in the Old Testament) (Hammond, 1981). Beyond accepting this notion, Shakespeare believes that the reverse is also true: beyond Richard's treatment of society, it is society's very reaction to his ugliness that prompts his incredible actions. There are clear hints that his mother's blunt admission that she never loved or cared for him, the abuse and bullying he suffered during his childhood, events that indicated to him that he is a monster at heart (Cheetham & Fraser, 1972). As a monster he will develop defenses, some of which are inhumanly directed against his fellow humans. An example of such a defense mechanism is his behavior towards his brother Edward, as the latter flirts with a beautiful woman. "*Love forswore me in my mother's womb*," he broods, and to make sure that this abandonment would be permanent, the goddess connived with Nature

> *To shrink mine arm up like a withered shrub,*
> *To make an envious mountain on my back,*
> *Where sits deformity to mock my body;*
> *To shape my legs of an unequal size,*
> *To disproportion me in every part.*
> (The Third part of King Henry the Sixth. 3.2.153–60).

So, it's a given for him that he won't be able to have conquests because no woman is going to be attracted to his misshapen body. Whatever pleasure he could seize from life thus could not possibly come from making his "*heaven in a lady's lap*" (3.2.148). But there is a way for him to compensate for this lack: he will zealously devote himself to maligning those who possess gifts that he does not have.

Despite his physical defects which deprive him of a normal life, Richard does not cease to be the youngest son of the Duke of York and brother of King Edward IV. This fact ensures him a high position in the social hierarchy. Despite the world's ridicule of him, his power will be unlimited because of his high birth. It is understandable that the special characteristics of Richard are intertwined with the typical characteristics of an autocratic ruler: arrogance, brutality and a sense of inherent impunity (Baldwin & Baldwin, 2000). His orders must be carried out immediately. His arrogance and complete insensitivity do not pale even in the face of death, as for example at the funeral of the king he himself killed and demanded that the coffin be buried in the ground when he passed by at that moment. When they at first refuse, he showers insults upon them— "*villains*," "*unmannered dog*," "*beggar*"— and threatens to kill them (The Life and Death of Richard the Third 1.2.36–42). The result shows both his out-of-bounds dynamism and the definition of his aristocracy: the companions finally obey him in fear.

It is clear that Richard's behavior is the result of his wounded self-esteem and his attempt to boost his wounded ego. The violent exercise of power on his part compensates for his deformity. He finally feels a pleasure that he can now control people and that he is now to be reckoned with. Richard, through Shakespeare's incomparable pen, turns into a symbol of people who compensate for their physical deformity and by extension their psychopathology in a political act of arrogance and abusive activity (Kiernan, 1993). The mixture is explosive: such political people are the greatest threat because they mix their personal problems with the political action that concerns their subjects As Shakespeare's play depicts him, Richard is chillingly clear about the links that bind together his physical deformity, his psychological disposition, and his overarching political goal:

since this earth affords no joy to me
but to command, to check, to o'erbear such
as are of better person [i.e., appearance] than myself,
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown.

(3.2.165–68)

His personality is now established: he knows what he wants and what he lacks in order to feel pleasure. The foundation of this pleasure is absolute authority and power. The one that allows him to control everyone and everything. He declares, "*account this world but hell/ Until my misshaped trunk that bears this head/ Be round impaled with a glorious crown*" (3.2.169–71).

His attitude towards his insatiable desire for power is the definition of an upstart. He does not hesitate to turn against the younger sons of his brother, Edward, but also against his elder brother, George, who, should they both die, is the next in line. He sees nothing but the crown

I do but dream on sovereignty
Like one that stands upon a promontory
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
Saying he'll lade it dry to have his way
(The Third part of King Henry the Sixth. 3.2.134–39)

He is truly pathetic. The combination of these two qualities – absolute power due to some vague hereditary rights on the one hand, and a disturbed and morbid personality on the other – proves to be the most destructive and dangerous. After all, he admits it himself: he confesses that he looks like someone "lost in a thorny wood," who as he tries to find a clearing, the thorns tear his legs (Hammond, 1981).

Apart from all his physical defects, however, he also has some "gifts" unfortunately for those around him. It's a cheat meter. The way in which Shakespeare presents Richard is truly impressive: *«Why, I can smile and murder whiles I smile,"* he says, congratulating himself, and cry *"Content!" to that which grieves my heart, and wet my cheeks with artificial tears, and frame my face to all occasions".* (3.2.182–85)

A profound connoisseur of the human psyche, Shakespeare sees an important relationship between the desire for power

and the damage created during the early stages of human life. In other words, damage done to a person's self-esteem during early childhood has far-reaching consequences later in life. The greatest harm of all, according to Shakespeare, is the lack of motherly love. All of the anger that is evident throughout the play from Richard is a result of his anger towards his mother.

An important but rather unknown feature of Richard III is that it emphasizes the king's relationship with his mother, perhaps because the play focuses on the individual rather than the historical events that led the country to a civil war. Examples of father-child relationships are found in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Aegeus, in the two plays of Henry IV, in *Much Ado Nothing* with Leonato, in *Othello* with Bravantius, in *King Lear* with Lear and Gloucester and in *The Tempest* with Prospero. In Richard III, Shakespeare focuses on the tyrant himself - on his psychological disorder, which highlights the problematic relationship between mother and child.

The above fact can be seen in the very words of the Duchess of York, Richard's mother, who right from the start characterizes him as a monster. He suspects him of the death of his brother George and warns the orphaned children of the latter to be careful and not to believe anything that Richard says: *"Think you my uncle did dissemble, grandam?"* says one of the children. "*Ay, boy*," she curtly replies. She expresses some combination of two contradictory sentiments, disgrace and disavowal. "*He is my son, ay, and therein my shame*," she acknowledges, and then immediately abjures any responsibility: "*Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit*" (The Life and Death of Richard the Third. 2.2.18, 29–30)

The climax of her shame comes with the news of Edward's death: *"I for comfort have but one false glass [i.e. mirror],"* she *says with bitterness, "That grieves me when I see my shame in him" (2.2.53–54).* His mother's cold treatment of Richard seems to grow over the course of the play, culminating in her exhortation to the other women who suffered from his behavior – Margaret, the widow of Edward VI, Elizabeth, the widow of her son Edward and Anne the wife of Richard - to vent their wrath: *"In the breath of bitter words,"* she tells them,

"let's smother /My damnèd son" (4.4.133–34). Her absolute contempt is manifested the moment he appears in front of her: *"Thou toad, thou toad.".* She even wishes she had smothered him inside her womb:

Thou cam'st on earth to make the earth my hell.
A grievous burden was thy birth to me;
Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
Thy school days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious;
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous;
Thy age confirmed proud, subtle, sly, and bloody.
(4.4.167–72)

Her curse ends with his death wish: *"Bloody thou art; bloody will be thy end."* Her treatment of Richard contrasts with the affection she felt for her other children – Edward and George. Richard, for his part, is deaf. All his behavior is a result of this rejection. The tyrant is already created and is a result of the experiences he had as a child. Now in reaction to rejection, Richard builds one of the characteristic abilities of the tyrant: he can penetrate the minds of the people around him, whether they want it or not. He compensates for the rejection by being able to impose his presence on whoever he wants without guilt.

Conclusion

Examining Richard, we see a relentless and merciless man. The only think that he is interested in power, constantly practicing its abuse. He has not misgivings or regrets about what he does. He doesn't hesitate for a moment. He doesn't care about the others. All he offers to his subordinates are exchanges and fees to carry out his orders. For this and in the end, one after the other, they abandon him by changing camps. They don't love him or believe in him. Richard usurps the crown and power, reaps everyone on the way of. But in the end, as in all of Shakespeare's historical dramas, a legitimate one heir has escaped and returns to restore order and justice

(Cheetham & Fraser, 1972. Bloom, 1999). The chain of murders and the river of blood never stopped. Every new leader he would throw the previous one until it was his turn. Until they hate him too his subordinates. Richard climbed the ladder of power and reached the crown. At every step he committed another crime. On the highest step he found the abyss waiting for him, ready to swallow him. The leader who promised the world to his subordinates of him, shortly before his death he no longer has anything. Nothing has the same value anymore to promised. In his greatest despair he promises even more, because only this has to offer the world, promises (Baldwin & Baldwin, 2000).

The impressive thing is that in this case he promises absolutely nothing. Something that he does not have, his kingdom which he has already lost. For an exchange up to then insignificant, a horse, now becoming important in saving his life.

Slave! I have set my life upon a caste,
And I will stand the hazard of the die,
I think there be six Richmonds in the field;
Five have I slain instead of him.
A horse, a horse! My kingdom for a horse!

(Richard III, 5.4)

Looking at Richard, we see a pseudo-transformational leader in terms of personal characteristics, which operates on its continuous spectrum of transformational leadership by exercising transactional leadership, through reward under heresy and administration by exception. He is, therefore, a leader with a moral deficit and value code that does not care about others or the common good. He is self-centered and driven exclusively by the thirst for power.

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Saint *Jnaneshwar:* A Spiritual Leader of *Varkari Sampradaya* (Sect) of Maharashtra; a Retrospection

Rina A. Pitale Puradkar,
PhD, Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College, Mumbai
rinapuradkar@rjcollege.edu.in

Abstract:

Throughout human history, spiritual masters have come to this world to awaken within us the light of divinity with the help of their teaching they taught us that God is present in all creations and guide us to realize this. We too can be the bearers of this spiritual light, which we can share with this world by practicing it. Saint Jnaneshwar being spiritual leader (1275-1296) was the greatest mystic saint poet and philosophers of India (Maharashtra) during medieval era. He was born in Maharashtra in the thirteenth century. During this period in Maharashtra very few people were acquainted with the knowledge of Sanskrit in society. As a result of it the majority of the common masses were denied the wealth of ancient Hindu scriptures and religious knowledge. He rose as a very bright star on the horizon of Maharashtra as the authority of scriptural, spiritual knowledge and he rebelled out against the strict norms set up by the Brahmins by using the local language Marathi as his vehicle for preaching.

The name Jnaneshwar means 'Lord of knowledge' (Jnaniyacha Raja). He is also called as 'Mauli' means 'mother'. Jnaneshwar is said to have laid the foundation of the Bhakti movement 'Varkari Sampradaya' in Maharashtra which was later on taken to its peak by Tukaram and other

saints. This paper tries to explore the intellectual and spiritual legacy and teachings of Saint Jnaneshwar for the establishment of bhakti marga for the wellbeing of common man and path to attain moksha.

Keywords: Saint Jnaneshwara, Varkari Sampradaya, Mauli, Lord Vitthala, Jnaniyacha Raja, Bhakti, Purushartha, Pasayadana, Chidvilas, Pandharpur, Vasudeva kutubakam

Throughout human history, spiritual masters have come to this world to awaken within us the light of divinity with the help of their teaching they taught us that God is present in all creations and guide us to realize this. We too can be the bearers of this spiritual light, which we can share with this world by practicing it. Saint *Jnaneshwar* being spiritual leader (1275-1296) was the greatest mystic saint poet and philosophers of India (Maharashtra) during medieval era. He was born in Maharashtra in the thirteenth century. During this period in Maharashtra very few people were acquainted with the knowledge of *Sanskrit* in society. As a result of it the majority of the common masses were denied the wealth of ancient Hindu scriptures and religious knowledge. He rose as a very bright star on the horizon of Maharashtra as the authority of scriptural, spiritual knowledge and he rebelled out against the strict norms set up by the *Brahmins* by using the local language *Marathi* as his vehicle for preaching.

The name *Jnaneshwar* means 'Lord of knowledge' *(Jnaniyacha Raja*). He is also called as '*Mauli*' means 'mother'. *Jnaneshwar* is said to have laid the foundation of the Bhakti movement '*Varkari Sampradaya*' in Maharashtra which was later on taken to its peak by Tukaram and other saints. '*Jnaneshwar* laid the foundation and initiated the construction of the temple. *Namadeva* as the servant masoner constructed the floors and walls. *Ekanath* alias *Janardana* erected the supporting pillars in the form of preaching from *Shrimad Bhagvad* and *Tukaram* adorned it with the golden *kalash* on the pinnacle of this temple to

teach philosophy of constant God-remembrance i.e. the philosophy of devotion or *bhakti.*'[1]

Even today *Varkaris'* place the *Padukas* (Foot wear) of *Jnaneshwar* in a palanquin (*Palki*) and travel by foot from Alandi to Pandharpur during the holy month of *Ashadh* and *Kartik* of the Hindu calendar i.e. July and November month of English calendar; where people walk long distances from Alandi to Pandharpur with bare feet by continuous chanting the name of Lord *Vitthala* incarnation of Lord Vishnu to the holy place of Pandharpur, to worship Him.

He wrote '*Jnaneshwari*' the significant commentary on '*Srimad Bhagavad Gita*', '*Amrutanubhava*'or '*Anubhavamruta*' (Im mortal Experience, the verses on the divine nectar of spiritual path) and *Chandeva Pashasti* (Sixty-five verses conveyed the essence of Advaita Philosophy) and '*Haripatha*' a song praising or chanting the name of *Lord Vitthala*. Saint *Nivruttinath* his elder brother and Guru who initiated him as his disciple instructed *Jnaneshwar* to write a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita in Marathi. *Jnaneshwar* composed the 18 chapters in a metre called '*Ovi*' and brought the Bhagavad Gita to the common man who could not understand Sanskrit. It is said that Jnaneshwar was only sixteen years old when he composed it. The language and the poetry used was captivating and is considered the basic text of the Varkari sect. The 700 shlokas of the Gita were dealt with in 9000 *ovi's*. The *Pasayadan* or the last nine verses of the *Jnaneshwari* are most popular of them all, he prayed everything for welfare and wellbeing of others and all humanity and nothing for himself. Saint Jnaneshwar himself believed that 'The whole world has one soul'.

Jnaneshwari being the magnum opus of Jnaneshwar, it is also called as *Jnanadevi* as well as Bhavartha-*Dipika* i.e., a torch enlightening the import of the original text. *Jnaneshwar* himself does not use any title. He describes his work as an ornament to the *Gita,* in the form of the *Marathi* version. The titles Jnaneshwari and *Jnana-devi* are used by Namadeva while Janabai suggests the other title i.e., *Bhavartha-Dipika*.

[1] Rahirkar, G.S., *Sakal Sant Gatha*, p. 542, ab. 3757, 3 rd ed., Prembodha Prakashan, 1887.

There are seven hundred verses of the Gita while the number of the *ovis* in the *Jnaneshwari* is about nine thousand. In these he tries to bring out fully the spirit of loving devotion that pervades the Song of the Lord. This is the message of the Gita and Jnaneshwar proclaims it in words that are so sublime, so lucid and so enchanting. The aim of the *Jnaneshwari* is to spread spiritual bliss, to eliminate the dearth of discrimination and to enable any aspirant to have the glimpse of Divine Knowledge. The *Jnaneshwari* gives a detailed analysis of metaphysics, astrology and yoga. It is widely studied in most households in Maharashtra and has been greatly revered by all other saints of *Varkari Sampradaya* as important text of *varkari's*. Prof. Patwardhan rightly says that "The general drift of the teachings of *Jnanadevi* is to emphasize *Upasana* and *Bhakti*, service and love of God, not the identity of the Bhakta and his Lord, is to be inferred from the fact that Jnanadeva is at his best, his spirit in the full swing of its pinions and his soul in sympathetic raptures in those portions of *Jnanadevi* that deal with the *Bhaktiyoga* system which maintains that salvation is to be attained by means of *Bhakti* or is *Bhakti."*

Prof. W. B. Patwardhan, further writes on *ovi* used by Jnaneshwar in *Jnaneshwari* commentary on *Bhagvad Gita* in Marathi as, "trips, it gallops, it dances, it whirls, it ambles, it trots, it runs, it takes long leaps or short jumps, it halts or sweeps along, it evolves a hundred and one graces at the master's command." The *Shanta Rasa* or the 'peaceful flavour' predominates the whole work of *Jnaneshwari*. In the case of Jnanadeva this *Shanta Rasa* does not mean merely a negative otherworldly sentiment. It is identical with *Bhakti Rasa* which is a positive feeling of deep devotion.

The beauty and wisdom of Jnaneshwara's teachings have serve over the centuries to other saints of *Varkari Sampradaya* and common masses. His teachings brought transformation in the society of Maharashtra which was orthodox on nature. His whole life was determined to the upliftment of common masses. He was completely devoted to Lord Vitthala (Ultimate Reality). He re-established the Varkari movement which is a path combining Vedic

doctrines with *jnana* and bhakti (*Jnana yukta bhakti*), that is devotion guided by knowledge, and believed that one cannot be liberated unless one attains the true and divine knowledge of Brahman. He regards Bhakti as the fifth *Puruṣārtha*[2] or highest goal of life, higher than Moksha (or liberation). Moksha means the experience of complete merger of the individual self in the Absolute or God. The experience of Bhakti involves psychological union with God while preserving the individuality for tasting the sweetness of Love Divine. Being a great *bhakta*, for Jnaneshwar, *bhakti* or loving devotion is the fruit of right knowledge and the spring of right actions. It is the supreme acme of human life. He speaks about *Jnanottar bhakti* which *akrutrim* means natural or spontaneous which is unique in nature.

The Varkari Panth (Pilgrim Path) or *Varkari Sampradaya* (Pilgrim Sect) is one of the most important *Vaishnava Sampradaya* in India.The *Varkari* movement owes its widespread popularity in its annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur which every year attracts very large crowds of pilgrims and well-wishers. The pilgrims from many countries like Japan, Germany etc. are also seen occasionally. It is not restricted to a particular caste, class or race; rather everyone is welcome in the vast spiritual family, irrespective of man-made distinctions. The history shows that, many of the holy men or saints respected by all hailed from low caste. This is suggestive of spiritual democracy in the *Varkari Sampradaya*, where freedom and equality rests on the principle of the spiritual brotherhood and belongingness to one's God. This movement in Maharashtra encompasses the all life in all its aspects. The main practice is remembering and chanting the name of Lord Vitthala (Form of Lord *Vishnu*) who is also called as '*Mauli*' means 'mother'. Teachings of saint *Jnaneshwar* have recourse to great devotion among masses and enlightened them on bhakti path leading to liberation. He said that when one reaches the state of kaivalya or samadhi there is experience of oneness, with constant bhakti. The

[2] Dandekar S.V., *Särtha Jnaneshwari*, 18- 867, 11th edition, 1997, Värkari shikshan Samstha, Älandi (Devachi), Pune.

experience of universal oneness leads to the awareness of *bhakti* (heart), *karma* (action) and *jnana* (knowledge) together. He experiences the stage of *Samatvam Yoga Uchyate* which is a complete state of balance, where there is total and complete absorption with the universe.

He had achieved control of every aspect of life being initiated by his *guru Nivritthinath* in *hatha yoga*. He was true yogi. It is said once he put his hand on the head of a buffalo, connected himself with that buffalo and the buffalo started reciting the *Vedas*. One story narrates *Jnaneshwar* making a concrete wall fly in the sky taking him and his siblings to meet another hatha yogi called *Changdeva.* He spoke on *Kundalini* energy and on awakening the energy through various practices.

He faced many difficulties in his entire life; many learned and so called spiritually elevated people denied the basic human rights to him and his siblings, yet he always remained calm and balanced, giving the best of knowledge and practices throughout his short but meaning life, a true yogi in every aspect. He inspires millions and will continue to inspire and motivate millions of people in India and abroad through the teachings and his life and the great texts that he has left behind as his legacy.

The ethical teachings of saint *Jnaneshwar* are in consonance with his metaphysics. The world, being a divine manifestation, is not to be scorned. He adopts the theory of *Chidvilas* (play of the pure consciousness) which maintains that the universe is the expression of the Absolute Reality and the cosmos as a sport of the Absolute. It is not something that hides reality but manifest it. The world is neither dreadful nor it is the subject of mere sensual enjoyment. Every object is surcharged with divine significance. Hence he does not teach the doctrine of renunciation. One should not give up one's duties but should perform them in a spirit of worship. Every act should be performed in an attitude of prayer. The ideal man of *Jnaneshwar* is one whose heart overflows with divine Love at the sight of any entity in the world. In one of his *abhanga* he

says, '*Je Je Bhete Bhuta TeTe Manije Bhagvant*'[3], it means consider any living or non-living being as God.

According to his teachings in *Jnaneshwari* or *Amrutanubhava*, God takes delight in manifesting in and realizing Himself through the infinite variety of forms of existence. Therefore, every form of existence becomes at once endowed with the wealth and beauty of the Infinite. The relation of the ultimate Reality or God with our finite-selves is one of deep empathy and love. God is regarded as the embodiment of love. Hence to know Him is to love Him, and this love is the stimulation of noble deeds and the highest social service. God as Universal Spirit (*Viśvātmaka, Iśvara*) is a very important concept for understanding the real meaning of bhakti. *Viśvātmaka Iśvara* means that understanding of God as abiding in everything and in every human being. So the philosophy of *Jnaneshwar* has not only a significant historical importance but there are also elements in it that have an everlasting universal significance. R.D. Ranade in his book 'Mysticism in Maharashtra' categorises Saint *Jnaneshwar* as intellectualistic mystic.

The present world needs a balanced mix of intellectual and spiritual growth. Only through spiritual development the balanced development is possible. There are five dimensions of the concept of balanced development: (1) How does development affect an individual? (2) How does development affect society? (3) How does development affect various life-forms? (4) How does development affect environment? (5) How does development affect the world?

In order to strengthen the balanced concept of development the five dimensions need to be attended to. They are: (1) materialistic, (2) economic, (3) intellectual, (4) moral, (5) spiritual. The main cause of an unbalanced concept is an incomplete system of education. The modern system of education is fully concentrated on enriching in knowledge and earning one's livelihood. The important aspects of learning- to live together and with others and learning to be one's true self- are almost neglected. As a

[3] Dandekar S.V., *Särtha Jnaneshwari*, X- 118, 11th edition, 1997, Värkari shikshan Samstha, Älandi (Devachi), Pune.

result of it, knowledge is increasing and economic development is taking place but peaceful co-existence and the identification of the inner wealth is lost.

Being Mystics and bhakti-margins, he had unorthodox, non-fanatic and non-superstitious approach to religion. As put forth by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "As the religion of spirit, mysticism avoids the two extremes of dogmatic affirmation and dogmatic denial."[4] The devout mystic is so open to all religions that they see brighter side of all religions. A mystic, even after attaining the highest experience is fond of serving society and strives for its spiritual good. This attitude is found in the majority of great mystics.

Jnaneshwari and *Amrutanubhava* is one of the masterpieces in philosophical systems, literature, poetry, metaphysics, science, spirituality, Religion and Yoga. It is also a real guide to live a contented life and let others also live happily. This sapling of the bhakti and spirituality is planted by him and now it has reached its peak by encapsuling everyone into it, '*Iwalese Rope Lawiyele Dari tayacha Meru Gela Gaganavari*'[5]. If his teachings can form a part of the Education System, then it will create better quality of students, with a feeling or a sense of reverence and respect and love for their parents, elderly persons and teachers. Further, it will prevent the disintegration of families and breaking up of homes which have become quite common all over the world. Possibly, blend of science and religion alone can bring peace to the world through the medium of education. This will help to build the men of character required for the holistic society and then there will be a real celebration of peace, humanity, universal brotherhood and welfare of men in the society. Without these values life does not reach its highest crux. Thus, philosophy of *Jnaneshwar* plays an integral and important role in one's life and in nation's development. It reminds me the *Saint* who gave a '*Vishwa Geet*' (universal prayer).

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[4] Radhakrishnan, S., *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*, Oxford India paper Back, 1995, pp. 8-9.

[5] Rahirkar, G.S., *Sakal Sant Gatha*, p. 523, ab.3625, 3 rd ed., Prembodha Prakashan, 1887.

"*MAY THE SELF OF THE UNIVERSE BE PLEASED WITH THIS OFFERING OF WORDS AND BESTOW HIS GRACE ON ME.*
MAY THE DARKNESS OF IGNORANCE DISAPPEAR!
MAY THE UNIVERSE SEE THE SUN OF SELF CONSCIOUSNESS,
MAY WHATSOEVER ASPIRATIONS OF THOSE BE FULFILLED! OF ALL LIVING BEINGS!"[6]

This universal prayer resounded across all the countries. There is aspiration for the truth in all, and desire for eternal happiness, peace and harmony should dwell everywhere. By realizing the 'Oneness' (union), his spiritual echoes the religion of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (the whole world is one family) and '*Sarva dharma samabhava*' (respect for all). They are the ones who bring permanent spiritual realm in the domain of temporal world. In this attempt they quietly suffer all hurdles and hardships. He not only preached the virtue of service, sacrifice, generosity, equality and fraternity there by service of humanity but practiced it. The teachings of Saint *Jnaneshwar* echoes the preamble of UNESCO which states that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed." It is a culture of peace, a set of values, attitudes, traditions, modes of behavior and ways of life that reflect and inspires each one who is either member or even not the member of this tradition will really help to open up the dialogue between two or more different faiths of religion, culture, race, and gender and so on. Let's come together to established the world on the principles and values of love and compassion by accepting and respecting the otherness of others. The philosophy of *Jnaneshwar* which is based on the *abhanga* "*Avaghachi Samsara Sukhacha Karin Anandhe Bharin Tinhi Loke*"[7]

[6] Swami Kripananda, *Jnaneshwara's Gita* as rendered by Swami Kripananda.

[7] https://www.santsahitya.in/dnyaneshwar/sant-dnyaneshwer-abhnag-54/

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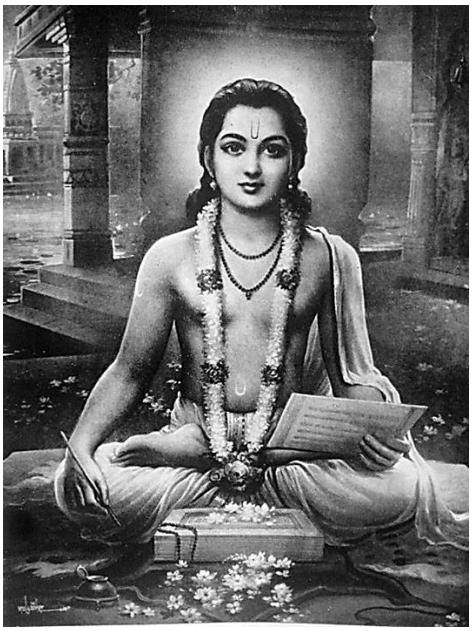

From coaching to Mentor Leader: Profile and skills of the mentor leader in human resources management

Sotiria Triantari,
Professor, University of Western Macedonia
striantari@yahoo.gr

Abstract:
We present in this article the personality of the mentor leader in management. The ancient Greek background of the coaching and mentor leader is highlighted. We focus on the differences and similarities of the coach and mentor leader, highlighting the skills of the modern mentor leader, who dynamically contributes to the formation of the personality of the individual, the employee in order to achieve personal and professional development and progress. The mentor leader with basically characteristics of empathy and mindfulness, which are basically communication parameters, transmits to others his experience, making the human resources of a business or organization flexible, creative, and mature. The mentor leader represents ethical leadership and addresses contemporary challenges in management by strengthening the link between theory and practice through education and transmission of knowledge, skills, and experience. The modern mentor leader makes a significant contribution to cultural change in management and to addressing organizational change, which has a significant impact on the psychology and behavior of employees.

Keywords: leader, coach, mentor, coaching, mentoring, empathy, emotional intelligence, mindfulness communication, persuasion.

1. The guiding Leader in Ancient Greek thought. From coaching to mentoring

In ancient Greek thought, the personality of the leader from Homeric times to Aristotle is framed by the basic characteristics of moderation (μέτρον), harmony, self-awareness, self-control. Aristotle highlighted the moral and intellectual virtues that a statesman ought to practice and cultivate. What is important throughout the course of ancient Greek thought is the leader's ability to observe moderation and manage himself and others (Triantari, 2020a).

In **Heraclitus (**6th-5th century BC), the moderation (μέτρον) defines the personality of the excellent statesman, leader, as the executor of his logic outside his individuality. The moderation (μέτρον) reflects the ethically communicative dimension of the leader in a context of coherence and management of the connection between the inner self and the universe (Heraclitus, Ap. B. 64 DK.; Betegh 2007). The concept of moderation (μέτρον) in **Democritus** (460-370 BC) is manifested through right cognition and action, which activates the moral consciousness of the leader. The dynamic personality of the logical leader is highlighted by his moral choices in which prudence plays a dominant role (Triantari 2017; Diels - Kranz 1972). Prudence ensures autonomy, self-control, self-knowledge, independence, being the standard and guide of self-management aiming at personal and collective happiness (Triantari 2017; Triantari 2020b). The ability of self-management, which orients the management of citizens by the leader, was highlighted by **Thucydides** (460-399 BC). The need to assert the leader's power enhances self-management and citizen management, recovering his persuasive prowess as the communication channel for gaining citizens' trust. The leader has self-awareness and self-control of his actions, which help him to be animated by the natural impulses of *honor, fear, and utility* (Thucydides, *Historiae,* 1.76; Triantari 2020a). Through the triptych of honor, fear and utility, Thucydides highlighted the leader's power to exercise and develop the need for self-preservation and self-management in a world of

contradictions, conflicts, and conflicting interests. Management as a controlling factor in the imposition of power is highlighted in the thought of **Xenophon** (430-355 BC). The functional and flexible leader/manager, who through wisdom and knowledge of what is good and bad, just and unjust, beneficial and harmful, raises the moral virtues of the leader as the background to the evaluation of his moral choices (Xenophon, *Memoirs III*, 9. 4.1-6.7; Triantari 2020a; Tsolis 2012), to his insight and negotiating ability to preserve peace and take initiatives (Xenophon, *Agesialos*, 7.1-7.7). The managerial and negotiating ability of the leader was considered by **Isocrates** (436 BC - 338 BC) as a prerequisite for his perfection. An excellent leader knows how to manage difficult situations with prudence, rational thought, and action (Isocrates, *On Antidotes*, 128; Alexiou 2005; Triantari 2020a).

Plato (427 BC-347 BC) focused the power of the leader's management and negotiating presence on the "woven leader" as the ideal type of leader. He likened the art of the leader to the art of the weaver, creating a fertile ground for the fusion and harmonization of diverse and different elements in a political community, whose harmonization and cohesion is to be managed and negotiated by the leader, the guardian and embodiment of moderation (μέτρον) and harmony (Plato, *Politicus*, 289e-290a. Chrysakopoulou 1990; Veneti 1990; Triantari20a). **Aristotle** (384 BC-322 BC) presents the image of the designer, reformer, and architect leader through the orator's ability to shape speeches for different audiences. Aristotle attributed the leader's managerial and negotiating ability to the dynamic relationship between speech and action, through which the leader's intellectual and moral qualities are projected. The philosopher achieved through persuasion the interweaving of heterogeneous political elements. Logical and psychological persuasion distinguishes the leader whose action and reaction are based on wisdom and emotional intelligence, creating the appropriate conditions for managing himself and his audience (Triantari 2016; Barboutis 2016).

The ancient Greek image of the leader is the modern model of the true leader, who is a coach and guide for life. In whatever sphere of social and professional life he exercises

authority he can simultaneously guide his citizens or subordinates to understand their strengths, seek self-management, realize what they can and cannot do, and seek harmony and moderation for themselves and others (Eby, Buits and Lockwood, 2004). The leader is a coach and mentor who, through accountability of actions and decisions, brings out mindfulness and emotional intelligence. These are two key competencies with which he can influence and teach those who wish not only to acquire skills but also to accept the specialized transmission of knowledge.

2. The profile of the coaching Leader as a condition of the mentoring Leader

Ancient Greek thought shaped the profile of the modern coach leader, as it emerged from the combination of the professional coach and the new leader (Asimakopoulou, V. 2018). D. Goleman (2002) included Coaching Leadership in the six suggested leadership styles. T. Gallway (2009) defined coaching as "the art of facilitating performance in another person's learning and development", considering coaching as consultative training in self-awareness of one's abilities. D. Goleman (2014) defined the Coach Leader as the leader who helps employees become aware of their abilities, strengths, and weaknesses, combining these with their personal and professional aspirations. He presents the Coach Leader as the leader who encourages employees to set long-term goals, to formulate action plans. Coach Leader provides feedback by assigning roles and responsibilities, which employees should understand with mindfulness. In D. Goleman's thinking, the Coach Leader motivates employees for greater performance and achievement, creating a good work climate with positive consequences for the business.

The definitions give the Coach Leader characteristics that set him apart from any other leader, such as sincerity for personal development and welfare of his employees, encouragement and motivation, self-awareness, mindfulness, self-confidence and stability, emotional intelligence. The Coach Leader leads with

ethical and intellectual principles and values (J. Rogers, 2008). He brings together all those characteristics that bring out the moral and intellectual qualities. He helps and supports less experienced subordinates or supervisors and enables them to learn by allowing them to participate in the planning and shaping of the vision. The leader, together with subordinates, wisely and accurately sets and carries out the short- and long-term goals, all contributing to the successful realization of the vision. The Coach Leader creates a community of subordinates, whose behavior and attitude towards them has a significant impact on them in both the professional and psychosocial domains (Eby, L. Buits, M. & Lockwood, A. 2004. Cf. Triantari, S. 2020a).

S. Triantari considers that Coaching Leadership belongs to the virtuous models and the Coach Leader brings together the moral and intellectual virtues with mediocrity (μεσότητα) being dominant and prudence (φρόνησις) predominant among the intellectual virtues, in which priority is given to the logical ability of the human. Prudence (φρόνηση) guides rational choice (προαίρεσις), which is an equally important intellectual virtue, since actions with it are characterized as voluntary (Aristotle, *Ethical Nicomachees C*1111b; Triantari, S. 2014). The moral virtues contribute significantly to the Coach Leader's behavior and the intellectual virtues, representing the logical part of the soul, lead him to the truth, to a true realistic vision (Triantari, S. 2020a. Trogaidou, Ar. Triantari, S. 2023). The virtues based on Aristotelian psychology, which distinguish the Coach Leader are the following:

- Prudence (φρόνησις) to think rationally and wisely.
- Wisdom (σωφροσύνη) to act with moderation, modesty, to manage one's passions and desires properly.
- Justice to distribute responsibilities and duties and rewards equally and as they are proportionate and deserved to subordinates.
- Bravely (ανδρεία) to manage fear, to show courage in facing difficulties, to be distinguished for his diligence and cheerfulness.

- Magnanimity (μεγαλοψυχία), to behave accordingly and with temperance in happiness and misfortune, to be a kind and genuine human.
- Magnificence (μεγαλοπρέπεια), to be oriented towards projects and actions of public utility.
- Vivacity (ευτραπελία) to be smart, intelligent, and humorous.
- Freedom to make good management of resources and money, to disseminate and use information well and to be generous.
- Humility (πραότητα) to master anger and all negative passions, having self-control.
- Friendship to pursue good and right interpersonal relationships, built on reciprocity, cooperation, justice, and honesty.
- Fair distribution (νέμεσις) should seek the proper distribution of responsibilities and effective management.
- Honesty to base his words and actions on truth and to accept his strengths and weaknesses.
- Honor to be ambitious but not arrogant, to seek recognition in a positive and honest way.
- Self-discipline (εγκράτεια) to not be excessive in his thoughts, feelings and actions.
- Compassion (επιείκεια) to be able to forgive any mistakes, giving subordinates the opportunity to make amends (Starr, J. 2011; Tsoukas, H. 2017; Asimakopoulou, 2018; S. Triantari, 2020a).

The above virtues empower the Coach Leader with communication skills such as active listening, mindfulness, emotional intelligence, confidentiality, proper feedback, appropriate persuasion, and influence, shaping his profile (De Vries, M.K. 2014; Catalao, A. & Penim, A. 2016).

The Coach Leader acts as a role model for employees, contributing to their personal and professional development and support in order to better address their needs and challenges. The Coach Leader does not focus on the problem but on its solution, which is why his coaching is oriented

towards developing discovery of their potential, their empowerment and development through self-awareness. Towards this end, the Coach Leader helps managers to cope with changes in the internal and external work environment (Newstead, T. Dawkins, S. Macklin, R. Martin, A. 2020).

The historical origins of Coach can be found in Socratic midwifery teaching, which has a basic orientation towards the individual, with characteristics of self-awareness, self-awareness and self-management and aims at changing the way of thinking and behaviour. Coaching is the forerunner of Mentoring, as their similarity focuses on the one hand on supporting the learning process to achieve a specific personal or professional goal through training, counselling, and guidance. On the other hand, the Coaching focuses on the communication between two people, with designed to enhance a person's knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve a specific goal. Coaching and Mentoring seek to change the culture and behaviour of the individual through the discovery of his abilities and skills (Renton, J. 2009; Serrat, O. 2010; Asimakopoulou, B. 2018).

In Homer's Odyssey, Mentor is the loyal and good friend of Odysseus, who took on the role of animator, guide, and coach to Odysseus' son Telemachus (Kenworthy, J. 2015). Coaching and Mentoring seem to be two concepts that are identical to each other, but their main difference lies in their similarity, which is their orientation towards the individual. Coaching focuses on work in relation to the individual's career path and is short-term in its goals and processes. Mentoring focuses with philosophical reflection on the professional and personal empowerment, development of the individual and is long-term in objectives and processes. The characteristics of the Coach Leader coincide with those of the Mentor Leader and the former significantly highlights the dynamics of the latter, as the profile of the Mentor includes the profile of the Coach (Gordon, S. 1992; Renton, J. 2009).

The following table attempts to present the differences between Coach and Mentor:

COACH LEADER	MENTOR LEADER

He is Professional out of business	He is Senior manager of the business
He has specialized training for the mentoring of cooperating managers	He has enough professional experience
He is oriented to the problem solving, to the development of skills/competences for the development of the individual without a subject	He is oriented to improve communication, collaboration, motivation & leadership skills with a focus, e.g., marketing/transfer of experience in a specific professional field
He aims at self-awareness, identification of shortcomings & weaknesses, strengths, setting goals, optimal way of success	He helps in learning of the strategies/techniques for the development of the employee in the working environment - meeting the challenges of the job (technical skills)
He focuses on the Present & the Future, coaching style	He Focuses on advice, directions
He focuses on inner self-development, growth, and reconciliation of self. Result in awareness of abilities to find solutions & achieve goals	He transmits of knowledge from his specific experience

He focuses on a specific work/target/timelines/learning, behavior and skills required for the successful outcome of the work. Daily supervision of trainees He is oriented to a specific personal pathway of the individual in relation mainly to the work	He focuses on the needs of the individual, discussion of professional life/refining of the approach with philosophical reflection (attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, skills) Individual orientation with focus on goal design, empowerment of self-awareness, discovery of potentials/abilities/skills
He has short-term objectives, short-term process, formal style interpersonal relationship (2)	He has long-term objectives, long-term process, informal style interpersonal relationship (2)

The dynamics of the Mentor is based on the communicative interaction with the individual to activate and motivate leadership skills in connection with the strengthening of his self-awareness for personal and professional development. These two parameters will be highlighted by approaching and highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence and empathy for the Mentor Leader.

3. Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness in the Mentor Leader

In the historical-ideological review of the importance of the concept of self-awareness, self-management, and negotiation in the personality of the leader, it is understood that the starting point for the progress and development of these skills is emotional intelligence and mindfulness. In Thucydides, the law of assertion and the constant expansion of power, with the goal of the happiness of the whole, was the starting point in

the emergence of the managerial and negotiation skills of the leader, who uses his persuasive prowess as a communicative tool in its practical application (Koliopoulos, Triantari, Stavropoulou, Spinthiropoulos Garefalakis 2021; Lemonakis *et al.,* 2019).

In the modern era of constant and rapid changes, of the economic, social and communication crisis, the phenomena of greed, self-interest, migratory flows, geopolitical shifts, volatility, uncertainty, eliminating global stability and security, appear strongly. The leader's ability to manage and negotiate critical situations, especially war situations, is a deterrent to the threat of global catastrophe. But the willingness to deter also implies *prevention* (πρόληψις) in a spirit of communicative ethics, which the leader cultivates and promotes cooperation, understanding, and cohesion. *Prevention* (πρόληψις) lies primarily in the leader's capacity for self-management, who with the prudence controls his thoughts, desires, and pleasures (Trogaidou & Triantari 2023; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

The whole of the ancient intellect is pervaded by the passion of reason, that is, the inseparable relationship that exists between reason and emotion. Thucydides perceived reason as a stabilizing factor in the balance of fear (δέος), as the most intense human emotion, as it awakens the necessity of self-preservation. Thucydides and later Aristotle proposed logical and psychological persuasion as the intellectual building block of the excellent orator and leader. They praised *emotional intelligence* (Goleman 2011) and *mindfulness* (Kabat-Zinn 2003) as the basically communicative axes of management and negotiation in critical situations (Triantari 2020b). The complex of emotional intelligence and mindfulness empower the leader and more importantly the Mentor Leader, so that at the right time and circumstance, the leader's capacity for thought, decision making, and action can be brought out (Triantari, S. A. 2020a; Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Emotional intelligence is a basically characteristic of the leader and especially the Mentor Leader to understand, feel, evaluate, and practically apply the power of emotions as a source of energy, information, trust, creativity, and influence. The Mentor Leader empathizes with and guides the individual

in a philosophical reflection oriented to their attitudes, behaviors and perception of their life while influencing their emotions to focus beyond specific skills or competencies (Goleman, Boyatzis, Mckee 2014). Emotional intelligence in the Mentor Leader is framed by two main pillars: **α.** *Self-management and self-awareness* oriented towards the recognition of one's emotions and self-control in managing one's emotions, elements that make the leader honest, authentic, rational, and adaptive with a macro perspective in the education of the individual (De Janasz, Dowd, Beth 2023). **b.** The *social awareness* with which he understands others, interprets body language, accepts diversity, and manages relationships, either by inspiring with vision and goals, influencing through persuasion, or directing through the role of mentor, or by managing unpredictable changes or by assuming the role of negotiator in conflict management in order to mentor opposing parties to mutually satisfactory solutions to resolve their disputes (Goleman 2014? Triantari 2020a; Triantari 2021).

The above axes that make up the skill of emotional intelligence in the leader are reinforced by mindfulness, which highlights the ability of the Mentor Leader, with a clear and stable consciousness, to control himself and in each present situation to bring out his ethics (Tan CH. 2023; Ashford Sj. & DeRue, DS. 2012). Knowledge, perception, and emotion empower the Mentor Leader's empathy in critical situations (Triantari 2020b; Lewicki, Saunders, Minton 2004). Particularly in our time, where challenges to the threat to global security and stability are frequent, the prevalence of leaders is at stake in a competitive context through the risk of expansionist policies, which in its extremity may dismantle democracy and promote the annihilation of the humans' race through the imminent use of nuclear weapons. Emotional intelligence and mindfulness are basically parameters in Mentoring. The conscientious Mentor Leader is based on his *intention* to enhance his *attention* as an observer of inside and outside events and his *attitude* as a decision maker in observation, rational decision, and action (Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, Freedman 2006). Mindful Leadership builds self-

awareness, which is the heart of leadership and mentoring Leadership (Ehrilch, J. 2017).

Within the bosom of emotional intelligence and mindfulness are contained the core skills of the Mentor Leader.

4. Essential Skills of the Mentoring Leader

One could ask what the main implications are, arising from the complex of emotional intelligence and mindfulness in the management policy of the Mentor Leader. This reflection requires focusing on the skills derived from emotional intelligence and mindfulness, such as:

- Self-assessment
- Self-control
- Self-awareness
- Transparency
- Adaptability
- Aptitude
- Optimism
- Honesty
- Attentiveness
- Authenticity
- Stability
- Creativity
- Intuition
- Insightfulness
- Coolness
- Active listening
- Reliability
- Resourcefulness
- Flexibility
- Temperance
- Resourcefulness (Triantari 2020a; Ntisiou, Triantari (2023); Trogaidou, Triantari (2023).

These are skills that bring out the personality of a Mentor Leader with the ability to manage relationships and situations,

negotiate, consult, communicate, and select individuals with better productive results.

In this era of complexity, constant change, fluidity, instability and uncertainty, the complex of emotional intelligence and mindfulness in the Mentor Leader has implications:

- The reducing stress and panic
- The preservation of peace
- The ensuring and advancing culture
- The strengthening mental endurance
- The motivation for creativity and adaptability
- The optimal performance in all areas of human life
- The solving problems related to under-generation
- The avoiding addictive behaviors
- The prevention and deterrence of migratory flows
- The rational decision-making
- The improving of education and health, which are important parameters for the existence of a healthy state
- The development of an international strategy and entrepreneurship, attracting alliances through peace processes
- The tackling climate change
- The protection of the environment
- The development of ethical principles and values
- The avoiding the waste of energy and mineral resources
- The orientation towards digital humanism.

The Mentor Leader emerges as a true, excellent, and "regenerative" leader (Storm, 2019) and manager (Warren 2009), who portrays in his image the transformational, charismatic, and negotiating leader. He is in' a constant struggle of harmony with life, moderation, and self-awareness, control and proper criticism and evaluation, balance of emotion and logic, flow of events and focus of attention, exhortation, and deterrence. It is the struggle that distinguishes the image of a

Mentor Leader, who in the generalized discussion and search for one's identity must develop self-restraint, self-control, self-management and awaken the negotiation that we seek from birth. It is the struggle of the "regenerative" leader, seeking a sustainable conscious management policy in every business activity, cultivating those conditions of life with products and services that enhance the individual, society, and the environment. He is the Mentor Leader who adds value to the person, the ecosystem, the planet, striving responsibly for the happiness and prosperity of man, preventing any conditions for his extinction. He is the leader who can practice Mentoring in a business or organization, seeking to guide and support the professional development of his employees by maintaining the communicative relationship and designing the alliance. Mentoring is based on the relationship of mutual respect and trust (Bezzina, 2006). Mentoring Leadership finds application in the complex and multifaceted field of management, activating the society of employees to become willing and supportive in the process of their professional support by changing their way of thinking and behavior.

5. Mentor Leader in Human Research Management

The skills of the Mentor Leader in Human Resource management also reinforce the purpose of Mentoring in management, which is the transfer of knowledge, skills, experiences from the Mentor Leader to younger and less experienced employees, so that they develop not only specific professional skills but also to guide them in their personal development (Parker, P. B. & Carroll, 2009). Mentor Leader and Mentoring Leadership is an important innovation because it contributes to:

- the rapid and effective integration of new employees into organizations/businesses
- the transfer of better knowledge and skills with specialized experience
- the developing of cooperation and interpersonal relations between employees

- the promoting of learning
- the self-development, self-awareness, self-management, and negotiation
- the improving of employee performance
- the increasing of professionalism
- the development and motivation of employees
- the increasing of productivity
- the selecting of appropriate employees for roles and responsibilities
- the creating of career paths
- the managing of retired staff
- the promoting of innovative methods, ideas, and practices
- the decision making and their implementation (Newstead, T. Dawkins, S. Martin, A. 2020. Alfano, M. 2013).

The Mentor Leader upgrades both himself and the management function as a bearer of ethical principles, knowledge, and experience, as a guide in the professional and personal development of employees. The Mentor Leader's strategy guarantees a change of thinking and behavior, i.e. a change of culture that is identified with the identity of the organization/business. The experience of Mentor Leader is essential especially for new employees who seek to receive emotional support through reliable role models with knowledge and skills that will boost their morale, build on their strengths, and strengthen their weaknesses (Shollen, S. & L. Brunner, C. C. 2014; Ruwhiu, D. & Elkin, G. "2016). The Mentor Leader helps in motivating employees and leaders, empowering their energy, creativity, and enthusiasm. Mentoring Leadership forms and promotes strategies to motivate and recruit talent, leadership skills and leadership types because it builds a positive work culture and career advancement in the business, increasing its reputation in the society (Pinnington, A.H. 2011).

The Mentor Leader meets the most basic needs from Maslow's pyramid, the needs of self-esteem and self-

actualization. The first needs focus on self-esteem, independence, self-respect, recognition, and respect for others. These are elements that strengthen self-confidence and lead to self-actualization. Self-realization means better self-development and helps the employee to first become a leader of themselves, so that his self-perception becomes a reality. The self-concept reinforces the sense of responsibility and satisfies the need for power, which is fueled by the desire to have authority and self-control in life situations and in the work environment. In this context, the need for social integration is satisfied in terms of communicative relations with others. The set of needs is directly linked to the social needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The development of these important needs enhances two basically parameters of emotional intelligence and mindfulness, contributing to the integration of the individual's personality and his connection to the business/organization and society (Knights, D. 2021).

The Mentor Leader goes a step beyond the Coach Leader and focuses on meeting the individual's needs for personal and professional development, contributing to the empowerment and happiness of human resources in management. The presence and contribution of the Mentor Leader in Human Resource Management means a new leadership practice with implications in a new economy, which is related through rational rules to the development of emotions and interpersonal relationships, as well as to the mutual personalization of the experiences of human resources in management (Holmberg, I. & Strannegard, L. 2005). Mentoring Leadership signals the need for leadership to emerge in the light of a humanistic approach that makes it ethical through its engagement with employees, the business, institutions, and society.

Conclusion

Mentoring leadership has its roots in ancient Greek thought with the mentor or coach leader as the central figure. From coaching leadership received all those elements that made it

dynamic in shaping the personality of the individual, leader, and employee, who zealously desires personal and professional development and progress. The Mentor Leader with his empathy and mindfulness reveals all those skills that he possesses and can pass on to others together with his experience in order to make the human resources of a company flexible, mature and creative. Mentor Leader brings closer the need for ethical leadership that can meet the challenges of the modern era at professional, political, social, and economic levels. Mentoring leadership enables the connection between theory and practice through the education and transmission of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences that will contribute to changing the culture and behaviour of leaders and employers in management.

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The ethics of war leadership as seen through ancient Greek poetry

Ioanna Tripoula,
PhD, University of Athens
joantrip@gmail.com

Abstract

The present article focuses on the ethics of war leadership in the ancient Greek world, as it is presented through poetic works, specifically the Homeric epic, mainly Iliad, and tragedies, such as Aeschylus' *Pérsai*, Sophocles' *Aías*, *Antigóni* and *Philoktḗtēs*, and *Andromákhē* and *Hekabē* by Euripides. These works offer interesting insights into the most important aspects of the morality of war leadership, such as who warrior is considered as a charismatic and virtuous leader, which behavior is his is considered moral and by what criteria, who is considered as moral model or moral guide, how the leaders decide regarding the fate of captives and especially of women and what is the role of the gods in selecting and evaluating the morality of war leaders? The conclusion that emerges is that there are certain moral standards, which men and especially the war leaders are expected to follow, while balancing between the pursuit of personal expediency and the common good. A virtuous character, however, is not considered a sufficient condition to ensure a glorious life or victory, because the fate of each and everyone's is ultimately defined by the gods. Man can only try and hope that he has been proved morally worthy before the challenges and problems he faces· his end, however, will prove whether he really succeeded.

Keywords: Aeschylus, drama, Euripides, Homer, *Iliad*, leadership, Sophocles, tragedy

The ethics of war leadership as seen through ancient Greek poetry

The heroic code, which defined the ethics of war including those of war leadership in Greek antiquity was formed by the Homeric epics and especially the *Iliad*, from which the tragedies of classical era were highly inspired[1]. The morality projected through the heroic poetry echoes a heroic era, the era of the Mycenaean kingdoms which was already by the time of Homer considered as a distant past[2]. The ideal of the virtuous leader according to the ideals of that time is personified by two generals of the two opposing sides, Achilles and Hector. Though of a different nationality those two from a moral point of view are two sides of the same coin, since they share certain values in common, as being good (i.e. kind, loving, caring) to their people and fearsome to their enemies[3]. For example, Achilles speaks tenderly when referring to his father and addresses his mate, Patroclus with genuine tenderness · likewise, whenever Hector speaks to his father-king, shows true respect, as well love to his wife and child[4]. Both generals, however, prove themselves to be extremely frightful to their opponent when they come into battle, not only by their martial skills, but by their very behavior. Hector's name spreads terror among the Troians, whilst just the sight of Achillea's presence to the battlefield is more than enough to makes the Trojans retreat. *Iliad* is full of bloody battles and duels between fearsome warriors. All this ferocity is not simply explained as an obligation or as an emotional outburst (such as caused to Achilles by the death of Patroclus), but arises from the archaic morality according to which you show your

[1] J. De Romilly. *Ancient Greek grammatology (Arkhaía ellinikí grammatoloyía).* Athens: Kardamítsa, 1988, 39.

[2] S. Schein. "The Iliad: Structure and Interpretation". In *A New Companion to Homer,* 343–359. I. Morris & B. Powell (eds.). Leiden: Brill, 1997.

[3] M. Whitlock Blundell, *Helping friends and harming enemies: a study in Sophocles and Greek ethics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 26-59.

[4] De Romilly, 1988, 40-41.

toughest side to the opponent, until he regrets that he initially chose to be your opponent.

However, it appears from various points that there were certain moral principles which mainly must be demonstrated by the leaders. A well-known example where a certain dueling ritual is presented, is the scene between Glaucus and Diomedes, both descendants of old and noble families[5]. The duel begins with praising of the opponent and often ends with an exchange of gifts. When we rush to judge this kind of behavior based on today's morality, we fall into the trap of characterizing it as politeness or amenity, when it actually served other purposes; namely, on the one hand, praising the opponent in the "fight of words", that is, before entering the fight with the weapons, was intended to show the worth of both involved, while on the other hand the exchange of gifts would always remind both of the feat of a duel with a glorious and equal opponent[6]. Thus, both the verbal combat and the exchange of gifts raise the prestige of the warlords involved, to the same degree as engaging in battle.

In the duel between of the two main leaders, Achilles and Hector, the rules are broken: the two engage firstly in a verbal combat, but in a one that lacks the usual practice of glorification of the opponent- at least on Achilles' part, simply because he cannot overcome his anger and grief. When the prince of Troy reminds the rules concerning the defeated, that is to respect the dead body and return it to the relatives, Achilles is neither willing to listen nor to respect them. This scene is the apogee of sketching the difference between the two characters: Achilles is carried away by his temper and his emotions, while Hector is steadily proven as more prudent like a real leader should behave.

However, these two, Achilles and Hector, are both undisputed leaders, who won this recognition not so much because of their origin or social position, but because of their personal worth. This is mainly shown by their indirect but constantly apparent comparison with other heroes: Achilles is

[5] *Iliad*, Z′, 119-236.

[6] H. van Wees, "Homeric Warfare". In *A New Companion to Homer*, 668–693. I. Morris & B. Powell, Leiden: Brill, 1997.

often shown as more worthy than the major leaders of the army and especially than Agamemnon, while in addition he enjoys greater appreciation from the army and, from the other side of the wall, Paris is the proof that being the prince of the city is not enough to get praised or respected. And of course, what connects the two great heroes is the unquestionable sense of personal honor and the moral obligation to defend their personal honor and the honor of their family and city[7]: Achilles willingly and steadily walks towards his death, not only to avenge the death of his friend, but because he knows in advance that in this way, he will gain everlasting glory (*κλέος ἄφθιτον*), while Hector, on the other hand, repeatedly states that he considers it a shame to be proved a coward before his army and his king. The code of this morality is summed up in the words of Ajax, the second - after Achilles -bravest of the Achaeans: "*the honest must live honestly/or die an honorable death. That pretty much says it all*" (*«ἀλλ' ἢ καλῶς ζῆν ἢ καλῶς τεθνηκέναι / τὸν εὐγενῆ χρή. πάντ' ἀκήκοας λόγον.»*).[8]

Both parties have a living moral leader, i.e. Priam from the camp of Troians, and some well-respected figures from the Greek camp, such as Phoenix and Nestor. Considering that we refer to a decennial war, these people -most of them kings in their own countries- represent the old warrior class, who now, that we have reached the very last days of the war, take little or no part in battle, but play a decisive role by advising not only for war planning and operational matters, but also in matters of attitudes and behaviors, that is, ethics, mainly by mediating among leaders and by advising the younger ones. However, to what extent their opinions and advices will be heard, basically depends on the personal ambitions of the warriors and above all on which way they think is best for defending their personal honor.

Finally, a new form of morality is personified by Odysseus, who is already a leading figure in the *Iliad*, not only because he is also a king, but mainly because of his cleverness, which he inherited from his grandfather, Autolycus. He is mostly well

[7] A. W. H. Adkins, "Homeric Ethics". In *A New Companion to Homer*, 694–713. I. Morris & B. Powell. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

[8] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 479- 480.

known for his ability to slip away from difficult situations with the power of his mind or/and speech. His first reaction, when asked to travel to Troy, to pretend to be mentally ill, although at first glance looks like a funny or even unheroic choice[9], is a behavior indicative of his morality, of his cunningness, but also of his sound judgment, which is characteristic of a proactive leader. His persuasiveness and ingenuity were, after all, the catalytic factors that ensured the triumphant victory after ten years of irresolute war. Perhaps in this way Homer is ultimately leans towards this ethics of war by projecting the message that, to engage in any cause, a leader must firstly believe in the cause, possess all the necessary virtues and be able to succeed. This new kind of morality is clearly projected as the opposite of that of Achilles or Hector in the Sophoclean tragedy *Ajax*, where the great hero, leader of the Salaminians, appears firstly as a representative of the old heroic code · later, though, after the rage that overwhelmed him because of the misrecognition of his worth as a soldier, is presented as a negative role model, i.e. arrogant, immoderate and irreverent, in contrast to Odysseus, who justifies the title of the winner of Achilles' armor by demonstrating piety and prudence[10]. One way of understanding the outcome of their battle could be that strength and martial prowess can at any moment serve the troop or turn against it· but critical thinking and fierce judgment is a steadily reliable quality of a worthy leader.

The contrast between Odysseus and Ajax highlights two different moral conceptions regarding how one deals with victory. This question arises in the tragedy of Sophocles *Philoctetes*[11]. The main hero, king in some Thessalian cities, who joined along with the Greek fleet for Troy, never arrived, as his fellow warriors abandoned him in Lemnos, due to an

[9] J. Griffin. "Heroic and unheroic ideas in Homer". In *Homer: readings and images*, 21-32. C. Emlyn-Jones, L. Hardwick & J. Purkis (eds). London: Duckworth in association with the Open University, 1992, 21-32.

[10] Lesky, A. *History of ancient Greek literature* (*Istoría tis arkhaías ellinikís logotekhnías*). Thessaloniki: D. Kiriakídi, 2015, 391; Easterling, P. E. «Sophocles (Sophoklís)». In *History of ancient Greek literature* (*Istoría tis arkhaías ellinikís logotekhnías*), 394-419. P. E. Easterling &V. M. W. Knox (eds.) Athens: Papadíma, 1994, 394-419 and especially 400-401.

[11] Blundell, 1989, 184-225.

incurable snakebite poisoning. Ten years later, they are forced to return for him, because of an oracle, who says that Troy will never be conquered without his magic bow and arrows. The mission is assigned to Odysseus and Achilles' son, Neoptolemus[12]. Since Philoctetes, however, refuses to help his former partners, who have abandoned him for so many years, the king of Ithaca comes up with a plan, that includes deceit, deception and lies. The one who will deceive Philoctetes will not be Odysseus, precisely because of his reputation for deception, and Neoptolemus, who he is presented as a representative of morality because of his youth, of his little experience in war (as his name suggests), which causes men to become corrupt and his descent from Achilles, which makes him virtuous. Although the young man initially refuses, considering cheating morally reprehensible, he is eventually defeated by the same passion that had driven his father to Troy, the love of glory. His moral quality, however, does not allow him to complete the plan and in the end, he chooses the path of truth and decency[13].

This contradiction between Odysseus and Neoptolemus, between deceit and honesty, proves that there are two types of ethics among war leaders. On the one hand, Neoptolemus represents uprightness, an ideal represented from the older generation, by his father, by Ajax, Hector etc. On the other hand, Odysseus, at least as seen from Philoctetes' point of view, is the personification of trickery and resorting to any means with the ultimate goal of victory[14]. Characteristically he declares: *Where such are needed, I am such; and where the righteous and the virtuous are to be judged, you will not find anyone better than me. everyone —/except you*" («*Οὗ γὰρ τοιούτων δεῖ, τοιοῦτός εἰμ' ἐγώ·/ χὤπου δικαίων κἀγαθῶν*

[12] E. Belfiore, "Xenia in Sophocles' Philoctetes", *The Classical Journal*, 89, 2 (1993): 113–29.

[13] Lesky, 2015, 406-410; De Romilly, 1988, 113· Lesky, A. *The tragic poetry of the ancient Greeks*, vol. I, *From the origin of the genre to Sophocles* (*I trayikí píisi ton arkhaíon Ellínon,* t. A΄, *Apó ti yénesi tou ídous os ton Sophoklí*). Athens: National Bank Educational Foundation (MIET), 1997, 397-412.

[14] H.M Roisman. "The appropriation of a son: Sophocles' Philoctetes", *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* (1997): 127-171.

ἀνδρῶν κρίσις,/οὐκ ἂν λάβοις μου μᾶλλον οὐδέν' εὐσεβῆ./ Νικᾶν γε μέντοι πανταχοῦ χρῄζων ἔφυν,/πλὴν ἐς σέ»)[15]. The king of Ithaca is of course a "*polytropon*" (i.e. resourceful) man, however in this case he just follows orders of the council of generals of the Greek army[16]. Therefore, we should not fall into the trap of jumping to trivial conclusions, because in this case we would judge based on the morality of our era and society. After all, in war, as is commonly known, (almost) everything is allowed and Odysseus is the most eminent representative of this point of view. He is the leader who does what has to be done in order to ensure every single time the success and the victory.

The use of deception on the behalf of a leader is considered justified and legitimate, if it aims to the common good. Odysseus himself aw a king, a warrior, even a person, has nothing to benefit from his lie, but it will surely will bring to his army the long-awaited victory over the Trojans after ten years of war. It is, so to speak, a small malpractice done by one man in order to achieve a great good for the many, his fellow-warriors. This is another – a new or at least an unusual - aspect of "be good to your own and tremendous to your enemies" morality. The practice of deception was, after all, also used later, with the use of the Trojan Horse, which helped them to achieve the long-desired conquest of Troy, the end to the ten-year war, a triumphant victory for the Greeks and the *νόστος*, the return to homeland.

However, in other mythological examples, deceit is denounced if it is used for selfish purposes. Such a case is presented in Euripides' *Hekabē,* in which the heroine is the former queen of Troy, wife of the great leader Priam[17]. Dring the war, Hecuba had entrusted her youngest son, Polydorus, to an old ally of their city, the Thracian king Polymestor, in order to avoid the child's involvement in the war. The young prince had been sent to the foreign kingdom with gold, which Polymestor finally decided to keep for himself, killing its rightful owner. By this action the leader of the Thracians

[15] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 1049- 1053.
[16] Lesky, 1997, 411.
[17] Lesky, 1997, 103-115.

proved himself to be far below his role, because his act was clearly violating the oaths he had given to the child's parents and to the gods and mainly Zeus, the god - protector of hospitality[18]. Hecuba, is forced under the new circumstances to leave behind her the passive role she had until now as a woman and as a queen and το become a leader securing the obedience of the Chorus, in order to deceive two kings and destroy the one of them.

With her actions furthermore se becomes the instrument by which the gods punish the treachery and selfishness that lead to impiety, and restore the secular and moral order[19]. According to the ancient Greek thought the gods constantly supervise the world and judge the moral choices of individuals, sometimes punishing and sometimes rewarding[20]. Long life, bliss and certainly victory are ways of manifesting god's approval of the individual's morality. In Aeschylus' *Pérsai*, king Xerxes is bitterly defeated, because he defied the will of the gods, who wanted the Hellespont to be a boundary between the two continents and the two worlds, East and West, while, when passing through Athens, he burned down the sanctuaries of the Acropolis, clearly offending the gods [21]. Therefore, it seems that there are certain boundaries, which one even a great king, leader of tens of peoples and millions of people, is not permitted to access, and these are the boundaries that the gods set for the world, whether physical, social, or in any way related to the worldly order. As the wise king Darius very eloquently declares: *For Zeus heavy and straight stands /punisher of all great pride*" («*Ζεύς τοι κολαστὴς τῶν ὑπερκόμπων ἄγαν /φρονημάτων ἔπεστιν, εὔθυνος βαρύς*»)[22].

A similar belief is expressed by Sophocles in *Aías*, where the hero, leader of the Salaminians who participated in the Trojan War, loses the opportunity to acquire the weapons of Achilles

[18] De Romilly, 1988, 40.

[19] Lesky, 2015, 511-513.

[20] C. J. Herington. *Aeschylus.* New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1986, 5-7.

[21] De Romilly, 1988, 85; Herington,1986, pp. 67; H. D. F. Kitto. *Greek tragedy: a literary study.* London: Routledge, 1990, 31- 33; Lesky, 1997, 141-151.

[22] Aiskhúlou *Pérsai*, 827-828.

because of his insulting behavior towards the gods[23]. At least three times he proved disrespectful to the gods. At first, on his departure for Troy he told his father: "*father, with gods at my side, and a mere mortal / may equally win; but I, even without / their help, am confident / that I shall win the war alone*" («*πάτερ, θεοῖς μὲν κἂν ὁ μηδὲν ὢν ὁμοῦ /κράτος κατακτήσαιτ'· ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ δίχα / κείνων πέποιθα τοῦτ' ἐπισπάσειν κλέος./ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπει μῦθον*»)[24]. With the same arrogance he had answered Athena, when she once decided to stand before him in the battle: "*queen, go and stand before the other Achaeans; /as far as we are concerned, the front of the battle will never /be crushed*" («*ἄνασσα, τοῖς ἄλλοισιν Ἀργείων πέλας/ ἵστω, καθ' ἡμᾶς δ' οὔποτ' ἐκρήξει μάχη*»)[25], while addressing his wife, Tecmessa, he had argued that he did not consider himself indebted to the gods"[26]. The misrecognition of the power of the gods constitutes an unforgivable insult that cannot be left unpunished; on the battlefield the punishment translates into bitter defeat. The Homeric epics and classical dramas are full of such examples, which prove that people in general and especially those who are kings and leaders are free to make whatever choices they want, but their morality is judged not only by people, but, above all, by the gods. The power or authority people may have mean nothing in comparison to the divine· in fact, it depends directly on it and is judged by it.

Not only the outcome of a war, but the end of a man's life lies in the hands of the gods according to his moral choices and moral quality. He, who dishonors his citizens and subjects, dies in shame and his dead body remains unburied, as the example of Ajax shows us. It was a decision made by king Menelaus, in order to punish the one who attacked his army and to show the rest how powerfully and decisively he responds to such choices. In the military there is a strict hierarchy, which is implied to echo the will of the gods.

[23] Blundell, 1989, 60-105.

[24] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 767-770.

[25] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 774-775.

[26] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 589-590: «*ἄγαν γε λυπεῖς. οὐ κάτοισθ' ἐγὼ θεοῖς / ὡς οὐδὲν ἀρκεῖν εἶμ' ὀφειλέτης ἔτι;*».

According to this hierarchy, the leader has the power of life and death on every subject, just as the gods have the power of life and death over every man. This is the reasoning by which Menelaus orders the prohibition of the burial of Ajax[27]. While, however, he thinks he is imposing the will of the gods, he overlooks that the dead belong to the jurisdiction of the gods, and thus no mortal has power over their bodies or their afterlife. The prohibition or even this delay of their burial is a clear insult towards the gods and their cosmic and moral order[28].

The inviolable right of a proper burial is recognized already in the Homeric epics, where it is often stated that, as in all battles, there was a cessation of fighting especially for the purpose of burning the dead and rendering of due honors[29]. In that point we can also recall the story of the sons of Oedipus, who were involved in a civil war and who they annihilated each other; the new king, Kreon, forbids the burial of Polyneices on the grounds that he marched against his city, not realizing that he is committing blasphemy. Moreover, the story of the house of Lavdakids is being used also in Aeschylus's tragedy *Heptà epì Thḗbas*[30] and Euripides' *Phoínissai*[31]; although each poet is narrating the same story highlighting different aspects and meanings, they both express the belief that the fate of people, of the warriors, their relatives, even of the civilians, i.e. whether they will win or how they will die, is not really decided by their kings or leaders, rather than by the gods.

The fate of Hecabe and Antigone reminds us that the way of dealing with the weak and the defeated is indicative of the morality of the winners. A true leader cannot be petty or vindictive. Regarding the fate of the captives, most information comes from the classical era, but the very first can be found in the Homeric epic poetry. For example, Achilles' ritual tribute to Patroclus included among other offers the sacrifice of

[27] Sophocles, *Ajax*, 1047-1090.
[28] Lesky, 1997, 313
[29] *Iliad*, Η΄ 321-432, Ω΄ 678-805.
[30] Lesky, 2015, 352-35; Lesky, 1997, 154-168.
[31] Lesky, 2015, 534-536; Lesky, 1997, 290-314.

Trojans, who were caught as captives in an earlier battle[32]. Such an information indicates that being a captive was essentially like being already dead, with the significant difference that the captive one was not protected by the sanctity and the respect that was tributed to the dead. The brevity with which this - shocking for our modern standards, today's ethics and human rights perceptions - information is passed by, can mean nothing else than that it was a common practice when honoring an important person of the military.

Obviously, the fate of men differed from that of women during war. According to the current morality of the times, a woman was expected to remain at home and had no place in the camp. So, it makes sense that their presence is extremely rarely mentioned, as it happens, for example, in *Iphigéneia hē en Aulídi*, where the heroine arrives with her mother after being called by Agamemnon under the excuse that he wishes to perform her nuptials with Achilles before their departure for Troy – an excuse for securing her presence in order to offer her as a sacrifice to Artemis. And in this case the woman is the weak one and her fate is up to the judgment of the leader. Thus, her father King Agamemnon, decides - albeit reluctantly at first, due to his paternal love - the death of his daughter for the sake of the expedition. Atreides' decision is a typical example of utilitarianism, according to which the action that benefits the whole is morally correct.

Women in general did not have a place in the camp. The exception was the women of the wars who were under siege, as they had no choice. From the *Iliad* we know that any woman who ended up captured, was given as a *γέρας*, a spoil to a leader or to the soldiers altogether, depending on the importance of her lineage or her social status; it seems that female captives, like the women of Troy, ended up either as concubines, if young, meaning pretty enough and in an age proper for childbearing, or as servants if older. Thus, although in general their fate was predestined, examination of individual cases can provide evidence for the moral evaluation of the winner.

[32] *Iliad*, Ψ΄ 175-176.

For example, the classical tragic poets had shown a special interest for the destiny of the female captives of Troy[33]. Euripides in *Trōádes*, refers to the fate of the four Troian women who, in the last rhapsody of the *Iliad*, mourn over Hector's corpse, i.e. queen Hecuba, her daughter, Cassandra, the even younger Polyxene, and Hector's wife, Andromache[34]. This particular tragedy is all about the relation between the war and women as war trophies[35]. With the capture of their city the fate of these women was more or less predetermined – the one that Hector had already predicted in the last meeting with his wife[36]. For them there is only the path of slavery left and what remains to be decided is to whom each one will be given as a *γέρας* (trophy)[37]. The case of Andromache, in which the same poet focuses on another of his tragedies, however, shows much about the morality of the leaders who determined her fate[38].The former princess, wife of the great leader of Troy, was given as a concubine to the son of the man who killed her husband and who had previously killed her entire family. This choice on the part of the leaders of the Greek army clearly seems to have been vindictive and punitive. In addition, Menelaus works with his daughter Hermione, who is married to Neoptolemus, to kill the Trojan captive. Thus, the poet shows us that a great king, who gathered an army from all over Greece and led a ten-year campaign, turns out to be immoral, as he is involved in a woman's intrigue that starts from jealousy and envy. The behavior of the two of them towards the unfortunate woman is unfair and immoral - something that will be emphasized by Peleus, Achilles' elderly father[39]. This attitude of his, shows wisdom, kindness and

[33] De Romilly, 1988, 126.

[34] *Iliad*, Ω΄ 678-805.

[35] E. Craik, "Sexual Imagery and Innuendo in *Troades*". In *Euripides, women, and sexuality*, 1-15. A. Powell (ed.). London New York: Routledge, 1990, 1-15.

[36] *Iliad*, Z' 440-463.

[37] N. Felson & L. Slatkin. "Gender and Homeric epic". In *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, 91-114. R. Fowler (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 91-114.

[38] Lesky, 2015, 513-515 ·Lesky, 1997, 115-131.

[39] Euripidis. *Andromache*, 632-636.

humanity, but also arises from the fact that as a man and a king he himself realizes the need for his lineage and his city to have a successor to the throne. His morality, therefore, is undeniably influenced by the fact that he is a man and that he has experience of the practices of war.

Equally vindictive and small-minded was the decision of the Greek leaders regarding the fate of the queen of their rivals. In *Hekabē* we follow the tragic fate of Hecuba after the fall of Troy, when all her male children hand been killed, and all the women of the family been given as concubines[40]. In the context of the tragedy, she will watch her young daughter being sacrificed on the mound of the man who killed her first-born son, while later she understands that her youngest and the only son she had left, as she had sent him away to save himself, Polydoros, was killed by their erstwhile ally, King Polymestor of the Thracians. Once again, the tragic poet shows that the great leaders are actually small-minded and mean. Polymystor betrayed his oaths to secure gold and new, stronger allies, while Odysseus repeatedly refuses to return the favors Hecabe had done him in the past. So, with nothing for her left to lose and nothing to hope for, she decides to take revenge on the killer of her last son by blinding him. Whether the gods morally approve her choices and actions is evidenced by her end; despite the fact that there are many mythological variants, they all converge on her being transformed into a female dog – i.e. into a state apparently prohibitive for any punishment thereof under the human law[41].

In summary, from the Homeric epics and tragedies of the classical era it becomes clear that there was a belief that even in war certain moral rules apply which are binding for everyone and leaders must follow showing that they understand that the moral order of the world is defined by the gods. The heroic code enforces each warrior and especially the leaders to be good to their own people and fearful to their opponents. The one who recognized by all as a good and effective leader must also possesses moral virtues and above all

[40] S. G. Daitz, "Concepts of Freedom and Slavery in Euripides' Hecuba", *Hermes*, 99, 2 (1971): 217–226.

[41] Kitto, 1990, 216-222; Lesky, 2015, 511-513.

be devout to the gods. The older and more experienced are expected to advise the younger not only in matters of war, but also in matters of morality. Shiftiness or eloquence or other virtues which contribute to the achievement of an end for the common good, are positively evaluated insofar that they do not invalidate moral constants. In war, contrary to general and widespread belief, not absolutely everything is permitted. A man and especially a warrior, a general, a king, a ruler, who knows how to keep his moral principles intact, even at the most critical moments, will be rewarded by the gods either with a long life, or with a glorious death, or with a triumphant victory. The one who showed disrespect, on the contrary, is about to suffer bitter defeat and a dishonorable death. The parallel losses include the most unfortunate: the prisoned warriors and the captured women. The fate of these people is completely left in the hands of the winner. The manner in which their fate is determined, however, says much about the morality of the victors, whether they really deserve to be considered leaders with the favor of the gods on their side, or whether through their arrogance and malice prove themselves to be inferior to their circumstances. In any case, everyone can only hope and try to prove himself worthy and morally correct- the rest lays entirely in the hands of the gods.

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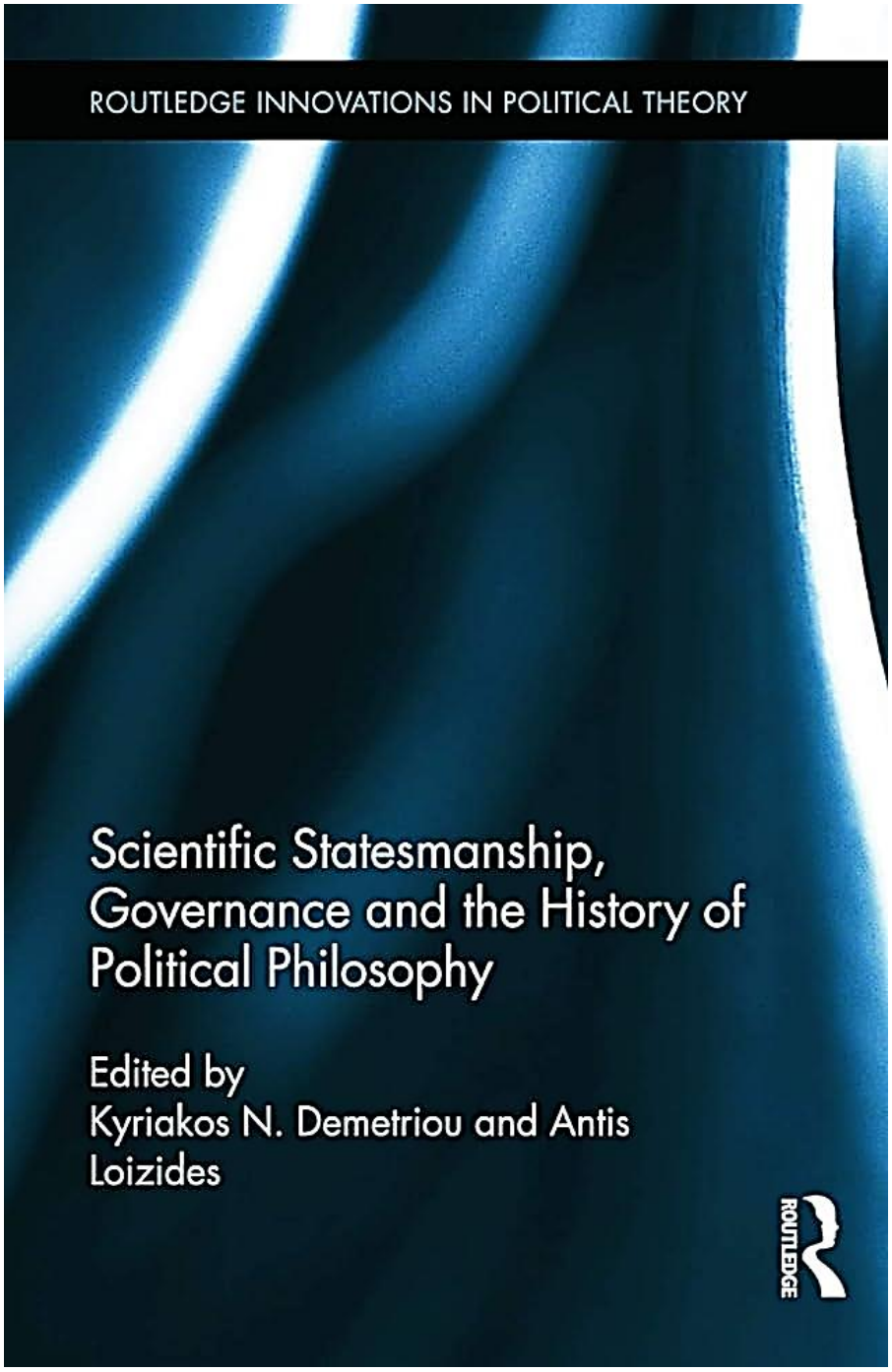
ROUTLEDGE INNOVATIONS IN POLITICAL THEORY
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ROUTLEDGE

The natural gift in Rousseau's politics and educational theory

Nick Tsampazis,
Doctor of Philosophy,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
ntsampaz@sch.gr

Abstract:
Rousseau's theoretical treatment of natural talent exhibits two distinct tendencies. The first draws inspiration from the primitive, wholly natural existence of early humans before the advent of civilization. In contrast, the second tendency is grounded in the concept of nature as an ontological foundation for authenticity within the context of alienated civilization of his time. The first perspective is defined by suspicion towards natural talent because it runs counter to the model of elementary egalitarian naturalism inherent in the genuine state of nature. In this view, any exceptional abilities or talents disrupt the inherent equality of primitive existence. Conversely, the second tendency celebrates natural talent as a rare expression of untouched nature within the confines of civilized society. Such talents possess the potential for liberation and redemption, serving as a counterbalance to the alienation that pervades modern life.

Keywords: nature, talent, state of nature, civilization, alienation, authenticity

The crucial implications in any perceived gift or talent are its natural origin and the apparent superiority of the individual who possesses it. Gift or talent is intricately connected to the broader issue of human inequality. Consequently, any examination of it in the context of Rousseau's thought must commence with his *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men* (1755). In this seminal work, Rousseau delves into the problem of human inequality while shaping his theory of human nature and providing a historical account of civilization up to his era.

The first part of Rousseau's work extensively delineates the inhabitant of the primordial natural state, casting the primitive man of nature as a human archetype. It is a paradoxical human archetype in that it is moulded with both visionary ideals and scientific elements, enriching the literary concept of the "noble savage". Rousseau's version of the primitive man places the latter nearly at the level of animals, with which he co-exists in the untamed wilderness before the emergence of society or civilization. Simultaneously, through his naturalistic imagery, Rousseau imbues this figure with fundamental concepts and values that permeate his broader philosophical framework: authenticity, self-sufficiency, independence, harmonious integration with the environment, a life lived in cycles of euphoric serenity, absence of selfishness or evil. These also provide the basis for Rousseau's critique of bourgeois society and the industrious human archetype that upholds it—the bourgeois. The notion of primitive man becomes an almost obsessional motif in Rousseau's work, directly or indirectly influencing significant stretches of his writings.

The second part chronicles the genesis and historical development of civilization, up to and including Rousseau's times. The trajectory of civilization commences at the pivotal moment when humanity transitions from the primordial natural state to more complex social structures, ultimately culminating in the despotic regime. In the dawn of civilization, a rudimentary natural society emerges, where incipient corruption exists but remains relatively subdued,

still dwarfed by survivals of primordial authenticity. Thereafter, significant transformations take place, including the de facto institutionalization of individual ownership over land and the authorization of a deceptive social contract. These milestones inevitably lead to the total alienation associated with the despotic regime.

Upon commencing, Rousseau distinguishes two kinds of inequality: natural and moral inequality. As he writes:

> I conceive of two sorts of inequality in the human Species: one, which I call natural or Physical, because it is established by Nature and consists in the difference in ages, bodily strengths, health, and qualities of Mind or Soul; the other, which may be called moral or Political inequality, because it depends upon a sort of convention and is established, or at least authorized, by the consent of Men. The latter consists in the different Privileges that some enjoy to the prejudice of others, such as to be richer, more honored, more Powerful than they, or even to make themselves obeyed by them.[1]

Closing the work, he states:

> [...] inequality, being almost null in the state of nature, draws its force and growth from the development of our faculties and the progress of the human Mind, and finally becomes stable and legitimate by the establishment of property and Laws. It follows, further, that moral inequality, authorized by positive right alone, is contrary to Natural Right whenever it is not combined in the same proportion with Physical Inequality.[2]

[1] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origins of Inequality". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 3 (Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly eds, Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, Christopher Kelly & Terence Marshall transl.), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1992, p. 18; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discours sur l' Origine et les Fondements de l' Inégalité parmi les Hommes". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (Bernard Gagnebin & Marcel Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 131. [Hereafter *Second Discourse*, *C.W.* 3, p. 18; *O.C.* 3, p. 131].

[2] *Second Discourse*, *C.W.* 3, p. 67; *O.C.* 3, pp. 193-194.

In the concluding lines, he argues:

> The ranks of Citizens therefore ought to be regulated not upon personal merit, which would be leaving to the Magistrates the means of making an almost arbitrary application of the law, but upon the real services that they render to the State, which are more susceptible of a more exact estimation.[3]

It is clear that any social inequality is legitimized only when it is grounded in and corresponds to the extremely low level of natural inequalities.[4] In essence, Rousseau's *Second Discourse* champions the ideal of equality. The minimal natural inequalities observed among humans in the primordial state do not justify but very small social disparities. Rousseau regards significant dissimilarities in abilities and talents with skepticism and disapproval, rejecting the notion that they are purely natural. The concept of exceptional natural talent, according to Rousseau, has been a byproduct of social workings. It arises from a social process or effect that amplifies an initially dubious advantage, allowing the possessor to excel conspicuously.[5] But in the *Second Discourse* societal processes mark a latter and distinct state from the primordial one and true nature is, in principle, exclusive to that pre-social, primal condition. Having make it complicated to ground social positions and ranks in nature, Rousseau ultimately turns to more overt and dependable criteria, namely external behavior. The importance of natural talent gives way to the significance of applied republican political virtue as a model and criterion for structuring social hierarchy.

Rousseau's suspicion towards natural talent and preference for an acquired ethos rooted in classical republicanism are evident in other works as well. For instance, Rousseau contends that the constitutional legislator of Corsica should prioritize actions that foster public delight in the

[3] *Second Discourse*, *C.W.* 3, p. 95; *O.C.* 3, p. 223.

[4] In this sense, the description of nature serves as a normative model in Rousseau, possibly constituting a form of naturalistic fallacy.

[5] In general, Rousseau's political thought rejects liberal individualism in favor of an early version of sociocentrism or utopian socialism.

commonwealth and encourage the pursuit of virtues, while downplaying the significance of exceptional talents. In his view, great talents could potentially cause more harm than good, and the prudent exercise of common sense suffices for effective governance in a well-constituted state.[6] Elsewhere, Rousseau rejects intellectual abilities as a reliable criterion for social superiority arguing that such abilities are often ambiguous, misplaced, and deceptive, and, as such, poor indicators of true merit.[7] The case for the evaluation of citizens on the base of their socio-patriotic contributions as opposed to their social background or innate talents alone is further fleshed out by Rousseau. He suggests that "all grades, all employments, all honorific recompenses [...] be marked with outward symbols".[8] Also, in public education, which Rousseau holds paramount among all state institutions,[9] living role models of patriotism should be showcased. For example, those citizens who have made distinguished contributions to the state should be the ones teaching.[10]

[6] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Plan for a Constitution for Corsica". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 11, (Christopher Kelly editor, Christopher Kelly & Judith Bush translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 2005, p. 156; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Projet de Constitution pour la Corse". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 940.

[7] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Considerations on the Government of Poland and on its Planned Reformation". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 11 (Christopher Kelly ed., Christopher Kelly & Judith Bush transl.), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 2005, p. 177; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Considèrations sur a le Gouvernement de Pologne", *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 963. [Hereafter *Poland*, *C.W.* 11, p. 177; *O.C.* 3, p. 963].

[8] *Poland*, C.*W.* 11, p. 212; *O.C.* 3, p. 1007.

[9] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'Political Economy". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 3 (Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly eds, Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, Christopher Kelly & Terence Marshall translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1992, p. 156; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Sur l' Économie Politique", *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 261. [Hereafter *Political Economy*, *C.W.* 3, p. 156; *O.C.* 3, p. 261].

[10] *Political Economy*, *C.W.* 3, p. 156; *O.C.* 3, p. 261.

Additionally, Rousseau proposes organizing public ceremonies to bring these models of civic virtue to the limelight.[11]

However, in Rousseau's early work titled *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts*, where he extensively critiques science, art, and philosophy, attributing them to the erosion of virtue and the decline of society and politics in the modern world, we encounter a celebration of natural talent:

> Those whom nature destined to be her disciples needed no teachers. Verulam,[12] Descartes, Newton, these Preceptors of the human Race had none themselves; indeed, what guides would have led them as far as their vast genius carried them? Ordinary Teachers would only have restricted their understanding by confining it within the narrow capacity of their own. [...] It is for these few to raise monuments to the glory of human mind. [...] Therefore, may Kings not disdain to allow into their councils the men most capable of advising them well.[13]

Rousseau regards genuine geniuses as manifestations of pure nature. These exceptional individuals are impelled by an inner drive intricately connected to their innate abilities. They owe no debt to society or conventional education. In a similar vein, Rousseau expresses his fervent appreciation for natural talent in his entry on "genius" within the *Dictionary of Music*:

> Seek not, young Artist, what is Genius. If you have any, you feel it in yourself. If you do not, you will never know it. The Genius of the musician submits the entire Universe to his art. [...] He does not know how to say anything to those in whom its seed is not present, and

[11] *Poland*, C.*W.* 11, p. 178; *O.C.* 3, p. 964.

[12] This refers to F. Bacon.

[13] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 2 (Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly eds, Judith Bush, Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1992, p. 21; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3, (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 29.

> his wonders are little felt by anyone who cannot imitate them. [...] Vulgar man: do not profane that sublime word.[14]

Individuals possessing exceptional gifts are rare and remain unaffected by vanity. Their intellectual stature renders any display of pettiness or self-importance inconceivable. These extraordinary individuals, in fact, embody social, historical, and cultural phenomena. In their individuality, they symbolize something collective. A similar figure emerges in Rousseau's political writings: the lawgiver. In *Social Contract*, we come across the following passage:

> The discovery of the best rules of society suited to Nations would require a superior intelligence, who saw all of men's passions yet experienced none of them; who had no relationship at all to our nature yet knew it thoroughly; whose happiness was independent of us, yet who was nevertheless willing to attend to ours; finally, one who, preparing for himself a future glory with the passage of time, could work in one century and enjoy the reward in another. Gods would be needed to give laws to men.[15]

In Rousseau's work *Emile*, the embracement of natural gifts is tempered with caution. Nature serves as the foundational principle underlying the renowned Rousseauian educational method outlined in this treatise. At the outset of the first book, Rousseau asserts: "(Our not acquired) dispositions, [...] constrained by our habits, are more or less

[14] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Dictionary of Music". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 7 (John T. Scott editor and translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1998, p. 406; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Dictionnaire de Musique". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 4 (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1995, pp. 837-838.

[15] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Social Contract". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 4 (Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly eds, Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1994, book 2, Chapter 7, p.154; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, «Du Contrat Social; ou Principes du Droit Politique». *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (Bernard Gagnebin & Marcel Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 381.

corrupted by our opinions. Before this corruption they are what I call in us nature".[16] Nature, therefore, constitutes the core pre-existing element that precedes any social influence or formation. Education, according to Rousseau, must be guided by this innate nature. "[...] education comes to us from nature or from men or from things. [...] Since the conjunction of the three educations is necessary to their perfection, the two others must be directed toward the one over which we have no power".[17] Emile, the student, is steered towards a way of life reminiscent of that of the primitive man in a natural state. He is deliberately distanced from social relationships and external influences, immersed in a natural environment. The only consistent human presence in his life is that of his tutor, who carefully manages Emile's interactions with nature and gradual introduction to aspects of culture. This approach, famously known as "negative education", aims to cement and nurture Emile's inherent characteristics before he embarks on more conventional, formal education for life within society.[18] Unlike the narrative in the *Second Discourse*, this departure from the natural state is thoughtfully timed and executed, with due care to prevent alienation phenomena.

Rousseau's perspective on natural talent in *Emile* is twofold. While he acknowledges its existence and recognizes its positive implications, he exercises caution regarding the casual and frequent labeling of children as gifted. In selecting the young Emile, a student possessing an average, unremarkable intellect, as the subject of his educational experiment, Rousseau aims to rigorously test his pedagogical approach.[19] He contends that child prodigies, authentic

[16] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Emile or on Education". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 13 (Christopher Kelly & Allan Bloom transl. & eds), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 2010, p. 163; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Émile ou de l' Éducation". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 4, (Bernard Gagnebin & Marcel Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 248. [Hereafter *Emile, C.W.* 13, p. 163; *O.C.* 4, p. 248].

[17] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, pp. 162-163; *O.C.* 4, p. 247.

[18] See Pierre Burgelin, "The Second Education of Emile". *Yale French Studies*, Yale University Press 1961, No 28, pp. 106-111.

[19] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, pp. 400-401; *O.C.* 4, p. 537.

manifestations of innate abilities, are far less common than many parents assume. He writes:

> There is on the other side another kind of exception for those whom a happy nature raises above their age. As there are men who never leave childhood, there are others who, so to speak, do not go through it and who are men almost at birth. The difficulty is that this latter exception is very rare, very hard to recognize, and that every mother, imagining that a child might be a prodigy, has no doubt that hers is one.[20]

Consequently, Rousseau proposes the establishment of a scientific method to discern genuinely exceptional children.[21] In another context, he articulates the following viewpoint:

> Examine your alleged prodigy. At certain moments you will find in him an extremely taut mainspring, a clarity of mind which can pierce the clouds. Most often this same mind will seem lax to you, soggy, and, as it were, surrounded by a thick fog. At one time it gets ahead of you, the next, it remains immobile. At one moment you would say, "he is a genius", and at the next, "he is a fool". You would be mistaken in both cases: what he is is a child.[22]

Rousseau contends that even superficial ease in learning can be detrimental for children. Such apparent aptitude may dazzle adults, obscuring the fact that the children are not genuinely acquiring knowledge.[23] Rousseau attempts to explain the difficulty in identifying truly intelligent children:

> Nothing is more difficult in respect of childhood than to distinguish real stupidity from that merely apparent and deceptive stupidity which is the presage of strong souls. It seems strange at first that the two extremes should have such similar signs. Nevertheless, it is properly so; for at an age when man as yet has nothing that is truly an idea, the entire difference between one who has genius and one who does not is that the latter

[20] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, p. 240; *O.C.* 4, p. 341.
[21] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, p. 349; *O.C.* 4, p. 475.
[22] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, p. 241; *O.C.* 4, p. 342.
[23] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, p. 242; *O.C.* 4, p. 344.

> accepts only false ideas, and the former, finding only such, accepts none. Thus, the genius resembles the stupid child in that the latter is capable of nothing while nothing is suitable for the former. The only sign which permits the two to be distinguished depends on chance, which may present the genius some idea within his reach, while the stupid child is always the same everywhere.[24]

Interestingly, Rousseau places himself within the category of child prodigies, as he writes in his work *Confessions*:

> My childhood was not at all that of a child. I always felt, I thought as a man. It was only in growing up that I returned into the ordinary class, upon being born I had left it. One will laugh to see me modestly present myself as a prodigy. So be it; but when one has laughed well, find a child who at six years of age is attached to novels, interested, carried away to the point of weeping hot tears at them; then I will feel my ridiculous vanity, and I will acknowledge that I am wrong.[25]

Rousseau's attitude toward natural talent exhibits a noticeable duality, vacillating between rejection and enthusiastic acceptance. This phenomenon becomes explicable when we recognize two distinct tendencies within his thought—one utopian and the other realistic—both embedded in his overarching project of remedying the cultural malaise of his era through revolutionary pedagogical and political proposals.

The utopian tendency aligns with the paradigm of the primordial state of nature and its inhabitant, the primitive man. Rousseau envisions this naturally perfectible being [26]

[24] *Emile*, *C.W.* 13, p. 241; *O.C.* 4, p. 343.

[25] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Confessions". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 5 (Christopher Kelly, Roger D. Masters & Peter G. Stillman eds, Christopher Kelly translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1995, p. 52; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Les Confessions". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 1 (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1959, p. 62.

[26] According to Rousseau, perfectibility constitutes a fundamental trait of human nature. Initially latent within the original natural state, it

developing latent capabilities in tandem with the emergence and evolution of civilization. Humanity, thus, symbolically returns to the egalitarian, simplistic existence of the primitive man, forsaking the modern, complex civilization and its stark inequalities. Within this negative strategy, Rousseau's concept of the republican political society, as expounded in *The Social Contract*, is key. An effort is made to circumscribe the culture of the bourgeois class—steadily advancing and expanding without bounds—within the confines of the city-state and the vainglorious ethos associated with deified individuals of the era yields to a conception of political virtue characterized by unpretentious, unwavering loyalty indelibly inscribed within the essence of one's being.[27] The individual submits to the collective. Within this framework, natural talent appears incompatible or even perilous.

The realistic tendency, on the other hand, entails an alternative approach to addressing the afflictions of alienating urban civilization. In a virtual application of the homeopathic principle (similia similibus curantur) in social malaise, Rousseau writes:

> [...] the same causes which have corrupted peoples sometimes serve to prevent a greater corruption; it is in this way that someone who has spoiled his temperament by an indiscreet use of medicine, is forced to continue to have recourse to doctors to preserve his life; and it is in this way that the arts and sciences, after

becomes activated through the impact of diverse external factors (*Second Discourse*, *C.W.* 3, p. 42; *O.C.* 3, p. 162).

[27] For a political society of this kind, Rousseau writes:

> It is education that must give the national form to souls, and direct their opinions and their tastes so that they will be patriots by inclination, by passion, by necessity. Upon opening its eyes a child ought to see the fatherland and until death ought to see nothing but it. Every true republican imbibes the love of the fatherland, that is to say, of the laws and of freedom along with his mother's milk. This love makes up his whole existence; he sees only the fatherland, he lives only for it; as soon as he is alone, he is nothing: as soon as he has no more fatherland, he no longer is, and if he is not dead, he is worse than dead" (*Poland*, C.*W.* 11, p. 179; *O.C.* 3, p. 966).

> having hatched the vices, are necessary for keeping them from turning into crimes.[28]

In this context, the ideal of nature is not relegated to a distant past from which we have irrevocably departed. Instead, it remains a perpetual and essential ontological dimension, concealed beneath or within the fabric of civilization's creations. Nature, as Rousseau defines it, comprises those inherent dispositions that are not acquired through external influences. [29] When this innate nature dynamically emerges, it becomes a possible conduit for freedom and redemption. It might be able to reshape the cultural landscape by reimagining the very products of civilization. Natural talent serves as a clear and emblematic manifestation of this underlying nature, carrying with it the potential for liberation and redemption. Rousseau's enthusiastic acceptance of natural talent stems from this transformative power, and he takes great care to avoid misjudgments in its recognition.

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[28] Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Preface to Narcissus: Or the Lover of Himself". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 2 (Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly eds, Judith Bush, Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1992, p. 196; Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Narcisse ou l' Amant de Lui-Même", *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3, (B. Gagnebin & M. Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 972. In *Geneva Manuscript* Rousseau writes: "Let us attempt to draw from the ill itself the remedy that should cure it. [...] Let us show [...] in perfected art the reparation of the ills that the beginnings of art caused to nature" [Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Geneva Manuscript". *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 4 (Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly eds, Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters & Christopher Kelly translation), Dartmouth College Press, Hanover and London, 1994, p. 82; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Du Contract Sociale (premiere version)". *Ouvres Complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 3 (Bernard Gagnebin & Marcel Raymond eds), Gallimard, Paris, 1964, p. 288]. "To draw from the fault the means of correcting it: this is precisely the dialectical solution that Rousseau proposes for the faults of modern society as a whole", Marshall Berman argues (Marshall Berman, *The Politics Of Authenticity. Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society*. Verso, London and New York, 1970, p. 235.

[29] *Emile, C.W.* 13, p. 163; *O.C.* 4, p. 248.

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From Participatory Leadership to Digital Transformation under the interpretation of Political Philosophy: *Types of Leadership in Education and School Administration*

Elias Vavouras,
Ph.D., Lecturer,
University of Western Macedonia
ilvavouras@gmail.com

Maria Koliopoulou,
MSc School Units Administration,
University of West Attica
mkol_33@yahoo.com

Kyriakos Manolis,
Master, Social & Educational Policy/Planning, Developing and Administration of School Units,
University of Peloponnese
kymanolis@gmail.com

Abstract: Leadership is a field of inquiry and a practical skill that involves the ability of an individual or organization to "lead" or guide other individuals, groups, or entire organizations. Academic settings define leadership as a process of social influence in which an individual can help and support others in accomplishing a shared task. Leadership from a European and academic perspective includes a view of a leader who can be motivated not only by community goals but also by the pursuit of personal

power, but also emerges from a combination of many factors. In recent years, scientific interest has focused on the investigation of parameters related to school leadership, in an effort to upgrade the quality of the educational work provided and also more efficient operation of the school unit. Particular emphasis is still placed on the systematic utilization of new technologies in the entire range of administrative and teaching functions, underlining the multiple advantages they entail. The modern school leader must combine a variety of skills in order to adequately cope with his role. In this context technology is an integral part of school leadership in the sense that the profile of the digital leader is an amalgam of effective leadership styles (distributed, transformational, pedagogic) in which technology is a fundamental component.

Keywords: political philosophy, school leadership, administration, school leader, transformational leadership, distributed leadership, digital leadership, participatory leadership, school culture

Introduction

What exactly is a leader and what is the right kind of leadership? Is there an objective view of the phenomenon of leadership or is everything defined by the conventional law of human societies? If we accept the relativity of the definition of leadership, then we must limit ourselves to a sociological observation of the facts and make no judgment as to their value. No leader can be characterized objectively, that is, scientifically, good or bad, but only successful or unsuccessful according to the achievement of a subjective goal. And the humans, who receive leadership guidance, are nothing more than matter in a subjective type of formation.

Also, the civil society shapes the standards of leadership and directs them where it wants by aligning them with its goals. A leader is competent if he promotes the goals of the civil society to which he belongs. But this sociological reading of leadership opens the ominous doors of relativism and historicism, as everything is defined by the power and possibility of its realization. Who educates the political society so that it harmonizes with the set goals? The leader may be a kind of educator, whose success is judged by how well he accustoms the citizens to socio-political norms.

On the other side comes the philosophical understanding of leadership and the leader. The leader and the process of leading or ruling is not something subjective, but is based on objective parameters that spring from the knowledge of the nature and purpose of man. If such knowledge exists, then through leadership human can become better, improve his nature by following a path of integration. So, there is an exemplary type of leader, who applies a process of leadership governance, which promotes the integration of man according to the teleology of human nature. The task of political philosophy is to implement human natural integration within civil society.

From this point of view, the city and man acquire a specific value. There are humans who are superior to others in value because they have reached a greater point of natural integration. By the same reasoning, there are civil societies that surpass others in terms of the degree of improvement of their citizens through the model of political leadership they apply. Therefore, the leader and the way he leads cannot be evaluated sociologically, that is, with observational neutrality, but only scientifically based on the knowledge object of political philosophy, i.e., the knowledge of the essence and purpose of man.

Therefore, the function of educational leadership is considered particularly critical, as it enforces the formation of the citizen from an early age both on an individual and political level. The educator as a leader undertakes to realize the purpose of human nature in a path of completion from a worse to a better state. The state is the supreme educator, because it sets the rules for the formation of political parts, but the leader of the educational progress is the one who comes into direct contact with human matter and sets it in order and movement.

The concept of management and leadership types

This interpretation deals with the administrative process in a wider field but also in education, the digital transformation in administration and educational organizations, in relation to digital leadership and the types of leadership that promote

change and transformation. Reference is made to the characteristics of the digital leader and his abilities in the direction of his technological and digital proficiency.

The evolution in the workplace and the need for mass production, especially during the first industrial revolution, set the basis for the consolidation of the science of administration, in the light of the improvement of the work produced and the management of human resources. Management science evolved mainly on the basis of private organizations and businesses, with the aim of optimal management of service delivery. However, with the appropriate processing and adjustment of the theoretical background for the management of private sector businesses, it can also be applied to the management of public organizations and bodies.

According to Koontz & Weihrich, (2010), the distinction between the private and public sector lies in the following: business organizations/enterprises and charitable/non-charitable organizations with the ultimate goal of "surplus" (to create surplus). The two researchers argue that the surplus should be interpreted as "profit" (profit) for businesses, and as "satisfaction of needs" (satisfaction of needs), for charitable/non-charitable organizations, such as schools. beginning of the 1950s, management science enters educational organizations).

Administrative science in educational organizations is a process that aims to establish an appropriate school climate within the school unit, through planning, organization, direction and control-evaluation, while Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert (1995), focus the administrative process on the collaborative factor more, as they argue that goals are achieved mainly through interaction and continuous teamwork. More specifically they define management as: "the art of achieving goals through people". Administrative science and process supports and develops decision-making and initiatives, to an extremely large extent. Goals, decisions and upcoming planning are functions directly connected to each other. Managers should make decisions related to:

- *Targeting*
- *The resources and means needed to realize the respective objectives*

• *The distribution of the work to each existing one, in order to have the desired result and the completion of the possible administrative reforms, in case the goals set are not achieved. In this case, they are readjusted with corresponding proposals from all those involved in the process. In addition, the incentives that should be given to employees are crucial.*

School units are open systems that are in a permanent, two-way relationship with the wider social environment and adaptation to new developments largely determines their orderly operation. Educational organizations, by extension, are structures that need the administrative process, in order to achieve the coordination of actions but also the definition of goals and activities, with the aim of their smooth operation. Administrative work is associated with schedules, control and planning as well as results to be achieved in the short term. The role of school principals/supervisors is a "key role", as it involves finding mutually acceptable and convenient solutions, as well as substantial participation in decision-making.

Leadership in education is generally clarified and divided by a very basic criterion, which is the degree of participation of each team (team participation degree) in the processes related to the issues related to the responsibilities of each one. (Gordon, 2015). We could say that according to Gordon leadership is translated into style, which governs the school unit and is an integral part of the school culture. Thus, we have the following basic and general leadership styles:

- **The authoritarian style**: The leader, usually the manager makes the decisions alone without explanations and the teachers do not take part in the decision-making, having a priori been excluded from such procedures. This is an informal show of power on the part of the manager, who imposes his point of view without the approval and opinion of colleagues.
- **Enabling style**: It is the assignment of responsibilities to existing teachers according to the personal criteria of each one. This happens because of the leader's low self-confidence and low expectations he himself has for both his personal development and the shared school culture.

- **The democratic style**: It is the style where the leader, after gathering the appropriate information, informs his subordinates and after discussing and quoting all opinions, while the decisions are made jointly

From transformational leadership to distributed and participative one

We first encounter **transformational leadership** in Burns' theory (1978). According to Burns, the leader and members interact to such an extent that the goals for the organization are shared. The transformational type of leadership focuses on the radical change of people and school organizations. That is, it focuses more on changing people and groups. Therefore, changing the culture is the main issue (Sergiovanni, 2001).

The interaction of leaders and subordinates to improve and strengthen motivation as well as the path towards a creativity and a school culture with a vision and a shared mission are what govern transformational leadership. This vision is given to the team members as well as the shared mission of the leader to achieve the empowerment of the team. Everyone is bound by terms of trust and creates a shared culture. Without the members, the vision is not achieved, being an integral element of its success, (Kotter, 2001). According to Avolio & Bass (1995), transformational leaders change and ultimately transform the views of the rest of the organization's members, without feeling commitment or influence thereof. Team members become learners and develop into leaders themselves, but moving the needs of team members upwards (according to Maslow's pyramid) meeting the demand for self-actualization and awareness for the good of the team and creating a culture of vision. After all, a transformational leader must have vision and courage to take risks, in order to bring about the organization through his wisdom and the intelligent decisions he will make. (Bass, 1995).

Distributed leadership is found in the foreign literature with the term distributive leadership or shared leadership and combines top-down and two-way decision-making.

Distributed (or distributive) leadership is the leadership researched by the Australian psychologist Gibb, to whom we also owe the definition of distributed leadership. Gibb's primary concern was to study the dynamics of groups versus the individual. (Gordon, 2015). According to Gibb "distributed leadership is the knowledge of "how to do it" ("know how") that is distributed to subordinates by leaders in order to involve them in actions and decision-making. Incumbents are then responsible for distributing that knowledge." Distributed leadership is an innovative approach of the leader to subordinates and has gained many supporters in recent years. In fact, according to research for many years, distributed leadership offers better results to the organizations and agencies that implement it. (Yukl, 2002). We can say that distributed leadership gives an innovative approach emphasizing not so much the result but the way and the practices with which the leader deals with situations (Spillane, 2006). After all, the methodology and concepts of distributed leadership are based on Spillane's theory.

Diffusion of specific leadership occurs in a natural way to team members and has been the subject of study by educational policy researchers as it was considered the best leadership style in terms of improving school issues (Harris and Muijs, 2005; Dimmock, 2012). participation of members in leadership responsibilities, contributes to the achievement of the organization's goals and is practiced democratically, while students and parents can participate (Leithwood, 1999). It combines top-down and two-way decision-making.

Something very important in distributed leadership is the degree of commitment of the members as well as the participation of almost everyone in it something that has a positive effect on the team and improves the effectiveness of either the teachers or the principal. (Leithwood et al., 2009). After all, this organizational commitment to education is the primary element for school effectiveness and self-improvement (Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Rozenholz, 1989 as cited in Hulpia, Devos and Rosseel, 2009). It has been proven through research that teachers who apply this specific leadership have better

dedication and efficiency since without these two-no progress and change in school culture is achieved (Hulpia et al., 2010).

The way it can be achieved and produced is something that has preoccupied the educational administration scholarly community for decades (Dee et al., 2006). But what is important is that although it is not some terrible innovation. however, it gives a dynamic as well as an "in actu" view on the broad topic of leadership (Harris, 2013). Harris also notes that the aforementioned researchers are reference points for the theoretical discussion around distributed leadership (Harris, 2005).

Researchers had been dealing for many years, as early as the early 70s, with the concept of **participative leadership**, more like an idea of dispersing and distributing the leader's power, as well as dividing responsibilities on a much more complex basis. (Carter et al. 2002). The basic idea was that the work of leaders is burdensome and so one person is not capable of carrying it out, even possessing all the skills. It is even suggested that it be distributed and shared and not be something elusive, but that there be many leaders and to each interested party. (Goleman, 1999).

One could argue that participative leadership is exactly what the word itself says: democratic principles that involve everyone equally in decision-making to advance the culture. It is the leadership of the many versus the other forms of leadership that may be of the few (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Participatory leadership is not something that one person exercises on others, but a form of collectivity that is also characteristic of a specific group, which even characterizes the culture of that group, through which each individual is free to utilize his potential, parallel to the common line. (Bennett et al. 2004).

According to Day et al. (2004), participative leadership develops dynamically across the spectrum of the group. So, we have some patterns that if we follow, relationships will develop between the group. (Carson et al. 2007). One would say that the most concise definition of participative leadership is: "an interactive process between members or groups in which the main purpose is guidance for the achievement of group or

individual goals" (Pearce & Conger 2003). The definition of participative leadership is about complexity and is completely different from that of traditional leadership models, be they hierarchical or vertical models (Pearce & Sims 2002). It is an outcome of the group in an organization (Day et al. 2004) but also a process during which there is continuous influence of members and serial emergence of leaders, whether formal or informal' (Pearce 2004).

The participative leader combines the best benefits for the group and is distinguished by a cooperative and team spirit, facilitates communication between members and through participative methods focuses on finding solutions to problems and not on individual members of the organization. Emphasis is placed on promoting collaborative decision-making.

External leaders in a group can assist all group members and have a coordinating role in the use of resources and resources to achieve the common goal (Hackman & Wageman, 2005).

Digital Leadership and transformation

Educational technology, which is the practice of designing and exploiting new learning data and processes, is a field that is constantly evolving through the use of ICT in both teaching and school administration. The transformation that takes place at the level of digital leadership is able to face the complex situations and new challenges to shape the new school culture (Anderson & Dexter, 2000).

Avolio & Dodge (2000), conducted 40 surveys in environments where people worked and communicated through "advanced information technology" (AIT), i.e., techniques and tools that enable group dynamics through collection, processing, management, and data and knowledge transfer. The implementation of new technology affects the climate of educational organizations and has a transformative effect on the leadership style.

Digital transformation and radical changes in digital environments in all aspects of society are redefining leadership

styles in educational organizations and businesses. Digital leaders should possess and adopt digital knowledge and skills, introduce the digital vision and have a team spirit to facilitate and share among members. If digital leadership is not developed, the digital transformation will not have the expected results and the positive impact of its results will be underestimated.

With an emphasis on educational technology, the phenomenon of digital leadership evolved in conjunction with educational innovation, initially taking the form of e-learning and later the broad form of digital leadership. But we must separate educational technology from leadership. The union of the two creates digital leadership, once a completely uncharted field of education policy. (Jameson, 2013).

Actions that promote the improvement of the quality of schools with the entry of digital media not only in teaching but also in administration, constitute a good start for the de facto recognition of digital leadership in schools as the basic condition for creating a digital culture. Textbooks, administration software, school library software, school board software, my school, Webex, program clock programs are just some of the small pieces that make up the big puzzle of digital innovation.

The abilities of the teachers who, through their digital engagement, change the culture of the school outwardly but also transversely, within the units, create these conditions for the school to become an agent of innovation and great change both on the basis of the teaching methodology, the of learning but also of administration. (Robleyer, 2009).

The transformational leadership style combined with digital leadership shows a mass movement from traditional teaching and management and the central leader to a more flexible form, ready to face the innovations and challenges of technology. A change was also observed regarding the universality of teaching. Whether remaining passive or taking an active role in digital technologies, on-the-ground principals shape visions of digital leadership and shape school culture. (Afshari et al., 2009; Otto & Albion 2002).

Information and Communication Technologies shape the current view of leadership, as technological developments affect leadership behaviors and bring about changes in leadership style. Thus, new technologies are given greater scope to develop in the school organization. This two-way relationship leads to the definition of digital leadership (Gurr, 2004).

The school leader is the most important and decisive factor regarding the teaching structure and the organizational management methodology. It motivates and inspires all involved and in the context of digital leadership creates the parameters based on which new technologies will be the practical point of reference for creating a digital school culture (Banoglu, 2011; Blau & Presser, 2013; Abdullah & Ismail, 2015).

In the case of the digital leader, however, the requirements are more complex and demanding, and this is because his role is not limited only to the part of the organization, but also involves other areas, such as management, inspiration, know-how, management interaction (Schrum & Levin, 2009; Juraime & Mansor, 2016), as well as the diffusion of his vision within the school unit. Therefore, the role of the digital leader is not limited only to the management of the school unit, but also to the use and diffusion of digital management and learning tools in the school organization. (Grady, 2011; Yieng & Daud, 2017).

The effective digital leader to be successful must first understand the nature of how ICT works and is used. Also, to have vision and insight as well as the willingness to continuously disseminate the know-how he acquires (Flanagan & Jacobsen (2003), to have set clear expectations and strategy methodology for supporting colleagues in the field of digital technology (Knezek 2002).

The effective digital leader must have a vision, willingness to change the culture, continuous professional improvement of his digital skills (Hacıfazlıoğlu et. al, 2010) as well as a new concept called "digital citizenship" (Akcil et al 2017). Akcil et al recognize and point out that digital citizens are those who use technology and its tools within ethical rules by having rules of conduct and using ICT responsibly.

The digital leader must inspire as well as provide an effective way to use and leverage ICT by integrating digital media, encouraging and creating a shared digital vision (Richardson, Flora & Bathon, 2013; Yieng & Daud, 2017).

Finally, it should be governed by knowledge about ICT and cultivate skills by training or constantly dealing with technical support issues (Schrum & Levin, 2009; Weng&Tang, 2014; Hsieh et al., 2014).

Conclusions

1) We have seen the ways and means by which a leader instills in young humans the guidelines for achieving a goal. We also penetrated the field of education by understanding how much the leader as an educator determines the formation of the parts of a civil society. It is important not to confuse the means with the ends (Vavouras, 2022). Technology, for example, is a new field of leadership, but the goals for human integration remain the same. Digital technology is an instrument of power and influence, but it does not identify with the definition of human or the prospect of his individual or political bliss (Vavouras, 2020).

2) Also, seeing the issue of leadership with sociological neutrality may absolve us from our responsibility for the state of ourselves and political society, but it does not in any way absolve us from self-determination of our value. Only the influence of political philosophy can bring out the human value and the qualitative separation of the modes of leadership and political governance. Education is a process of completing the human being according to objective parameters derived from the nature and purpose of man, otherwise we fall into the abyss of relativism (Vavouras, 2021), where the education of a scientist or a leader has the same value as the education of a criminal or a tyrant.

3) Leadership is an important scientific field of research in recent years, with special emphasis on school units, where the school leader has to manage a multitude of issues that affect both the student population and the educational staff of his

school unit. To this end, he should be reliable, efficient and a decisive factor in decision-making (Triantari & Vavouras, 2024) on a daily basis. Management and the exercise of leadership are in a two-way relationship and interaction, as research shows, the leader also has the responsibility of management.

4) The abilities of the leader of the school unit are clearly based on the leadership style that he exercises, on the knowledge, experience and diffusion of the vision, in relation to the goals and the planning for its achievement. In this way, it establishes and develops the school culture and the cultivation of the democratic style of leadership among all involved. As mentioned, school units are open systems that interact with the wider social environment (parents, school community, institutions, structures), to a greater extent than in the past, in accordance with the requirements of the new curricula. Therefore, the adaptability of the school leader to this new condition, and to the daily challenges, creates new data in the entire management of the administrative work.

5) The present research, through the secondary data of research at the global level, highlights the new theories around leadership. It is vital to mention how much weight is given to teamwork, distribution and assignment of tasks to all members of the school unit. Participative leadership combines team spirit and promotes communication throughout the educational community, while transformational leadership is a continuous interaction that ultimately leads to the change of people and visions.

6) The philosophy of distributed leadership involves decision-making from and to all directions and agencies, while emphasizing the methodology that the leader puts forward each time to face the various challenges. The rapid development of technology and educational innovation made it necessary to create a digital vision of the school leader, in order to respond with expertise and consistency to the complexity of his role. Gurr (2004), summarizing the theory of the digital leader, promotes the importance and influence of Information and Communication Technologies on leadership behavior. This continuous two-way relationship is what ultimately defines the digital leader.

In conclusion, and through the multitude of scientific theories, an attempt was made to holistically approach school leadership, a scientific field that is constantly evolving and enriching, on a global scale.

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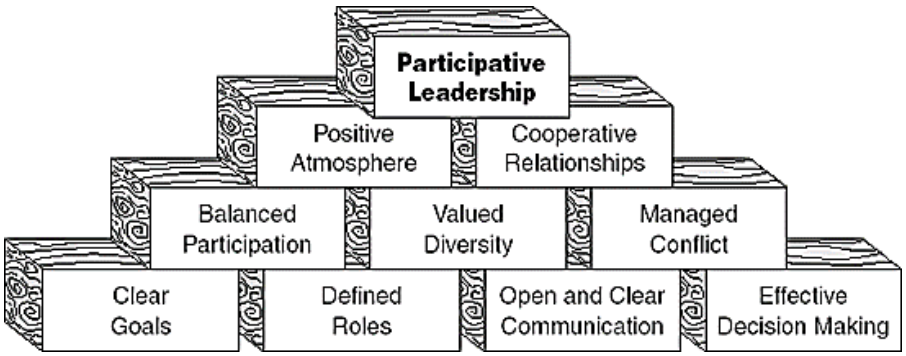
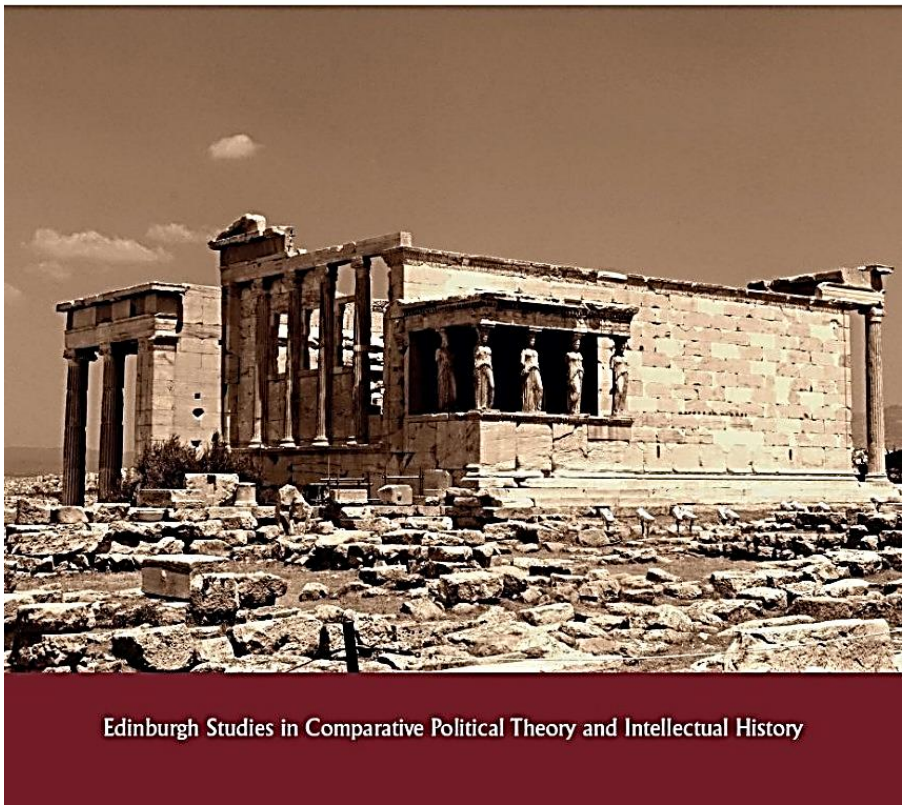


ANCIENT GREEK DEMOCRACY AND AMERICAN REPUBLICANISM

Prometheus in Political Theory

Michail Theodosiadis



Hope and the joy of living, in Pieper's philosophy

Teresa Lasala,
Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona
tlasaladescarrega@gmail.com

Abstract:

We live in a practical society, where work is a god to be worshipped. The almost totalitarian situation implies that most people live to work and even the spare time we dispose of is destined to rest, in order to continue with our productive life, not to live a meaningful one. The result is that there is no time to devote to personal enrichment. When the most of time and efforts are destined to work, there is nothing left to culture, arts, meditation, and philosophy. And these are the activities that precisely are to lead us to feel the joy of life.

When there is nothing more than work to define who we are and what being alive means, then appears boredom and fatigue, because we miss something important. Life loses the taste of the new and its sense. Josef Pieper thinks that hope is the best attitude to walk the way of life. Hope teaches us that, in the end, it's all right. Not a fairy tale, but a good life to live. The alternatives are certainly dreadful. One of them is a flattery optimism, condemned to frustration, and the other is hell, where desperation dwells, as Dante told us.

Pieper was a Christian philosopher but lately the topic has been studied from other points of view. The power of hope shows itself in its capacity to change reality, to change our mind, first. And to change society. The real question is what we are living for. The answer could be to become the best version of ourselves and to leave a better world behind us. We can achieve this goal if we are hopeful and confident people. No matter how difficult the way may be, when there is a will, there is a way. So, let's go and enjoy the walk. Whatever may happen, it pays the bill.

Keywords: Work, Leisure, Desperation, Hope, Happiness

I. Work: use and abuse

We can see that, lately, working time dominates our whole life. Our family, our friends, our hobbies or even our rest, all is put aside for the sake of being professional and proper people. Our whole life is organised according to the timetable assigned to us. Our tasks menace to invade all our thoughts and our whole energy. We rest only to keep on working, sometimes. The worst part of the story is that most of times, one cannot even say the working day has proved to be satisfactory or an enrichment for working people. Lots of them are simply staying there without any motivation and waiting for their wages, without any implication in their tasks, in a silent state of demission.

The question is, if we must necessarily part with all the things that really matter in life at the workplace's door, only for keeping ourselves alive, does it really pay the bill? Is this life, after all? Real work, means we work to live, not live to work. So easy to say, so difficult to do. Exit has become a god that claims for sacrifices all over the world, as liberalism spread and defeats every opposition wherever it may take place. Pieper thought that work was necessary, but not sufficient. We are looking for the land of honey and milk. Milk is necessary, but we need some honey, too. Life is good when we can taste it. Living to work is a temptation nowadays because the other elements of human life that were traditionally regarded as what we worked for, family, friends, community, and faith are weakened, and so work is what defines who we are in modern societies. Some people surely have many difficulties to define themselves anyway, as work has proved to be a very unstable situation and one can be unemployed or change jobs many times during a lifetime.

Work is important for two reasons. First, most of us need to work to sustain ourselves and our families. The second reason is that we are created to create, to be co-creators. We feel motivated when we put our effort on something new, when we have something to offer. But total work is to be avoided.

We should not allow ourselves to be imprisoned by a tyranny of usefulness and instrumental formation during our whole life. We need a life plenty of freedom and fullness. To be most fully human is always to aspire to be something more than what we are, we need to go all time higher. The failure to do good or not developing one's potential, does in fact hurt oneself and others, who need and have a right to become the best version of themselves. As adults, we need to impart knowledge and encourage virtue according to the tradition to young people. But we need to inspire them, whether they work in practical labours or in mind ones. Successful people in any field are openminded. They know that there are lots of things to discover and are ready to find a way to them. So, they can feel themselves useful to society by contributing to its wellbeing.

We are not created to survive in life. True leisure is important because it has the power to transport us to another world. Pieper argues that leisure is not to be confused with amusement or with rest. Both are simply ways to restore ourselves to the productive functions that are assigned to us in our workplace. Only philosophy, poetry, art, literature, prayer, meditation, and other experiences have the power to take us beyond the chain of ends and means that binds the world of work. Pieper thought philosophy is the human activity that is most detached from the world of work, because it is the least practical of human activities, as it is certainly an end after all. The world of freedom begins with philosophy.

Hugh of Saint Victor said that the things by which every man advances in knowledge are principally two, reading and meditation.[1] And knowledge has got the key to freedom. The more we know, the more options we have at hand and the more we have got possibilities of acting efficiently.

A labour relation can be creative and satisfactory. The idea is to combine effort and dedication with pleasure and time to devote oneself to other activities, so creative and satisfactory as the professional one. Our life is enriched with every new challenge we take. And every person has his or her own way of enrichment.

[1] Coleman, A.P. *Leisure and Labor*, 85.

II. Being tired and tired of being

Living a life devoted to work, without any other motivation is often the cause of boredom and frustration. To rest for the only reason of keep on working cannot really be named rest. One needs to stay away of internal and external noise, and to contemplate the world around and the own life, and feel it's all right, after all. When, there is no time to do that, desperation comes.

While hope tells us that everything will end well, for the individual and for the community, despair tells us that everything leads to absurdity, to nothingness. In advance, despair has already taken sides. This attitude is perfectly compatible with a certain optimism about existence.[2] But, ultimately, the desperate is a suffering being since he is torn between his need for self-realization and the denial of it. Those who refuse to accept risks and those who refuse to accept hope have in common that they want to avoid frustration and disappointment. The systematic abandonment of hope leads to fatalism. Hope is seen as a prelude to disillusionment and the cause of the loss of peace. It can lead to action, but also to catastrophe.

Revers noted that the introversion of the person causes boredom, which is a trigger of despair, establishing a connection between the state of the desperate with that of the neurotic. This state of mind can be reversed by connecting the person with reality, where hope, the source of cure for mental illness, can be found.[3]

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[2] Shumacher, B. *A Philosophy of Hope*, 131.

"The attitude of fundamental despair can coexist with a certain optimism about existence. Moreover, it does not necessarily reject daily waiting, it does not deny the fundamental hope or, rather, a positive completion of the natural inclination of the human being. However, the one who despairs fundamentally can also despair of waiting, thereby denying an ontology of becoming, of *not-being-yet*, and replacing it with a static and closed ontology of the finished, without any future, from which the category of possibility has been banished."

[3] Quoted in Schumacher, B., *A Philosophy of Hope*, 133.

Pieper argues that the root of despair lies in *acedia*.[4] According to him, the totalitarian world of work enslaves people, who can no longer engage in truly free activities. Industrial society denies life outside of work and does not give people the opportunity to self-realize, to become what they have the possibility to be.

There are basically two forms of despair, one is real desperation, the other is conceit.[5] The first takes us to hell. Dante hangs on his doorway the sign: O, those of you who enter, abandon all hope."[6] The damned have no hope. In fact, hope means everything will be fine. The root of despair is found in sloth, abandonment, and neglect. The desperate have no desire to become what they can indeed be.[7] The second, takes us at a vanity fair.

There can be hopelessness and despair. The former is manifold, and the latter is unique, definitive. The goods in which we have put our waits can cause us disappointment and can open the door to despair. Human beings can decide that the object of hope is not attainable. And it is certainly true that the world can offer us enough reason to think this way.

Despair is not the only daughter of sloth. He has more: restlessness of spirit, indifference, pusillanimity, resentment, and malice. The restlessness of spirit is characterized by the flight of oneself, and we find it in verbal incontinence, in unhealthy curiosity, in unease and in importunity. Indifference is a denial of one's own being. Pusillanimity, on the other hand, means not giving value to the mystical possibilities of the human being. Resentment implies an immense narrow-

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Pieper also saw a very close relationship between mental illness and despair and boredom. Plügge, in his work Über suizidale Kranke (On the Suicidal Sick), had developed the theme.

[4] Pieper, J. *Über die Hoffnung*, 55.

"But the beginning and the root of despair is *acedia*, laziness."

(The principle and root of despair is sloth).

[5] Pieper, J. *Über die Hoffnung*, 49.

[6] Alighieri, D., *Divine Comedy*. Canticle I, Canto 3, page 19

[7] Pieper, J. Ü*ber die Hoffnung*, 59. That man does not want to be what God wants him to be, and that means that he does not want to be what he really is.

mindedness, and malice, the choice of evil simply because it is evil.

The desperate often consider the persistence in other people of the joy of living an insult. The desire to drag other people into nowhere serves to give credibility to their attitude.

The hopelessness and sadness that accompany it is fought with courage, with the choice of the path of hope. It is necessary to rediscover the value of silence and the meeting with oneself. So, we can internalize what we are, and the place we have assigned in the world. Despair cannot have the last word.

III. Leisure: an antidote to boredom and more

Nowadays, most people enjoy leisure time as the best time in life. Time and money are invested to get pleasure, adventure, some rest or at least, to meet other people and talk about things one cannot talk about at work. The turnover in the entertainment industry, sport or tourism is increasing every year. And most people spend a lot of money in those activities. The percentage of yearly income dedicated to leisure time is growing exponentially since the last century. So, the question is not: Leisure, yes or not? The question is: Leisure time for what? The concept of spare time is by no means so simple and innocuous as it may have appeared.

For Pieper, the idea of leisure has nothing to do with spending time or with entertainment. It cannot be the same thing as rest or play, anyway. He says, one simply cannot enjoy leisure time without enjoying the working time. The question is how we are investing our time, the value we put on the days we dispose of on earth. If we are enjoying our whole life, the working time, and the free time, we can say we are happy people.

When Pieper talks to us about leisure, he talks about celebration (*Fest*) and happiness (*Glücklichheit*). In fact, these are the real goals of human creatures on earth. He says that leisure and work aren't incompatible at all. Every day we must work, that's the usual thing. Leisure is important because it's

unusual. Furthermore, only serious work can lead to full leisure. Real leisure is not only one day without work. It's an important day, a day on we are transported to another world, full of possibilities, of new realities, where the unexpected, the different, takes place. Leisure is neither doing nothing, nor jumping in frenetic activity for hours on end just for spending time. Time is really a very important thing. It goes by (*tempus fugit*, as the romans said). Time is all we have here on earth to invest.

One must be joyful to have a good day. And joy comes from loving everything we do; everybody we meet, and every circumstance we must deal with. In some cases, we are face to face with stress, misunderstanding, illness, and death. If, nevertheless, we think life is beautiful, if we are proud of ourselves, and accept whatever comes, then we are happy people. Perhaps, sometimes we are not joyful, but we can be in peace with the world. Only if we sign our life as true, we will love all our days, the labour ones, and the others.

John Paul II said that "man lives a real life thanks to culture".[8] Culture involves the whole person. The good, the true and the beautiful reminds us that we can transcend this life. We can accept, but relativise death, because it does not have the last word to say. Short or long, every life matters, and every life can be successful.

Happy people are the heart of a party wherever they are, at home, at work, in a football stadium, at the cinema or in the sea. Other people may have lots of money, hobbies, fame, and prestige. If they are not happy, they cannot celebrate. Celebration needs of gratefulness to be born. And it needs of love, too. When we love, we give and share what we possess and what we are. And we feel happy to give and to share.

Work satisfies our basic needs and procure our daily bread. But the totalitarian work state is to be avoided. We work to do something other than work. We work so we can have leisure, as Aristotle would say.[9] This something other indicates an activity which is meaningful. Traditional wisdom has always understood that there are also human activities that do not

[8] Coleman, A.P. *Leisure and Labor*, 133.

[9] Pieper, J. *Only the lover sings: Art and Contemplation*, 27.

serve some other purpose and so are not servile. When we devote ourselves to them, we feel transported out of time.

The ultimate fulfilment, the real absolutely meaningful activity, the most perfect expression of being alive, the deepest satisfaction, and the fullest achievement of human existence must happen in an instance of beholding, namely in the contemplating awareness of the world's ultimate and intrinsic foundations,[10] Plato would say.

An activity which is meaningful, cannot be accomplished except with an attitude of receptive openness and attentive silence. The problem is that, nowadays, man's ability to see and to hear is in decline, because there is too much to see and to hear. In our time, restlessness, stress, total absorption by practical goals and purposes are disturbing the human ability to perceive. In this obviously continuing process, there exists a limit below which human nature itself is threatened, and the very integrity of human existence is endangered. We must be able to see the trees in the woods.

At work and in our idle time, we are happy when we love everything we do, when we jump into the core of action, because, previously, we have been contemplating the world around us, and have seen who we are and why we do the things we do. To contemplate means, at first, to see, and not to think. That is, to see in an exceptionally intensive manner. A new dimension of seeing is opened by love alone.[11] Lovers can see what nobody else is able to perceive.

On our leisure time we are not simply resting, we are celebrating a party. We can say that there are three elements necessary for a party: game, contemplation, and waste. The party begins when we intend to do something for itself. There is not *for* or *in order to*. It's like playing. The game is always an essential part of the party. We can fly without destination because the important thing is the journey itself.

Contemplation is where the happiness of man and woman is to be found. One needs nothing and seeks nothing. The

[10] Pieper, J. *Only the lover sings*, 22.

[11] Quoted in Pieper, J. *Zustimmung zur Welt*, 28.
Chrysostomus: "*Ubi caritas gaudet, ibi est festivitas".*

world is here, all around us, to be seen and admired, as if it were the first time a living person could discover it. We can consider it a present offered to us by God for the sake of our increasing maturity.

And finally, another element is the waste. One becomes rich in a party. Everything is there to share. And the only cause of all this giving is love. Because we love, we are ready to give and to offer. It may be real, or in remembrance or in hope. But joy always comes because of love. Only the lover can sing the song of life. Love gives birth to generosity and confidence. Life is beautiful when there is love.

With these elements, we can feel joyful. Joy is the consequence of love. When we possess something, or we receive something, let it be real, or hoped or remembered, we meet joy. Time plays no part in our state of mind because we feel ourselves out of time. So, when we come back to time, we feel regenerated and full of energy. We can accomplish all our duties and develop our tasks.

Happy people are grateful people, too. Happy people are those who recognise that all that is, is good, and that it's good to be. On the seventh day, on the day of rest, one can see that all the creation is good, very good indeed. So, we can live in a never-ending party, feeling ourselves in the best of places, at the right time and discovering all things for the first time, as a present offered to us for the sake of love.

On leisure time, we stop, stay silent and see, and accept that, though there is pain, tears, suffering, anxiety and death, life is a present. Life is worth all that. The assets of life are worth all the liabilities it can put on our way. On leisure time we can relativise all our circumstances. Hope shall lead us to the end of the road, and we will be able to enjoy all our steps, with joy, gratitude, and love. Hope is no kind of optimism. It's the result of confidence and care. Sometimes it is not easy to walk but the landscape is so beautiful, it is worth the effort.

Pieper says we can deduce three consequences from all that. The first one is that we can meet joy in the praise of God, creator of the world we live in. If life is beautiful, the giver of live is an artist, creator of Beauty. The second one is that the cult party is the real Party, where we praise God. We praise

him for who we are and for what the world is. And, finally, the third one is that only the rejection of cult can get the destruction of Party. Outside the Party, there's no hope. Despair and misery dwells in that devastated land of nowhere.

There are of course, different types of parties, religious and worldly. But even the worldly parties have their origin in cult, Pieper says. In cult we can be grateful to God for the world He has created. We put hope in what we obtain there. The fruit of cult is the superhuman capability to see the ordinary life as the first day. Being in the right place, on the right time. Seeing everything as new and prepared for us, for our fulfilment (*Vollendung*). Those are the fruits of Party, and that's a taste of Paradise. To be in a party is to live in the everlasting divine present. In a party, our leisure time represents a way to get free, for we can relativize our ordinary existence from the heights of possibility and dream. But a party requires a special dress to enjoy it. The party dress we must put on is made of humility, gratefulness, hope and confidence. Wearing an inappropriate dress may ruin the party.

In fact, happiness is to be found in contemplation. There we can find all we need; all we can desire. Only the human person can be happy. And the human person can only be happy in possession of good. God is the supreme good. So, Only God can make us happy people, according to Pieper. God and Happiness are the same thing. God is not happy for creating things. He is happy for he celebrates creation. He celebrates himself. Everybody who celebrates creation, who celebrates God, becomes a happy person, for he or she is looking at all that exists in a new way.

Pieper thinks that the immediate consequence of all that is that it cannot exist a praise of live without a praise of the giver of live, God. So, the real festivity is the religious festivity and the only thing that can ruin the spirit of happiness and festivity is the absence of God and the negation of his praise. With him, joy and happiness are granted for ever, for He is the answer to all questions, and makes odds with everything may happen.

Happiness and joyfulness are twin but are not at all the same kind of thing. Joy comes from the possession of Good (let it be in the real world, in hope or in remembrance). Happiness

is the answer to Joy. It comes from getting all there is to get. It means seeing but seeing in the right way. Happy people see themselves, the world and God. Happy people see what they love. Love is necessary to happiness, but it's not enough. The proximity of the loved one is in the origin of happiness. The contemplative person feels all there is around, he or she has got what others are looking for, because they see and love, and are happy to see and to love.

In contemplation, we are surprised, because we see things and people as never before. What we see is far more than what we have been looking for. Once we have begun to see, we just cannot stop. There is so much to discover! All around us is peace, joy, Gloria. But to if we intend to arrive at the point of contemplation, we need to stop. We need silence and peace. Work is important, family is important, hobbies are important, too. But we need to stop to feel their importance. To get a view of our whole live and see it as a very good thing, we need some rest. Then, when we stop and look around, we may discover such a display of good things.

The *vita activa* is to be fulfilled in the *vita contemplativa.* Action needs a direction to be efficient, needs to choose the inputs required to get the outputs desired. Contemplation leads to happiness because we find the meaning of it all in its boundaries.

IV. Hope: the way to happiness

For Pieper, human beings are on the way. A path involves a point of departure and a point of arrival. It seems that, of all creatures, human beings are the only ones who know they are going to die someday. Where does the road take us? Well, it takes us to the calm of heaven, after earthly misgivings. The main feature of this state is the *noch nicht* (not yet).

This *noch nicht* has a double aspect: the non-existence of fullness and the search for it. Its origin lies, according to Pieper, in creation from nothing. The path of *Homo Viator* is not a coming and going from being to non-being. It leads to fullness, even if it has not yet arrived, and even if there is a possibility

of not reaching it.[12] According to Pedro Laín Entralgo, this blessed life lies within us. It does not come from experience but from one's own being.[13]

The vital success, the validity of one's existence, is the goal towards which hope is directed. Earthly hopes are very legitimate and very valid, but hope in eternal happiness, according to Pieper is based on Christ's resurrection.

The concepts *status viatoris and status comprehensoris* (adherence of the will to the highest goods), designate the way of being human.[14] Being comes from nothing, and the mere possibility of ceasing to be is terrible for a human being.

Becoming is somewhere between being and non-being. The stability of being accompanies the dynamism of becoming. Every human being and every community live in the tension between past and future.

In fact, every creature comes from nothing and has been created to *be*, not for annihilation. Creation is not only the beginning of a causal relationship, but the basis of the depth and infinitude of creation, of its mystery. The union of body and soul places us in a certain space and time, but the spirit is out of time. Despair cannot be a response to life, since the destiny of the human being is life, and fulfilment. Nor can the answer be in safety since the creature is threatened by sin and death. So, the only answer is hope, the path that leads to new the heaven and the new earth.

For Pieper, hope is a theological virtue. Either it is theological, or it is not even a virtue.[15] The virtues lead to the best version of the human being in this life, and to fullness in God in the everlasting life. We wait in response to what we have received and what we believe we will receive. This is hope.

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[12] Pieper, J., *Lieben, Hoffen,* Glauben, 201.

"The path of *homo viator*, of the person on the way, is not a directionless comings and goings between being and nothingness; it leads to realization and not annihilation. Although, the realization has not yet been accomplished and falling into nothingness is not yet impossible."

[13] Laín Entralgo, P., *La espera y la esperanza*, 64.

[14] Pieper, J., *Über die* Hoffnung, 12.

[15] Pieper, J., *Schriften zur Philosophischen Anthropologie und Ethik: Das Menschenbild der Tugendlehre*, 263.

Hope is the eager wait for fullness, both natural and supernatural. It is born of strength, of good spirits, which trusts in the many possibilities of human nature, created by God. It represents an affirmation of the future, trust, and investment of resources in it. It has emotional, volitional, and intellectual components, which entail an attitude towards life. Attitudes should not be ruled out as non-cognitive, since they come, especially in mature people, from experiences and beliefs acquired about the world and society, which have been meditated and viewed critically. Magnanimity allows us to turn to valuable, great things, and so, we can put aside the pettiness of life.

Before God, one can only kneel, humbly, aware of one's condition as a creature. Pieper believes that, in fact, the lack of hope can only be due to two reasons: lack of fortitude or lack of humility.[16] The strength leads us to develop our capabilities despite the impediments and obstacles of all kinds that arise. Humility represents the only valid attitude to the divine presence. At the very least, we can always hope in God's forgiveness. If there is a God worthy of our hope, then this hope must be inexhaustible.

We can only hope for ourselves and those we love. Christ is the foundation of Christian hope and, at the same time, its fulfilment.[17] Hope is founded on God's goodness and power. It's a gift. When we pray, we manifest our hope, earthly and spiritual. Prayer is the word of one who waits.[18] In it, we ask for spiritual help and bodily well-being. This hope, and the renewing strength it generates, provokes the renewal of youth. Youth is the cause of hope. When we are young, everything is still to be done and everything is possible. In youth there is little past, and you look at the future without reluctance, you

[16] Pieper, J., *Über die Hoffnung*, 30.

"The loss of supernatural hope has two causes: lack of fortitude and lack of humility."

[17] Pieper, J,. *Über die Hoffnung*, 35.

[18] Pieper, J. *Über die Hoffnung*, 71.

"For prayer,, in its original form of supplication, is nothing else than the utterance of one who hopes."

It implies the acceptance of an interlocutor willing to listen and give help.

see in it a world of possibilities. In *the noch nicht*, there is the germ of all utopias, because in it we find the elasticity, lightness, fortitude, joy, and courage of trust, of youth.[19]

All hope tells us: everything will end well, perhaps leaving aside the *how*. Hope is always creative. It has the power to modify reality, while bringing about changes in people and the environment. There is a hope that can be confused with despair: martyrdom. The martyr finds himself surrendered, helpless, to earthly powers. He states, however, that hope is a theological virtue, directed beyond this world. Despite all the horror he may experience, the martyr does not deny creation. The martyr waits in eternal life, despite its own catastrophic end and that of creation, because everything is worth it. Life itself and all created things are regarded with gratitude and are considered truly good.

The path of the *viator* is not a zigzag between being and nothingness. It leads to full realization, that's why we have been created. It is an opportunity, it does not lead in any way to annihilation, although it is possible. Gabriel Marcel, in the preface to *Homo Viator*, also tells us that, possibly, a stable order can only be established if we do not abandon the awareness that our condition is that of a traveller.[20]

We could say that even secular eschatology is in search of a better world. Human beings go in search of an object for their hope. The injustices of this world demand it. But a Christian has also lived the experience of a loving God. And that cries out against death as an end.

Pieper says, the whole person, not just the soul must transcend. The body allows relationships with the environment. For this reason, it leans towards the resurrection and not the immortality of the soul. Like Moltmann, he thinks theologians have been more concerned with knowledge of God

[19] Pieper, J., *Über die Hoffnung*, 42.

"She alone allows people to share in the enduring possession of the relaxation that relieves and punishes at the same time, the light joy, the courage of trust, which characterizes youth and makes it so adorable."

[20] Marcel, G., *Homo Viator*, 1.

"Perhaps a stable order can only be established on earth, if man always remains acutely conscious that his condition is that of a traveller."

than with promises.[21] A promise obliges whoever does it, but it's by no means guaranteed as it involves a reciprocal relationship. Human hope is the counterpart to God's promise.

The human being is in existence. He hasn't created himself. He doesn't know where he comes from or why he exists. But he has some understanding of himself. He has a conscience and a vocation, which drive him to become what *he can* really be. This future process must continue beyond death if we heed promises. If not, Paul already warns that:

"If Christ has not risen, our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain."

The resurrected body cannot be the same organic structure of flesh, blood, and bones. The spiritual body must involve another form of personal existence, full of possibilities. The body refers to space, while the soul refers to time. We cannot change the past, but our perception of events that occurred in the past can vary.

Even if there were the possibility of access to a just society and of achieving a transformed and transformative humanity, this would not mean having fulfilled total hope. All beings unfairly treated throughout history would not see satisfied their destiny. Total hope must encompass everything and everyone, throughout history. The God of love cannot allow death to erase the care of all that has been created. Hope is tied to our ability to do what God expects us to do, and He will do the rest. From that stuff are made the miracles.

Although it is facing the future, hope affects the present. It allows perseverance, trains the mind, and provides happiness. Reality is transfigured through hope. It is the answer people of faith give to the goodness of the world. But even for those who have no faith, for whom hope is nothing more than an emotion, at best, what can be expected is immense. It must be explained philosophically what it means to have hope, because of the obvious power it shows to change reality.

[21] Macquarry, J., *Christian Hope*, 47.

V. To Conclude

Josef Pieper has left an enormous contribution to the philosophy of last century. He says that our mind does not create truth, rather, the truth of things is given in creation, and we have the task of arriving to knowledge by adapting our ideas to that truth. So, some research is necessary to attain it. We will not be able to come to the truth if we do not dispose of some aids. The aid will come from the moral virtues if they are deeply embedded in our character. That is, to know the truth, we must become persons of a certain sort. We must become virtuous people. The full transformation of character that we need will, in fact, finally require the practice of virtues. Faith, hope, and love are the main virtues, and for that reason are to be at hand in our personal research. We are not to forget that Pieper was a Christian philosopher. So, practising the virtues, we will be able to see all things as they are. But we must accept the fact that we never will be able to comprehend fully the inner nature of things because of our limits of reason. Only He, the Creator, knows what is made of everything. The goal of our life is to increase our knowledge of the world and to appreciate it.

However great and gratifying the life of virtue may be, though, the more we go by that road, the more we will realise its limits. The way of virtue is quite difficult to go through. It requires patience and effort. And it is not always its own reward, after all. It brings with a kind of serenity, but nobody can live with this serenity alone. We look for some return, sometimes. We need some motivation during our journey. We look for real happiness. Life can be so hard that we need to look forward to the end of hardship and the light of peace and joy.

The path towards virtue is an endless road that we never can achieve solely by our own effort, and the virtue of hope teaches us that we are *en route* as *viator* up to the very moment of death, which is the end of the route. Pieper thinks that hope is the only answer we can give to the experiences we meet in life. Desperation would lead us to misery, and we just cannot

feel in total security in the changing world we are set into. We must do and love the good, and we must avoid the evil to become proper people. So, the virtues make us able to follow in the right way our natural inclinations, respecting other people and nature. Being virtuous people, our walk on life, with patience, will be grateful and firm.

We can see that in the mind and the writings of Josef Pieper the philosophy of the ancient Greek and the Christian theological tradition met and enriched each other. He just couldn't make a choice between them. In life, we usually walk on the path others have opened, after all. He could find no contradiction between philosophy and theology because both are necessary to find the way leading to truth. He even said that it is possible that, in the end of history, only people with faith will be interested in the roots of things and in the final meaning of existence, that is, in philosophy.[22]

Furthermore, Pieper considered that philosophy and hope had the same structure. Both are open to new possibilities and are *en route* throughout history, in a never-ending path of research and reformulation. Hope, as a virtue, has the power to reinforce our will and lead us to new possibilities.

At this moment of the exposition, we ought to consider at least the following points:

1) We need to be active people. There is so much to do. Our family, our society and ourselves have necessities to cover and we are able of doing all sort of good things, for others and for ourselves, in order to satisfy them. We have the right and the duty to devote our time and effort to improve our way of live.

2) Justice is a necessity too. We don't live alone. Our relations must be ordered to that aim. In the labour relation there are two partners, but they are not at the same level. One of the partners depends on the wages for living. So, dignity is to be preserved. And some equilibrium in the structure of the labour market is to be kept. Liberalism is neither to fix the rules nor to eliminate them in it.

3) When we love someone, we want him or her to be happy. His or her happiness makes us happy. We are not a leaf taken by the wind from a tree. We need take care of someone and

[22] Pieper, J., *Schriften zuum Philosophiebegriff*, 323.

be treated carefully by someone. We need to live with others in harmony. We become better people by helping others to develop their potentialities. We benefit of each other actions.

4) Artists are lucky people in a sense: their work survives the creators that have given birth to it. But everybody can be an artist. There are lots of things to be done, for the sake of our community and environment. There are many tasks waiting for us to be accomplished and everybody has a particular way of doing things. Our art works are to be admired and appreciated.

5) In our way in life, in our *statu viatoris*, we need of God's love. The only thing that never ends. Happiness requires eternity. Life can be so hard. Sometimes, it seems to be impossible to make odds with destiny. But death cannot have the last word to say. We hope for the land of promise, where fullness dwells.

Love requires eternity, too. When we love, we say: how good you are here. We need the beloved ones near us. We want them to be, and to be happy, forever.

6) The happy person is happy for his or her own sake. He or she needs nobody, needs nothing at all. Happiness is a fruit that comes from the inner parts of the heart. Nobody can put it there. Circumstances may be adverse, but nothing can disturb the calm habiting in our soul when we are happy.

7) We can put as elements of happiness: rest, peace, joy, gratitude, love, contemplation, and duty. Resting of our everyday activities, doing something really motivating; being in peace with ourselves, with our family and friends, with the world; helping and taking care of all. Loving life as it is and receiving all the joy that love can give us, with gratitude. Doing our duty and doing it with our best disposition, that could be the best destiny for any of us.

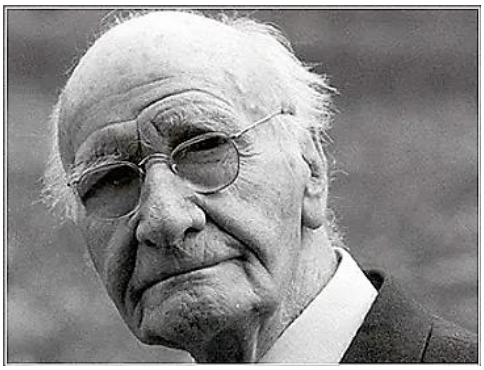
8) Hope is the only way to make the journey. Taking nothing for granted but with confidence. Flying away from desperation and security and accepting whatever comes to us.

Happiness is no kind of optimism. In fact, it can exist in the middle of suffering, of need, of trouble and of tears. Surely, we shall find a lot of them in our life. But, from the ashes of thousands of fires, it will rise a new energy to live. We all need

something to survive in our daily frenetic business: some time, some rest, some silence. In silence and rest, wide apart from the surrounding noise, we can find the reason of our whole life, who we are and what are we here for. When we know for what, surely, we will find the how to live.

The 7th day, the day of rest, comes to us as a memory of creation, and as a hopeful image of that which we are called to become. It shows all the beauty spread into the world around us. We are called to live our whole life in a party. But we need some spare time for this. Pieper warns us of keeping apart from cult because this means to remove the party from our lives.

So, to conclude, we are to work hard for the money we need, and to work efficiently for the sake of service and fame. We have a role to play in society. But we are to keep some time away from all our duties, just to see around us and even to evaluate our way of being, being grateful for all we have and for everybody who is sharing our life. Pieper thinks we need to look for higher mountains to climb and become the best possibility of ourselves. Then, nobody can take away from us the joyful feeling of living in a party, plenty of surprises. Not even death, or the total destruction of the human race, or the end of planet Earth. Let it come whatever event destiny has reserved for us. Because then, we are out of time and space, and we can celebrate from the core of our heart, singing to life, sharing our love, and exclaiming hallelujah!



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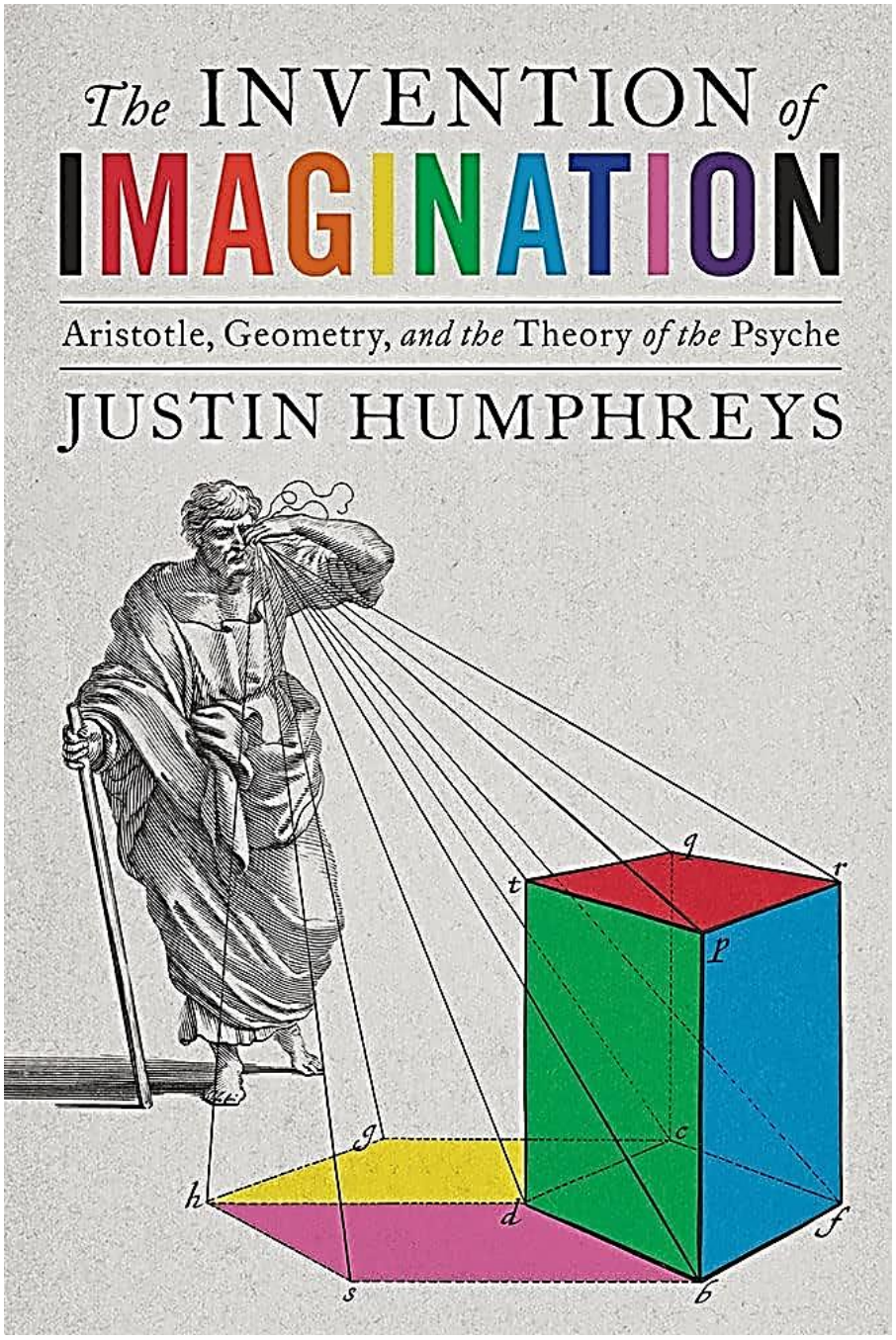
The INVENTION of
IMAGINATION
Aristotle, Geometry, and the Theory of the Psyche
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The banality of Being and Becoming

Lampros I. Papagiannis,
Assistant Professor,
Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
Guangzhou, China
lampros.p@hotmail.com

Abstract:
Throughout the history of philosophy there seems to be a distinction between or among schools of thought. For instance, idealism and materialism or behaviourism and natural predisposition. This article deals with the distinction between Being and Becoming demonstrating not only its importance, but also its internationality, as it appears that the distinction between Being and Becoming, which often takes the form of rivalry, does not concern Western philosophy alone, but it can be found, though under different forms, in the East, too. Several examples will show that, one way or another, the differentiation between the unborn, undead, perfect Being and the everlasting, never-ending Becoming go beyond the rivalry between the Monists (Parmenides, Zeno, Melissus) and Heraclitus. Please be advised that this article will only try to present this matter based on specific examples from the history of philosophy from Greece, India, and China. As it becomes understandable such a matter can (or should) be dealt with in a much larger scale, perhaps as the topic of a doctoral thesis.

Keywords: Becoming, Being, idealism, materialism, behaviourism, natural predisposition, history of philosophy, Greece, India, China

Introduction

This article will give examples from philosophical schools in Greece, India, and China that indicate that the distinction between Being and Becoming is a cliché beyond the boundaries of Western tradition. In addition, it is essential to point out that in the West the philosophical texts of ancient India and ancient China are translated into the western languages and thus they carry some sort of subjectivity in terms of how the translator has decided to translate some key-terms, such as Being and Becoming. With Sanskrit this may not be that serious, since Sanskrit is still an Indo-European language, and it does bear some resemblances to the western languages. Old Chinese, on the other hand, requires a great deal of attention and even then, the reader should keep in mind that ancient Chinese is not that common for scholars to know, let alone translate philosophical texts. Thus, we should take extra care when we come across terms like Being, Becoming, existence, virtue etc., since the signified may have been translated in such a way in order to match what the translator had in mind, but it may refer to a different signifier in the original text.

Greece

In Greece philosophy began as the observation of the natural world in an attempt to further comprehend how the world is structured and how it functions. The cosmogonic myths of Hesiod, the stories in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the Orphic hymns gave way to the (more) scientific manner of the Milesians starting with Thales[1]. The concept of becoming is, however, much more evident in Thales' student, Anaximander, who first spoke of the *apeiron*, a non-tangible element that

[1] Kirk G. S., Raven J. E., Schofield M., *The pre-Socratic philosophers* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1987 (e. p. 1957), 27-32.

cannot be destroyed[2], which Kirk, Raven, Schofield interpreted as a concept of space in terms of that it is the substance in which the world is composed and dissolved[3]. Almost likewise, Anaximenes set the air and the *apeiron* as the first principles of the cosmos, which is a combination of something material, like Thales' water and something immaterial, like Anaximander's *apeiron*.

However, the basic protagonists of the distinction between Being and Becoming are, of course, Parmenides and Heraclitus respectively. The difference in their though has often been considered "radical"[4], while Nehamas has attempted to compromise them by arguing that the two philosophers "*share an ontological picture apart from their epistemological views*"[5]. Moreover, Nehamas claimed that "*Heraclitus' fire, understood as change, satisfies Parmenides' signposts, as it is ungenerated, imperishable, whole, one, and indivisible, perfect and complete and that he turns out to be 'more Parmenidean than Parmenides himself' for 'he is more of a monist than the great monist himself'*"[6]. Although there does not seem to be a reason to take it that far, I personally would like to emphasise the fact that despite the different approach on the matter of the Being, there is still room for similarities in a way that Parmenides and Heraclitus may differ less than their ontological fragments have led us to believe. Apart from the epistemological views and the association of the Heraclitean fire with the Parmenidean Being mentioned above, the inability of man to comprehend the

[2] *Apeiron*: from the Greek work peras (end) and the prefix -a, a signifier of opposition. Apeiron is the Greek word for the Latin *infinitum* (in + finis).

[3] Kirk G. S., Raven J. E., Schofield M., *The pre-Socratic philosophers* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1987 (e. p. 1957), 60.

[4] *...the two most philosophical Pre-Socratics propound the two most radically different philosophies: Heraclitus the philosopher of flux and Parmenides the philosopher of changelessness...*, Graham, D.: "Heraclitus and Parmenides" in V. Caston and D. Graham (eds.) Presocratic Philosophy, Essays in honour of Alexander Mourelatos, Aldershot, Ashgate, (2002): 27-44, 27.

[5] Nehamas A.: "Parmenidean Being/Heralcitean Fire", in V. Caston and D. Graham (eds.) Presocratic Philosophy, Essays in honour of Alexander Mourelatos, Aldershot, Ashgate, (2002), 45-64, 47.

[6] Ibidem, 51.

Logos can be seen as the "confusing unjustified distinctions" in Parmenides according to Beatriz Bossi[7] (whereas this may be included in the epistemological field mentioned above, anyway).

The notion of Being in Parmenides is found in his *On Nature* (*Περί Φύσιος*). The chariot brings the poet before the gates of Truth (Αλήθεια) where the goddess teaches the concept of thought (νοείν), which is that the Being is the only real thing and that one cannot know, let alone express, the non-Being[8] (chapter II). Moreover, in the third book (from which only one phrase is left) we learn that the result of thought is the Being itself, as one would be unable to think of something that does not exist (*...το γαρ αυτό νοείν έστι τε και είναι*), which brings to mind the concept of logic in Wittgenstein from *Tractatus*[9]. On the other hand, the notion of Becoming is mostly associated with Heraclitus. The notion of Becoming does not at all deny that of Being; it only conceives the Being within the immanence of motion, as something that exists thanks to or owing to its constant movement. Hence, one can notice some room for compromise. For instance, Jean Brun understands the idea of Becoming as returning (revenir), instead of precisely becoming (devenir)[10]; in this respect, we are not dealing with a Becoming of the Being, but rather with a Becoming, which is part of the Being. According to William Ralph Inge, more widely known as Dean Inge, *eternity does*

[7] The view of those Heraclitean deaf who do not 'listen' to the account of logos (and cannot interpret the data due to their incapacity to perceive the unity of the real) seems quite similar to the Parmenidean mortals who make confusing unjustified distinctions. (What Heraclitus and Parmenides have in common on Reality and Deception Lo que Heráclito y Parménides tienen en común acerca de la realidad y el engaño: Bossi B., Universidad Complutense de Madrid, LOGOS. *Anales del Seminario de Metafísica* Vol. 48 (2015): 21-34, 34. (Verdenius also compares Heraclitus' claim about the damp soul (like a drunkard who does not know where he goes) to Parmenides' wandering man in Verdenius, W.J.: *Parmenides, Some Comments on his Poem*, Amsterdam, Hakkert, (1964): 29.

[8] Parmenides, *On nature* (Thessaloniki: ZITROS, 2003).

[9] Wittgenstein L., *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, U.S.A: Routledge 2001) 3.03.

[10] Brun J., *Les Presocratiques*, e. p. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France – PUF, 1982), 42.

not mean existence at all times, but existence independently from time, without past or future[11]. The constant motion prevents us from entering the same river twice[12]. Moreover, the notion of Becoming is given as a circle, the fundamental feature of which is the equality, since the beginning and the end on the circle are the same or rather, one might say, there is no such thing as beginning and end[13]. This point bares some resemblance to the *On Nature's* fifth book (again only one phrase left), where Parmenides says that it doesn't matter where the goddess will start from, since she will end up at the same point anyway[14].

As far as the rest of the pre-Socratic philosophers are concerned, it can be claimed that they all, more or less, became part of this conflict. Thus, the Pythagorians should be included in the school of Becoming as well as Empedocles, who constructed their philosophical ideas upon the concept of continuity and change. For the formers the idea of reincarnation and the immortal soul and for the latter the circular scheme of the interchangeable action of the diptych Philotis-Neikos provide enough evidence to place them in the school of Becoming, although several have spoken of the influence of Parmenides on Empedocles[15]. The rest of the triad of Elea, Zeno and Melissus, should obviously go with the school of Being, yet Zeno's dialectical approach, especially given with the paradoxes, may suggest that the influence of Parmenides was not as strong. On the contrary, Melissus, Parmenides' other pupil, seems to follow his teacher's basic argumentation on the perfection of the Being and the rejection of the non-Being, without this suggesting lack of originality in his ideas. Lastly, as far as the pre-Socratics are concerned, we ought to include the Atomics in the category of the Being, since

[11] Russell B., *A history of Western philosophy*, (New York: Simon & Shuster, Inc., 1945).

[12] Heraclitus, DK, B, 91.

[13] Heraclitus, DK, B, 103.

[14] ξυνὸν δέ μοί ἐστιν,
ὁππόθεν ἄρξωμαι· τόθι γὰρ πάλιν ἵξομαι αὖθις.

[15] Kirk G. S., Raven J. E., Schofield M., *The pre-Socratic philosophers* (Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 1987, e. p. 1957).

the idea of a particle that cannot be further divided (atom) matches to a large extent that of the Being.

The Being-Becoming distinction carried on even after the centre of the spiritual blossom moved from Ionia and Sicily to Athens. The dominant figures in 5th century Athens are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, although there are no written sources from Socrates[16]. Since there is hardly any topic left out from the dialogues, it is anything but easy to place Plato in a specific category, not just regarding the topic of this article, but in general. Several elements for the dialogues suggest that Plato is a fan of the idea of an unmovable, unborn, and everlasting Being, while others suggest that he believes in the everlasting continuity of change (Becoming). For instance, could the idea of Agathon (Αγαθόν), appearing in several dialogues, be the idea of the Parmenidean Being, only in other words? Is Plato guilty as charged of patricide against Parmenides in the homonym dialogue or was the whole dialogue a demonstration of irony? Given the fact that Plato is very fond of irony (in many cases this is apparent), it is far from easy to tell. In *Meno* the slave remembers to draw the line that divides the square in two triangles, a suggestion indicating memory of a past life according to Socrates, but what does this mean? Is the soul eternal and immortal and thus a symbolism of the Being or does the immortal soul go into a mortal body after the biological death and thus it symbolises the concept of Becoming, not much unlike the idea found in *Phaedon* and at the post-mortem adventure of the soul in the diegesis of Er, son of Armenius, at the end of the *Republic*?

The same dilemma goes for Aristotle. In *Metaphysics* (A) Aristotle wonders whether the first principle is to be associated with the essence, the matter or the source of motion (983 a), while he later questions whether the Being should be identified as the One (Εν) (1001 a). Later in *Metaphysics* (1001 b) and in *Physics* (A, 186 b) Aristotle rejects the idea of the Being and the One being the same thing, a clear indication that he

[16] However, Epictetus in his second *Discourse* (*Διατριβή* Β') suggests that Socrates did write some works, which were lost. The fact that Epictetus and Socrates were more than 500 years apart makes this source rather unreliable.

misunderstood the symbolistic character of the Eleatic school, particularly the paradoxes of Zeno.

India

Although the examples that could be drawn from Greek philosophy are innumerous, we shall now move on to examples that show how classical Indian philosophy has also made the distinction between Being and Becoming, keeping in mind that the difference in mentality between India and the West is related to the differentiation in how the two civilisations conceive the humane[17].

Hindu philosophy is strongly related to the Hindu pantheon and the level of spirituality seems so strongly attached to the philosophical ideas, that the two are often impossible to distinguish. Prima facie, the western tradition has been the attempt for a rational explanation of the cosmos, while Indian philosophy seems to have remained in a broader, metaphysical stage. Nonetheless, this is rather an understatement. The notion of rationalism exists anyway regardless the tradition. There is always logic in how the one or the other philosophical school perceives the cosmos, the divine or any other element under the philosophical microscope. For reasons other than philosophy, which are not to be discussed here as they involve sociopolitical and economic factors, the notion of rationalism has been associated almost exclusively with the West and in addition it has been a means of expressing the (fake) superiority of the West over the East.

The philosophy of India has been dominated by the philosophical principles of Brahmanism from the Vedas to the Aranyakas until their philosophically elegant version, the Upanishads. Thus, other philosophical traditions that were considered heterodox, since they did not accept the truth of the Vedas, were excluded. Buddhism, Jainism and Charvaka (materialism) never managed to settle in India. As far as the topic of this article is concerned, it may be said that the

[17] David White, *The Bhagavad-Gita* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1993, e. p. 1989), 5.

distinction between Being and Becoming is less obvious than in Greece, but can still be drawn based on some specific elements.

What could account for the philosophical tradition of Being in India? As what could the Being be identified? The first thing that would come to one's mind is the concept of *moksha*. Moksha is the salvation from the circle of the reincarnations (in Buddhism this circle is called *samsara*) and in this respect Hinduism could be considered as a soteriological religion. However, the concept of moksha, in my opinion, should be seen as a symbolism for the never-ending effort of man to achieve it. In other words, the true meaning of moksha is not to achieve it, but rather to constantly walk towards the road that leads to salvation. Here I argue that the actual distinction between Being and Becoming in Indian philosophy is the contrast between the Brahman and its manifestation, the Trimurti. As an example of analogy, if for Heraclitus the law of Becoming is something permanent[18], obviously contradicting the very idea of becoming, for Indian philosophy the Brahman contradicts the trifold concept of Trimurti. Brahman symbolises the notion of Being in the sense that it is unborn, undead and it represents the totality, since it exists in every particle of the world, something which reminds us of the idea of Being in Parmenides. The Trimurti, on the other hand, reminds us of Heraclitus and the concept of Becoming. The Trimurti consists of three gods who act as one, but with different tasks. Brahma[19] is the Creator, Vishnu is the Preserver and Shiva is the Destroyer. The Brahman does not leave its place to Trimurti, it still exists, but through the Trimurti. As one may easily speculate, the ideas of creation, maintenance, and destruction are not to be taken literally. Creation does not mean ex nihilo creation, maintenance does not last for ever and destruction does not imply something permanent. Brahma creates the world in order to last for some time thanks to Vishnu until Shiva destroys it only for Brahma to create it

[18] Wedberg Anders, *A history of philosophy, v. 1, antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1982), 21.

[19] Brahma, the first god of the Trimurti, is spelled without a final -n and it must not be confused with the Brahma**n**.

again. Thus, the concept of creation must be understood as constant creation, the concept of maintenance as ephemeral and the concept of destruction as an opportunity for creation.

Even if we accept the Brahman – Trimurti as the Indian version of the Being – Becoming conflict, the question that comes naturally is this: Does this change with the bhakti movement? It has been argued that the bhakti movement, the devotion to one specific god of the Indian pantheon, is the bridge between the polytheism of the Rig-Veda to monism[20]. I personally see the idea of Edgerton's monism in the post-bhakti era as a different version of the classical polytheism, not as monism per se, since the god to which the devotee chooses to devote himself to does not abolish the rest of the pantheon; the personal god represents all the gods of the classical Hinduism, including the Brahman. The two basic branches of bhakti are Shivaism (devotion to Shiva) and Vishuism (devotion to Vishnu). Vishnuism begins with the *Bhagavad-Ghita*, where Arjuna discovers that Krishna, the manifestation of Vishnu, is the absolute god and that if Arjuna devotes himself totally to Krishna, he will automatically devote himself to Brahman (and, obviously, this includes the whole pantheon.). The problem that prevents man from understanding the true nature of the god (Arjuna's problem in the case of the *Bhagavad-Ghita*) is a problem of human nature, a problem of ignorance of our true nature, as it has been mentioned[21]. Let us return to the initial question: Does the distinction between the Being and the Becoming change with the bhakti movement? If the personal god (e. g. Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Ghita*) had taught the abolishment of every other god and that the acceptance of the one god is man's ticket to heaven, then we could, indeed, accept the end of the Being-Becoming conflict in Indian philosophy. However, this is hardly the case. As Krishna teaches Arjuna, he (Krishna) took up the role of Arjuna's charioteer before the battle of Kuruksetra in order to restore the fallen ethical code and also

[20] Edgerton Franklin, *The Bhagavad-Gita*, (ed. & tr.), (U.S.A.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 113.

[21] Vaish N. C., *Musings on the BG* (Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 2001, e. p. 1936), 3.

to secure his reign. Nevertheless, Krishna's reign does not abolish the other gods, Krishna incorporates them, including the Brahman. Hence, Arjuna (and, indeed, whoever is devoted to Krishna) will still be devoted to the Brahman and to the Trimurti, but through Krishna. In addition, Krishna teaches Arjuna not to fear to engage in the battle (Arjuna has got second thoughts as he sees his next-of-kin standing opposite ready to fight), because *never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be*[22]. The immanence of existence associates with the Being, while the human perception of life associates with the Becoming. In other words, Krishna, Arjuna and all these kings have always existed, but Arjuna cannot fully comprehend it, because he perceives death as something final, rather than a rapture in the continuation, as Krishna is trying to teach him.

China

Chinese philosophy has been a living organism for more than 2,500 years. Although many schools of philosophy flourished during the development of the Chinese civilisation (there was even an era called the Hundred Schools of Thought during the Spring and Autumn Era and the Warring States Period that shows the variety of different schools of thought) only two schools are dominant: Daoism and Confucianism. However, before Lao-Zi and Confucius, there was the era of the *Yi-jing*, the *Book of Changes*, which can be considered the pre-philosophical era of China. The title speaks for itself: the main philosophical idea in this classic is the idea of change and this idea dominates the whole book, the initial purpose of which was fortune-telling. The idea of Being is still present and in fact there is even the idea that the Being derives from the non-Being[23], with the productive aid from the Yin-Yang

[22] *Bhagavad-Ghita*, 2.12.

[23] Chang Chi-yun, *Chinese philosophy*, v.3 (Beijing: Confucianism and other schools, Chinese Culture University Press, 1984), 300.

complex[24]. Prima facie, we can only assume that Parmenides would strongly disapprove of this book, yet if we consider the non-Being as the primal cosmogonic force, then we are driven to think of the non-Being assuming the place of the Parmenidean Being. Thus, it can be assumed that the conflict between the Being and the Becoming appears in the *Yi-jing*, although it is still very early for one to speak of different schools of thought.

In the 6th century Taoism appears and Lao-zi is considered the mythical founder of this school of philosophy that has been so strongly associated with the concept of change. A little later Confucianism emerged, and Confucius from Lun (modern-day Qufu, Shandong) shaped the political theory of China and indeed southeast Asia with his ideas being, more or less, present to this day. Although classical Taoism focused more on the metaphysical aspect and Confucianism on the political structure of the state and the relations between the emperor and the citizens and among the citizens, the two schools are not as distinct as one might think. Both schools make use of the term Tao/Dao, which confuses things as to how each school interprets it. In fact, it has been argued that every school in ancient China had a unique version of the Tao[25] and that Taoism lacked the social character of Confucianism and for this it failed to win the hearts of the Chinese from the start[26], as did Confucianism. Moreover, Confucius in his *Analects* talks about the notion of flux as well as that of harmony quite a few times and Lao-zi in his *Dao De Jing* refers to the political or the moral aspects. Hence, it cannot be said that the distinction between Being and Becoming in China refers to the distinction between Confucianism and Taoism. The conflict between Being and Becoming are both related to Taoism whatsoever.

In Taoism the distinction receives a different form in the sense that the Tao is the basis of both the Being and the Becoming. According to the beginning of the *Dao De Jing* the

[24] Ibidem, 306.

[25] Cheng Ann (Paris: *Histoire de la pensée chinoise*, Seuil, 2014), 35.

[26] Wei Francis C. M., *The spirit of Chinese culture* (New York: Charles Scribner's & sons, 1947), 68.

Tao that can be named is not the eternal Tao[27]; this ironic statement defines the true identity of Tao: Tao is the supreme, the eternal, but only for as long as man attempts to understand it and to conquer it. In other words, the Chinese Being owes its supremacy to the Becoming; Tao is supreme for as long as man chases it. The end of the flux means the end of the being of Tao, since as soon as one grasps it, one will come to the realisation that the real thing is still out there and that what he has grasped is but a chimera. The idea of Becoming in Chinese philosophy has often been associated with water, which, thanks to its nature, brings us closer to the Tao, explains Francois Jullien[28].

It is change where the value of Tao lies, not the ex-nihilo creation[29] and in this respect the concept of Being and that of Becoming in Taoism should be seen not in the sense of conflict, as for instance in Parmenides and Heraclitus, but in terms of coalition.

Conclusion

By and large, it can be claimed that the concept of Being and the concept of Becoming are the two dominant concepts in philosophy. However, it is often considered a Western privilege to think in a manner that separates the two. This article has attempted to demonstrate that this conflict (to whichever extent it can be considered as conflict) between Being and Becoming does not concern Western tradition alone, but can be spotted in the philosophy of the East as well. As mentioned in the abstract it would be an impossible task to include all the examples from all the philosophers from all three countries throughout a period of more than a millennium so as to support the line of argumentation expressed here.

[27] *Dao De Jing*, 1.1.

[28] Jullien Francois, *A treatise on efficacy*; *between western and Chinese thinking* (tr. by Janet Lloyd) (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2004, e. p. Grasset 1996), 170.

[29] Burik Steven, Thinking on the edge; Heidegger, Derrida and the Taoist getaway, Steven Burik, *Philosophy East & West* (499-516), University of Hawaii Press v. 60, No 4, (October 2010) 499.

Nevertheless, the volume of the written sources and the richness of the ideas should not be an obstacle for future academic research on this topic, which can be dealt with in the form of a monograph or, perhaps, a doctoral thesis.

Based on the above ideas presented and analysed, this article reaches the following conclusions:

1. The distinction between Being and Becoming has been the case since antiquity in Greece, India, and China, though with several differences. Thus, it is not to be considered a characteristic feature of Western tradition alone.
2. The distinction is far clearer in the pre-Socratics, with Parmenides and Heraclitus being considered as the crème de la crème of this conflict. Moreover, the limited sources on the philosophy of that era may allow us a general view of their ideas, but the poetic manner of Parmenides' *On Nature* and the fragmental structure of Heraclitus make it hard to come to specific conclusions. The obviously snobbish character of Heraclitus isn't helpful at all.
3. The distinction between Being and Becoming in India is found in the relationship between the Brahman and the Trimurti, which is the manifestation of the Brahman.
4. In China the distinction is not as strong since the Tao is the basis for both the Being and the Becoming. The distinction should be seen as coalition rather than sheer conflict.
5. In Chinese philosophy the matter of the cliché of Being and Becoming can be spotted in Taoism, whereas the social character of Confucianism complicates things as to whether the same (or a similar) distinction lies in Confucianism, too.

Epilogue

Prima facie, be advised that it may appear that this article has failed to indicate which philosopher falls into which

category as with Plato and Aristotle, other than the obvious (e. g. Parmenides – Heraclitus). However, let us take into account that this was not what the article was all about. The main concern of the article was to demonstrate that the distinction between the philosophical schools of Being and Becoming has been dominating philosophy since antiquity and that this "cliché" has been the case for India and China, too. I tried to stick to the initial idea as much as possible leaving out examples from other schools of philosophy or other eras, including those who attempted to associate the Being with the divine element in early Islamic philosophy, such the resemblance between the Being of Parmenides and Allah in Ibn-Arabi or the connection between the eternal motion and the first mover in Ibn-Rushd (Averroes). I hope that this article has promoted academic research in the field, as I am left with the impression that there has been little research regarding what appears to me as a quite interesting topic.

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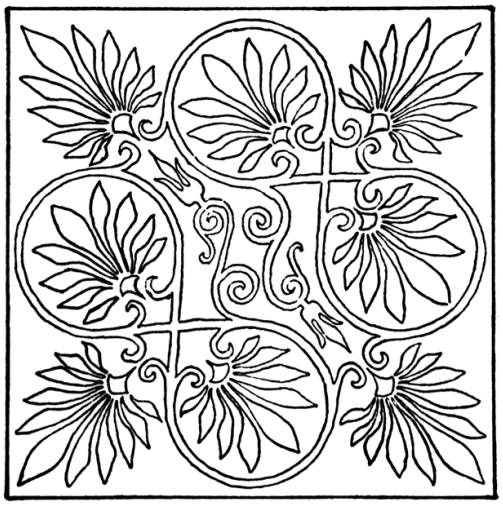

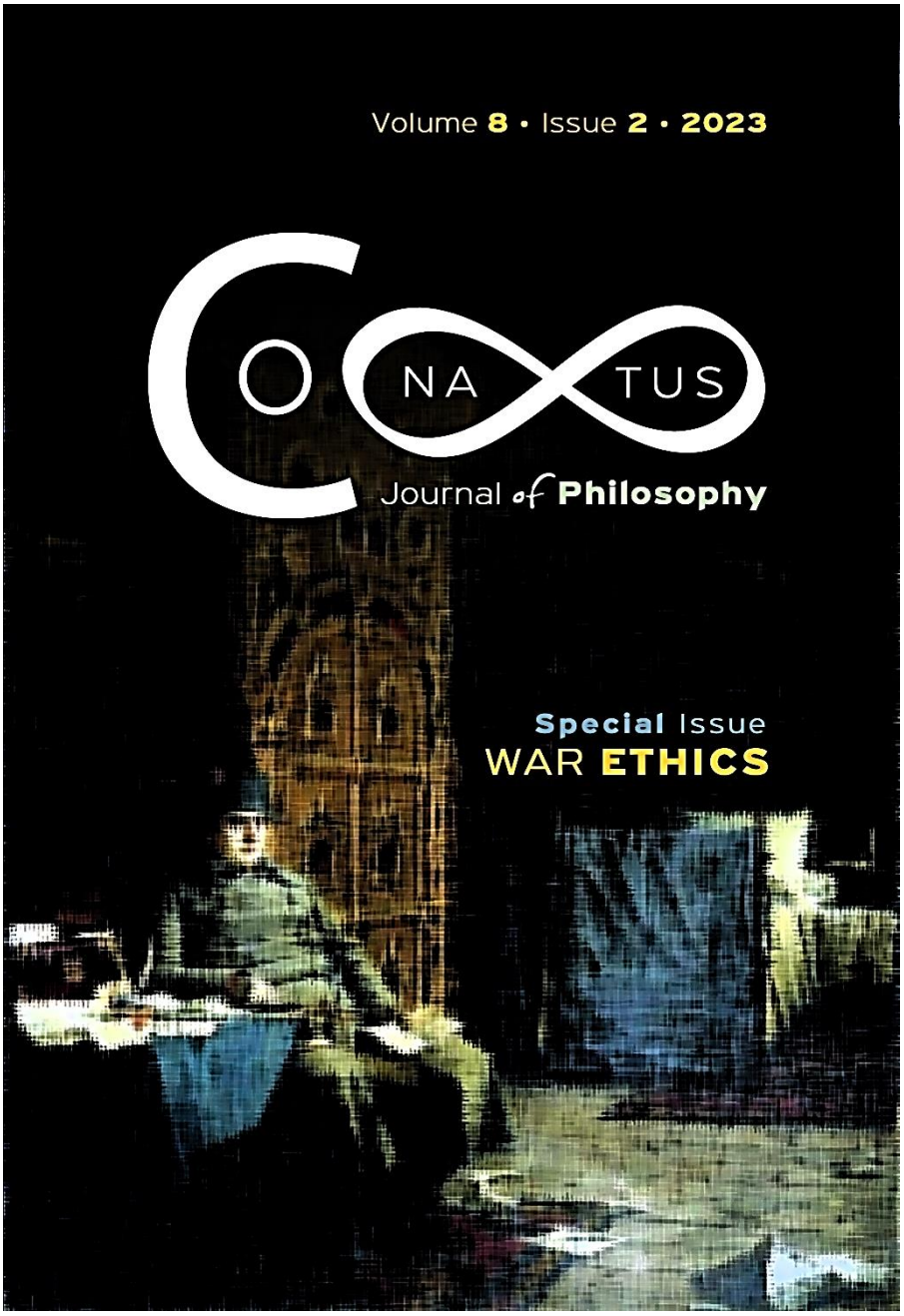

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Private property, labour and the transformation of Political Economy in *1844 Manuscripts*

Evgenia Thanopoulou,
Doctor of Philosophy,
National Technical University of Athens,
e_thanop@yahoo.gr

Abstract

This paper intends to show that, from a methodological point of view, the *1844 Manuscripts* are an integral part of the Marxist corpus and not an "epistemological break". Marx thematizes the object of Political Economy (*1844 Manuscripts*) by transforming its discourse. Then, proceeds to the analysis of the capitalist economy (*Capital*), using the revised categories of Political Economy. However, a necessary condition for such a reading is the non-ignorance of Marx's *ontology*. Marx *reverses* the Hegelian dialectics based on the relationship between man and nature. Starting from the *social practice* (labour), Marx sublates the *contradictions* between private property and labour, on the level of content, and that between Political Economy and Philosophy (necessity and freedom), on the level of discourse. Their mutual passage renders possible the transfer of the object to *reality* as a reflection or as a product of thinking (a *real* thing). Thematizing the *political-economic fact*, Marx returns to *social being*, sublating social *oppositions* too.

Keywords: Ontology, Dialectics, Negation, Alienation, Sublation, Science, Philosophy, Political-economic fact

Introduction

The *1844 Manuscripts*[1] are classified as belonging to Karl Marx's early writings, probably the most controversial in the history of his thought because the humanism, Marx promoted, was considered too abstract and universal to be "consistent" with the later "scientific socialism" or "historical materialism". Consequently, Marx sought the fundamental principles of Political Economy without any parallel critical elaboration of its accusations. This raises the question of the *discontinuity* of Marxist thought. The point of this theoretical and political controversy was the influence of Hegelian thought on Marx,[2] as part of a general tendency of disengaging Marx's philosophical thought from Hegelian logic and epistemology, during the 1960s and 1970s. Émile Bottigelli, who edited the French edition of the *1844 Manuscripts* in 1962, considers the Political Economy, presented by Marx, as a kind of phenomenology that expresses an alienated reality. The latter, has already been accepted by the bourgeois Political Economy without criticizing it.[3] Louis Althusser, in 1965, also underlined the "theoretical humanism" [*humanisme*

[1] The original document is being kept at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. It consists of two notebooks (first and third Manuscript), two separate sheets, that is, four pages (second Manuscript) and a double sheet of a four-page continuous text (fourth Manuscript). In their handwritten form, they include a total of 76 pages. The title "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844" does not exist in the original document. All the titles were given by the publishers of MEGA in 1932 (first complete edition) and reproduced, until today, in the known form.

[2] According to Marcello Musto, the changes that took place in Marx's manuscripts, in order to be published in 1932, either in Germany by Siegfried Landshut & Jacob Peter Mayer or in Moscow by MEGA, played an important role in this controversy which ideologico-political developments fueled throughout the 20th century. Musto M., "The 'Young Marx' Myth in Interpretations of the Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", *Critique. Journal of Socialist Theory* 43, no. 2 (2015): 233-237, doi: 10.1080/03017605.2015.1051759.

[3] Bottigelli É., "Présentation", in Karl Marx, *Manuscrits de 1844 (économie politique & philosophie)*, trans. É. Bottigelli, Editions Sociales, Paris 1972, xli.

théorique][4] that characterizes the *1844 Manuscripts*.[5] For Jacques Ranciére, Marx's theoretical approach is an *amphibology* since, behind each economic law, Marx reveals an anthropological law as its true significance or as an expression of human essence. This approach, for Ranciére, is completely different from that of *Capital* where Marx reveals the "inner-determination" of the economic phenomena which their phenomenal form encloses. This determination, which is disappeared in the object (or commodity), is a *social relation of production*.[6]

In the "Preface"[7] of *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx refers to the broader goal which is to publish individual works that critique the state, law, ethics, political life, etc., and the theoretical treatment of material by scientists. It also includes the publication of an overall project which will highlight the relation between them, a sub-goal that was never completed. Then, he explicitly states that *Manuscripts* focus on highlighting the internal connection that characterizes Political Economy with these different parts to the extent that is related to them.[8] The revelation of the internal connection or relation between the society of needs (economy) and of State (politics-ideology) makes their combination possible, avoiding the essentialist approach of idealism and the materialism of

[4] Althusser led the ideological controversy over humanistic interpretations of Marxism with his famous position "Le marxisme est un anti-humanisme théorique" (Marxism is a theoretical anti-humanism) formulated in Althusser L., *Pour Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, Maspero, Paris, 1965. There is, of course, an extensive controversy over the next decade in Thompson E. P., *The Poverty of Theory or an Orrery of Errors*, Merlin Press, London 1995.

[5] Althusser, *For Marx*, 227-231.

[6] Crane J., "Notes on Ranciére's 'Concept of Critique and the Critique of Political Economy'", *Red Leaves* (blog), May 26, 2021, https://redleaves.blog/2021/05/26/notes-on-rancieres-concept-of-critique-and-the-critique-of-political-economy/.

[7] The "Preface" was part of the third Manuscript, but MEGA publishers placed it at the beginning to state Marx's intention to engage in the critique of political economy and to show that the text formulated according to this reasoning. Musto, "The 'Young Marx'", 236.

[8] Marx K., *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and the Communist Manifesto*, trans. M. Milligan, Prometheus Books, New York 1988, 13-14.

Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, that is to say, the substantiation of concepts.[9] Due to the inadequacy of Political Economy and the inherent inability of philosophy to explain together the modern social reality, Marx aims at the *self-understanding* of Political Economy based on social practice and Hegelian dialectics. Thematizing the *political-economic fact* [*Nationalökonomisches factum*], he highlights its importance for the transformation, not only of the Political Economy, but also of the society.

Re-reading the *1844 Manuscripts*, I attempt to show that Marx's initial thought is not being cut off from the latter scientific analysis of the capitalistic economy or critique of the economic concepts. Thus, the economic phenomenon or fact is not alienated from the *social relation of production*. The main purpose of Marx in *1844 Manuscripts* is to form the basic structure of the methodology of a transformed Political Economy which, at the same time, constitutes a "positive critique". Through the category of "private property" [*Privateigentum*] and of "alienated labour" [*Entfremdete Arbeit*], Marx provides the presuppositions for the thematization of the real object of Political Economy. Furthermore, through the "labour of negative", he manages to thematize the political-economic fact (as production and as ideology) in order to sublate,[10] not only the inner-contradiction of economic phenomena, but also the opposition between theory and praxis. Putting the foundations of a "positive critique", Marx suggests the methodology which will be used

[9] In *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx acknowledges the importance of Feuerbach's religious critique, but points out that it is not differentiated from Hegelian idealism. Feuerbach begins his analysis by substituting beings with concepts, i.e., the person with Man, an imaginary being without the real characteristics that make up his existence. In Marx's view, idealism concludes in the same abstract result since it does not understand the concepts as philosophical constructions and substantiates them in its attempt to arrive at a conclusion about the structure and the relation of human thought and action. The accusations that make up human existence (the individual subject) are not attributed to him, but to an Idea.

[10] Unfortunately, there is no English word which can replace accurately the Hegelian "Aufhebung". The Hegelian term has three distinct senses: "to raise", "to preserve", and "to eliminate". The English translation chooses the term "superside" while this paper chooses the term "sublation".

in *Capital* for the analysis of the capitalistic phenomenon, as the object of a transformed Political Economy. The analysis presented below follows the structure of *1844 Manuscripts*.

1. The private property, the labour, and their latent relation

Focusing on the economic category of "private property" and "alienated labour", in the first Manuscript, Marx attempts to show, on the one hand, that economists do not understand the importance of economic phenomena and, on the other, that highlighting their importance requires a different methodology, suggesting the need for transformation in Political Economy.[11] For Marx, the main problem is the separation of philosophy from the natural sciences which leads to the thematization of a fragmented science, abstract and idealistic, cut off from the real world. Aiming at a *practical critique*, Marx seeks to escape from the idealistic usage of concepts that gives to the categories of Political Economy an abstract content.[12]

[11] As Michael Evans points out, Marx's interest in Political Economy began when he worked as the publisher of the independent and radical newspaper *Rheinische Zeitung*. The newspaper focused on material conditions and discussions on issues related to free trade and protection. Marx´s thoughts on Political Economy were influenced by Friedrich Engels's book, *Outline of a Critique of Political Economy* (1843). In this book, Engels refers to the development of Political Economy in a period of radical changes in economy. Moreover, he refers to the elaboration of the economic categories and the laws of private property, in the broader context of the development of industry and commercial order, by Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and David Ricardo. Nevertheless, he argues that Political Economy is a form of "licensed fraud" because impoverishes and dehumanizes humanity instead of articulating the laws of private property. Evans M., "Karl Marx's first confrontation with political economy: the 1844 manuscripts", *Economy and Society* 13, no. 2 (1984): 115-116, 121, doi: 10.1080/03085148300000017.

[12] Even before the *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx comes up against any abstraction of the *real* man. Mészáros I., *Marx´s Theory of Alienation*, Merlin Press, London 1970, 220-221. Indicatively, we mention that in the book *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'* (1943), Marx stresses that "man is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is *the world of man*, the state, society". Marx K., *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'*,

Trying to explain the phenomenon of wealth of the owners at the expense of the workers, Political Economy starts, according to Marx, from a "fictitious primordial condition", taking the movement of the category of "private property" and its abstract forms as laws. Based on the analytical method, economists fail to explain the division between capital and labour, thus attributing the phenomenon of alienation [*Entefremdung*] to private property. Political Economy does not examine the material conditions that determine the appearance of private property, reaching the point of accepting what is supposed to be explained,[13] thus reproducing the contradiction. The method that the Political Economy follows for the definition of economic phenomena moves from the most concrete to the most abstract concept. As Marx's analysis of the category of "alienated labour" shows below, the analytical method is half of the path that someone has to cross (genetic method) since the return is pending, that is, the movement from the most abstract to the most concrete concept (dialectical method).[14]

Marx, however, starts from the case of Political Economy on the division of the categories "labour", "capital" and "land ownership", follows its methodology, and examines the empirical elements of this distinction. In other words, he follows the movement of "private property"[15] in order to decide whether experience itself legitimizes the position of Political

trans. A. Jolin – J. O'Malley, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009, 131.

[13] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 69-70. As Soner Soysal points out, if the laws of Political Economy are to be true, their universal validity and necessity must be proved, just as the laws of the natural sciences are. That is, the wage–profit relation must not be explored as it is, i.e., as a result of the capitalists who make a profit. Such an approach leads to a reduction in wages in order for capitalists to make a profit. What is necessary and what Political Economy does not do, according to Marx, is the explanation of private property. Soysal S., "1844 Ekonomik ve Felsefi El Yazmaları'nda Yabancılaşma ile Özel Mülkiyet Arasındaki İlişki", *Posseible Journal of Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2022): 143.

[14] Rubin I. I., "Abstract labour and value in Marx's system", *Marxists Internet Archive*, 1927, https://www.marxists.org/archive/rubin/abstract-labour.htm.

[15] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 69-70, 81.

Economy on division. For Marx, as for David Ricardo, the main task of Political Economy is to determine the proportion of the total product belonging to the class of landowners, capitalists, and workers.[16] Based on this, he examines the fluctuations of workers' wages and the situation in which the worker falls, when society is in a state of decline, increased wealth, and fullness of wealth. In the latter two cases, a generalized wealth of capital and income would logically lead the majority of people to happiness. Nevertheless, the opposite happens: the majority of people live in misery.[17] In short, the worker does not own the total product of labour, as Adam Smith claims, but only a minimal percentage which allows him to exist as a worker and not as a human being.[18]

In addition to wages, Marx examines the profit of capital and the land rent, concluding that economists see the unity between capital and labour as a unity of individuals, such as that between the capitalist and the worker, which is characterized as incidental, emerging from external factors. The same goes for the dispute between them. For Marx, capital, which exists in the form of bonds or stocks bringing profit to the owner, arises from the division of labour and the growing role of human labour in the formation or production of the commodity. In cases of increased wealth, labour demand exceeds supply, leading to overwork among workers. However, the accumulation of a large amount of labour increases capital accumulation (multilateral accumulation). Subsequently, the competition between the capitalists leads to the accumulation of capital in a few hands (unilateral accumulation).[19] After all,

[16] Korsch K., *Karl Marx*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2016, 71. Karl Korsch points to later and explicit reports of Marx about the duty of Political Economy. As main idea, it is also present in the analysis of *1844 Manuscripts*.

[17] According to Marx, the last possible degree of wealth is the culmination of a developing economy characterized by the overproduction of products, resulting in either a reduction in the number of workers or a reduction in their wages. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 21-24.

[18] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 24-25.

[19] The accumulation of small and large capital and the competition between them refers to the relation between *fixed capital* and *circulating capital*. Fixed capital concerns what is used for land improvement, the

only large capital (industry) can cope with competition among capitalists either in the case of increased wealth, which results in higher wages and lower prices for consumer goods, or in the case of wealth fullness, where both wages and earnings are low. Is the overproduction and the need for multifaceted expansion which, combined with *productive forces*, turns capitalists or industrialists in search of large tracts of land, creating higher rents for the benefit of property owners. As a result, traditional disputes and competitions between capital and land (land ownership) are reduced.[20] Eventually, the two terms come together as workers' misery increases, allowing the domination of abstract labour[21] or the "objectification" of labour.[22] In other words, Marx finds that capital is accumulated labour,[23] while impoverishment is the result of the domination of capital over the products of labour produced by someone else (alienation).

Political Economy, according to Marx, is unable to explain the opposition because it falls into an error of an ontological nature. Considers labour a source of wealth, but substantiates its value, thus treating it as a *thing*.[24] In this sense, labour is

purchase of machines, tools, etc. Circulating capital concerns the production, manufacture or purchase of goods, for the purpose of reselling them and making a profit. The accumulation of large capital requires the accumulation and simplification of fixed capital, i.e., a kind of organization of the means of labour which can not be undertaken by the small capitalist. That is why, according to Ricardo, the accumulation of capital precedes the division of labour. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 44-45, 48-50.

[20] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 26, 40-42, 49-51.

[21] As Marx highlights, the worker lives only from his work and, in particular, from one-sided, abstract labour, which makes him nothing more than a worker. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 27. Abstract labour is a paid employment relationship. The worker produces for a wage, but the activity he develops, during the production process, can not be sold or bought. Nevertheless, when this activity gets a price, then its value, which is none other than the "essential relation of labor", is objectified. For more details, see the analysis below.

[22] Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 144.

[23] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 22.

[24] For Marx, however, the value of labour should be determined by the "essential relation of labour" which is summed up by the relation of the worker to the production (as the output of products or commodities and

transformed into means, i.e., a form of activity that "occurs only in the form of wage-earning activity".[25] As a result, is being sold and bought like commodities. The same goes for the worker, who is thrown into the market, reaching the point where the demand of the people necessarily regulates the production of the people.[26] The cause of objectification of labour is the dominance of socially homogenized labour that results from the exchange of a product of particular labour with any other product. This process facilitates the division of labour,[27] which derives from the equality of labour at the level of production, determining its value according to the quantity of labour expended in the production of a commodity. However, if the consumed labour takes the form of the quantity of product value, produced in measure of time, then the characteristics of the labour are "objectified": through the exchange of products, labour takes on the value of

as an act). Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 73. This determination is hiding behind the two discourses Marx articulates clearly in *Capital*, concerning: a) the apparent motion of commodity (price) and b) the "real" motion of value which disappears into the commodity. The two motions become one in Volume 3 (Chapter 9) where Marx examines the transformation of commodity values into prices of production. In the first case, the commodity itself contains the quantity of paid labour, shaping its cost price. In the second case, the commodity contains the total quantity of labour (paid or unpaid), shaping its value. The concealed difference, which comes up from the unity of the two motions, is the "essential relation of labour", transforming into- or externalizing to- the price of production as the form or expression of the total social capital. That is why, in practice, the cost of price of the commodities is always "less than their value, or than the price of production which is identical with this value for the total mass of commodities produced". Marx K., *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Volume III*, trans. D. Fernbach, Penguin Books, London 1981, 265.

[25] Wage is a deduction from the product of labour which land and capital provide to the worker as an aid. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 26-28.

[26] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 20-21.

[27] Division of labour exists in all the systems of social organization. Nevertheless, in the case of commercial society, it does not concern the division of labour among several individuals but that each individual is obliged to do the same work which consists of uniformly repetitive functions. It concerns, in short, the multiplication of the same work. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 26, 133-134.

commodities.[28] Money, in this case, transforms imperfections and fantasies (desires) into substances themselves, allowing the exchange of even physical-human qualities.[29] It is, in other words, the means of unity and separation of man from

[28] Marx cites some excerpts from other studies related to abstract labour and the measure of the time of the output of a product, based on which the income of the worker is estimated. He also mentions the consequences of the concentration of time due to mechanization and its combination with the simple (numerical) division of labour at the expense of the mental and physical condition of the worker. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 28-30. In *Capital*, Marx manifests that money is the common measure of the value of commodities. The conversion of objectified human labour, i.e., of commodities as values, to money "as a measure of value is the necessary form of appearance of the measure of value which is immanent in commodities, namely labour-time". Thus, it's not money that renders the commodity commensurable. Marx K., *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Volume I*, trans. B. Fowkes, Penguin Books, London 1982, 187.

[29] According to Ranciére, in *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx understands the objectification of the relations of production as objectification of the subject's predicates because he confuses the alienation [*Entfremdung*] of the relations of capital with the subject's substantial alienation. In other words, he confuses *Verkehrung*-inversion with *Verkehrung*-reversal, allowing the intervention of the worker and the capitalist. As he mentions, "In Manuscripts, the subject (the worker) invests an object with his essence. This object increases the power of the alien entity (capital) which poses itself as subject in the movement of reversal and reduces the worker to being the object of his object". However, in *Capital*, "the thing in which the relation has disappeared then presents itself as an automation-subject". Ranciére J., "The concept of 'critique' and the 'critique of political economy' (from the 1844 Manuscript to Capital)", *Economy and Society* 5, no. 3 (1976): 360, 362, doi: 10.1080/03085147600000016.

nature.[30] Ignoring the "*real* individual activity",[31] capital affects the whole existence of the worker. However, the latter, can neither be sold nor bought. Nor can labour be valued in the form of wages or remuneration if it constitutes active human property.[32] For Marx, the mediation of private property - exchange - division of labour eliminates the possibility of a non-mediated relationship of man with nature and with himself. Any form of institutional mediation leads, on the one hand, to the preservation of the worker and, on the other, to the disappearance of man as the creator of his history.[33]

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[30] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 138-139. This basic ontological dimension of alienated labour does not appear before the third Manuscript. According to Mészáros, the chapter on *money* was not included in this manuscript. His original position was after the chapter "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole". This shows that *1844 Manuscripts* are a system *in statu nascendi*, focusing on alienated labour. The discovery of the "money system" will be later the basis for the complete elaboration of the theory of value. Nevertheless, even towards the end of the Manuscripts, it seems that the "money-system" is the last means of any alienated mediation starting from- or focusing on- the alienated labour. In other words, the "money-system" is part of the broader ontological framework of human realization through labour. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 97-99.

[31] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 31. As Marx mentions in the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, objectified general working time obliterates any particularity of concrete labour. Therefore, the labour differs only quantitatively. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S. Ryazanskaya, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1999, 31, eBook (*Marxists Internet Archive*).

[32] In *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx makes clear that "price" is the expression of the exchange value (of commodities) with unique equality of the various commodities, with a particular commodity, that is, gold (= measure of values). This general equivalent takes the form of money. He points out, however, that the true measure between commodities (exchange value) and gold (as a measure of values) is labour itself. Marx, *A Contribution*, 31.

[33] As Istvan Mészáros mentions, Marx does not reject all mediation, but the "mediation of mediation" (INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY - EXCHANGE - DIVISION OF LABOUR), that is a set of secondary mediations of the ontologically fundamental self-mediation of man-nature relation which has an alienated form. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 78-79, 83. For Marx, institutional law (legislation) intervenes in such a way that maintains the capital which rules, through its purchasing power, the labour and its products. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 35-36.

Political Economy may attribute the properties of wealth to subjective activity, but it continues to see labour as a means of making money, even after the appearance of abstract labour (wage labour), reserving the subject-object relation. We see this reversal, according to Ranciére, in *Capital* as a double movement: the objectification of the social determinations of production and the subjectification of things in which the social determinations are represented and concealed.[34] Ranciére argues that Marx, in *1844 Manuscripts*, cannot see the difference or the "gap" between these movements. Consequently, he cannot make a distinction between the *product* as a real movement in the process of production (value) and the *thing* as it is given (appear) in perception as an economic phenomenon. The last one conceals the real movement of the inner-determination of the relation of production.[35] Nevertheless, Marx's methodological choice, beginning with the *1844 Manuscripts*, points to this very confusion which is the other error of Political Economy: the real and the concrete, from which economists start, are inseparable from the ways that thinking appropriates it.[36] The

[34] Ranciére, "The concept of 'critique'", 360.

[35] This "gap" or disappearance of real motion in the movement of an economic phenomenon and its appearance to the agents of production, as an economic phenomenon, is "constitutive of fetishism". Crane, "Notes".

[36] According to Mészáros, Marx does not start "from an actual economic fact", as economists do. He is interested in revealing the relation of the individual to the whole, explaining the special relation of the form to its content in terms of becoming. An economic fact, such as wage labour (abstract labour), can not be taken as a starting point, that is, as a physical form of the terms that constitute labour. Labour should be analyzed in a wide historical framework because it encloses the relation between man the nature. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 123-124. Marx raises the question of method. For him, the relation between man and nature should not be mediated by abstract and empty categories or concepts, like those the Political Economy uses. In order to reveal the unity and fluidity that characterizes the cycle of life, Hegel also challenges and denies every given truth, not only in terms of knowledge (what it is), but also in terms of way of thinking (how do I know that is), raising the question of the legitimation of knowledge, that is, of a scientific method. For Hegel, each philosophical question "is not exhausted by stating it as an aim, but by carrying it out, nor is the result the actual whole, but rather the result together with the process through which it came about". However, there is no need of

causal approach, adopted by the Political Economy, identifies them. Due to this formal identity, i.e., an indifferent identification, Political Economy ends up at a dead-end by receiving the requested (*petitio principii*). In *Grundrisse*, Marx makes clear that labour, as a simple economic category, is a real and concrete fact, a subtraction of the category "labour", from which Political Economy begins its analysis. This abstraction is practically true and appears where "there is the richest growth, where one thing appears common to many, common to all". Thus, an economic category makes its appearance only in modern societies, completing labour as a concept.[37] Marx implies this process in *1844 Manuscripts* since he introduces the category of "abstract labour". Identifying these two movements, Political Economy defines labour abstractly, as a thing, as a one-dimensional form of activity that maintains the capital–labour opposition. Proposals, like Pierre-Joseph Proudhons', that focus on improving or equating wages,[38] simply reproduce and conceal it. For Marx, improvements oriented solely to economic activity cannot sublate the contradiction between private property and labour or the opposition that their relation entails.[39] Consequently, what matters is the revelation of the existing opposition which the Political Economy itself seeks to eliminate,[40] establishing

checking the result, because "notion and object, the criterion and what is to be tested, are present in consciousness itself". For Hegel, "once the dialectic has been separated from proof, the notion of philosophical demonstration has been lost". Hegel G. W. F., *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1977, 2, 40, 53-54.

[37] Marx K., *Grundrisse. Foundations of the critique of political economy*, trans. M. Nicolaus, Random House, New York 1973, 104-105.

[38] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 27.

[39] Marx radicalizes "Aufhebung" through a real contradiction, based on the primordial difference of the terms that constitute it. Through *praxis*, Marx extricates himself from the status of ideas and, at the same time, restructures the structure of dialectics by activating and reversing the contradictions.

[40] Marx is referring to the post-Ricardo version of the Political Economy which, in any real development (social contradictions and struggles) on capitalist production, seeks to eliminate contradictions. Korsch, *Karl Marx*, 73-74. Identifying private property with the subject, the Political Economy itself is alienated from man. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 95.

the dominance of one-dimensional abstract labour (wage labour), that is, depriving workers of the possibility of freedom. In this sense, categories should not be treated as abstract objects, empty of identities, that is, free from the terms of *becoming*,[41] but as a process of understanding and knowledge of their dialectical movement.[42] If the division between private property and labour exists, as economists claim, then empirical facts and categories are related in some internal way (with interdependencies and necessary relations), which a causal approach, limited to "external and fortuitous circumstances", cannot reveal.[43]

Starting from the assumptions of Political Economy, Marx raises a double concern. The first one,is related to the ontological relationship of man with nature, which in the context of industrial production has been reversed, deforesting the active property of man (labour) from its qualitative properties (aesthetic and intellectual). Although nature is the source of worker's labour,[44] Political Economy ends up thematizing labour as a simple economic category that cannot be understood as a product of human intellect (elaboration of perception and presentation of ideas into concepts). This assertion leads us to the second concern, which is related to the identification of reality with thinking, by Political Economy, thus making impossible the transformation of the object to reality or actuality and its manifestation as a political-

[41] Karl Korsch talks about the "formalistic anaemia" of post-Ricardo economics, emphasizing the absence of any practical significance and applicability. Korsch, *Karl Marx*, 67-68.

[42] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 103.

[43] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 70. The methodologies adopted by the sciences are written according to the rules of formal logic failing, at the level of language, to save the meaning of a concept: they isolate and immobilize the qualitative characteristics, properties and aspects of the things. This reasoning, which is limited to the repetition of the same terms, constitutes a tautology. Lefebvre H., *Dialectical materialism*, trans. J. Sturrock, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2009, 25. Marx is referring to the organic phenomenon. According to Gaston Bachelard, in these cases, the real is proved through the revelation of the object as an interplay of relationships. Bachelard G., *The new scientific spirit*, trans. A. Goldhammer, Beacon Press, Boston 1984, 13.

[44] Soysal, "1844 Ekonomik ve Felsefi", 144.

economic fact (real or actual phenomenon). The analytic approach makes impossible the expression of objectified labour as a relation of man to himself, to his labour and the product of his labour as well as to other people, to their labour and to the products they produce.[45] The distinction between reality (praxis) and thinking (theory), on which Marx insists, does not render reality independent from man, as Allen Wood claims.[46] Wood neglects Marx's ontology which lies behind his methodology[47] and explores *how something* exists *into* beings.

[45] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 78, 122.

[46] Wood A. W., *Karl Marx*, Routledge, New York 2004, 189-190. Wood argues that Marx's practical materialism consists of contents that are not revolutionary. As far as epistemology is concerned, they "consist only in the familiar tenets of common-sense realism" and "common-sense realism holds that material objects and the natural world generally have an existence distinct from anyone's consciousness of them and that the qualities they have do not depend on the mental activity through which they may be conceived or known". In this sense, Wood insists that is absurd for someone to think that Marx "does not believe in a reality independent of man's practical consciousness of it". He cites several theorists who have expressed different views, considering the latter to be anti-realist or idealistic interpretations. To stand for his argument, Wood refers to György Lukács, who spoke of "ontological objectivity of nature", from the moment that *1844 Manuscripts* appeared, but he seems to miss the signification of "ontology".

[47] The relationship of man with nature is unique. Man is part of nature and depends on it to survive. This dependency has two sides. The first one has practical character and refers to a relation which is necessary for his physical existence. The other one has theoretical character and it is necessary for the realization of his mental inorganic nature. As Soysal points out, man cannot distance himself from nature because is a direct part of it: "Nature is man's inorganic body-nature, that is, insofar as it is not the human body" (Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 76). But "the whole character of a species, its species character is contained in the character of its life-activity; and free conscious activity it's man's species character" (Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 76). According to Marx, an animal is "immediately identical with its life-activity '...' Man makes his life-activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life-activity '...' Conscious life activity directly distinguishes man from animal life-activity. Or it is only because he is a species being that he is a Conscious Being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity" (Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 76). Man aims at his freedom from all necessities, but only as self-conscious being has the ability to overcome

Consequently, he misses the significant role of negation in Marx's critique. Negation generates the process of the formation of reality "as an object of knowledge, judgment and transformation", as Judith Butler notices.[48] This perspective justifies Marx's statement in *Grundrisse*, according to which, it is through thinking that the real and the concrete can exist as one-sided and abstract relation of an already given and living *concrete totality*. Only the movement from the abstract to the concrete can reveal this relation, reproducing *concrete totality*.[49]

The methodology that Marx proposes for the definition of the object of Political Economy, in *1844 Manuscripts*, does not differ from the one he proposes in the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* and *Grundrisse* and is none other than the dialectical development of economic categories.[50] The emergence of the interiority of a political-economic phenomenon (already existing relation) and its exteriority (objectification of the existing relation) is ensured by the dialectical movement of "private property" (capital) which

necessities or to escape of absolute determinism. Thus, labour appears as the activity which provides the possibility of shaping both himself and the world he lives in freely. Re-shaping nature, man reflects himself in nature, thus permeating his existence into nature. This means that he is producing labour and nature, applying his creative activity on nature. Soysal, "1844 Ekonomik ve Felsefi", 145-149. Soysal's analysis is based on Judith Butler's examination of Marx's distinction between the organic [*Leib*] and inorganic [*Körper*] human body, its relation with nature, its implications in understanding labour and laboring body and its account for the contemporary discussion about the critique of critique. Butler J., "The inorganic body in the early Marx. A limit-concept of anthropocentrism", *Radical Philosophy* RP 2, no.06 (2019): 3-17.

[48] Butler, "The inorganic body", 3.

[49] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 100-101.

[50] For Ranciére, this theoretical approach concerns the subjectification of things. Both, in *1844 Manuscripts* and *Capital*, the motion of the things maintains the concepts of a previous domain. It constitutes an anthropological discourse once it is referring to "the essence of subjectivity". For Ranciére, objectification is that which can provide "a rigorous conceptual determination" of the social relation of production. For him, Marx manages to correlate these two different discourses or the "inner-determination" of economic phenomena to its form only in *Capital*. Ranciére, "The concept of 'critique'", 361.

manifests itself either in the form of capital–land unity or in the form of capital–labor opposition. Its manifestation, through the common term of "abstract labour", can sublate their separation which is necessary, essential, and destructive only for the worker.[51]

2. Alienated labour: the cause of private property

The question of the manifestation, presentation, or expression of an economic category in reality as a conceived world, is put at the center of Marx's investigation in *1844 Manuscripts*. In the fourth chapter of the first Manuscript entitled "Estranged Labour" Marx focuses on the manifestation of the category of "alienated labour" as man's relation to himself, other people and nature. For him, man's objective and real relation to himself arises only through his relation to other people while the product of his labour is objectified labour. In this sense, alienated labour is manifested in practice since a man, not only produces his relation to the object and himself, but also the relation of other people to his production and his product and his relation to others.[52] Thus, Marx's theory differs from the theory of Political Economy which approaches the relation of the worker to production (product, labour) externally, superficially, that is to say, without distinguishing the direct, necessary, and essential relation which exists between them.[53] However, Ranciére argues that Marx uses uncriticized concepts of Political Economy, without distinguishing them from the previous referential context, thus maintaining the classical image of alienation.[54] Althusser also points out that Marx does not criticize the categories of Political

[51] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 122.

[52] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 78.

[53] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 69-71.

[54] Ranciére notices that Marx does not criticize the difference between the vocabulary of *1844 Manuscripts* and that of *Capital*. He argues that, in *Capital*, Marx uses new concepts, but he uses the same words for the anthropological concepts. He thinks that Marx did not see a difference between the discourse of Young Marx and that of *Capital*. Ranciére, "The concept of 'critique'", 361, 364-365.

Economy, emphasizing the radical dominance of philosophy over content, which will soon become independent.[55]

Marx follows the analytical method of Political Economy, for which labour's realization is its objectification: "In the conditions dealt with by political economy this realization of labour appears as *loss of reality* for the workers; objectification as *loss of the object and object-bondage*; appropriation as *estrangement, as alienation*".[56] The loss of reality leads the worker to starvation. The loss and enslavement of the object imply the deprivation of all necessary means for its survival, even of the labour itself. Finally, the appropriation of the object (product, labour) submits him to the domination of the product, i.e., the capital. Then, Marx gives to it a mental form (concept): "*estranged*, *alienated labour*" [*Entfremdete Arbeit*]. Nevertheless, the consequences of such a realization (of labour) do not explain, according to Marx, the reasons for its creation. The cause of alienation is not the "movement of private property" as the Political Economy wants to present it.[57] Proceeding to the internal development of the economic category of "alienated labour", Marx moves in the opposite direction, from the abstract concept to the concrete one. In his analysis, Marx examines the alienation of the worker and his production, that is, an economic fact, from two aspects: a) the relation of the worker and the product of his labour, and b) the relation of the worker and the act of production. In this way, he reveals the "secret" of private property's movement: that it is the product of alienated labour and the means of this alienation, i.e., its realization.

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[55] Althusser, *For Marx*, 159. Althusser attempted to distinguish the Marxist science of history (historical materialism) from philosophy (dialectical materialism). The function of a critical philosophy supports the scientific task by distinguishing scientific concepts from ideological ones in order to let the scientific practice elaborates the scientific facts freely. Lung D., "Humanist and Anti-Humanist Discourse after Marx", *SSRN*, September 11, 2017, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2961428.

[56] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 71. Alienation and appropriation are two sides of the same coin. Alienation expresses labour and appropriation expresses capital. Could C., *Marx's social ontology. Individuality and community in Marx's theory of social reality*, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge 1978, 145.

[57] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 81-82.

Marx analyzes an economic event through the transformative function of labour since without its mediation the element of matter is "incapable of creating wealth".[58] The internal development of the concept of "labour" facilitates the self-revelation of political-economic fact, i.e., the latent unity which characterizes the terms that constitute it as an object. Their internal connection maintains the individual which, at the same time, can be sublated, not to an *inner* and *silent* universality, as Feuerbach believes,[59] but to a new universality which the *concrete totality* condenses, representing the transition from the individual to the universal or *from fact to value*.[60] On this universality, which incorporates the concrete without identifying it with the totality, the value of labour is determined by the "essential relation of labour", that is, the relation of the worker to production both as the production of products and as an act.[61] The contradictions that arise from this relation, in the commercial society, are externalized by taking, at the level of material reality (material alienation), the form of opposition while at the level of consciousness, they

[58] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 47.

[59] Marx K. – Engels F., "Theses on Feuerbach", in Marx K. – Engels F., *Collected Works Marx and Engels 1845-47*, Vol. 5, trans. C. Dutt – W. Lough – C. P. Magill, Lawrence and Wishart, London 2010, 4.

[60] In his analysis, Isaak Rubin mentions that Marx´s method moves "from physiologically equal labour to socially equated labour, and from socially equated to abstract universal labour" from which the category of value follows. Rubin, "*Abstract labour and value*", 30. Although Rubin´s analysis does not refer to *1844 Manuscripts*, the main idea of Marx´s methodology remains the same.

[61] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 34, 59. For Marx, the reification of human substance or the change of the world presupposes the constant passage of *praxis* through *poiêsis* and vice versa. This connection between "free" and "necessary" action is based on the innovation and revolution of the Marxist view. Balibar É., *The Philosophy of Marx*, trans. C. Turner, Verso, London – New York 1995, 40-41. As Butler points out, the whole theory of alienation is based on the theory of value which arises from the fact that man has an organic and inorganic body, i.e., it is an existence which, on the one hand, is bound by material needs while, on the other, it is *free* due to its consciousness. As she puts it, "Human consciousness is that which, through labour, seeks to externalize itself in a natural object for the purposes of gaining a reflection of its own value in the object that it transforms by labour". Butler, "The inorganic body", 6.

constitute religious alienation (ideology) and take the form of contradiction. Following the Hegelian critique (Phenomenology), Marx moves beyond Feuerbach's religious critique and the indeterminate equation of humanism-naturalism because alienation also includes the experience of consciousness and its movement as a mutual passage and as a subject-object linking. Marx, like Hegel, seeks the reconciliation of being and thinking,[62] facts and predicates, based on the essence of being [*Wesenhaftigkeit*].[63] The comprehension of concepts coincides with the revelation of the real content of the *human essence*, contributing to the understanding, on the one hand, of science itself and, on the other, of historical reality.

For Ranciére, the economic structure of a capitalistic society is based on the *social relation of production*, thus the object is not transparent and it cannot be revealed through a phenomenological method or practice.[64] However, the difference between Marx and Hegel is that, for Marx, the object is not an idea or an empty concept. It is the product of historical conditions. The thematization of the concepts and the revelation of their content carries a third term which provides the possibility of completing a concept as a relation of opposite and complementary terms. Based on this term (*Aufhebung*)[65] it is possible to analyze economic categories, to

[62] In the case of Hegel, "*pure* Being is the same as *pure* thinking, not that thinking and Being, in general, are the same". Inwood M., "Commentary", in Hegel G. W. F., *The phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. M. Inwood, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018, 461.

[63] This reconciliation, in Hegel, results from the "essentiality" of things [*Wesenheit*] which is equating, as Michael Inwood points out, "with 'determinations of reflection', i.e., pairs of concepts that are 'reflected' into each other and thus, constitute each other, such as identity/difference, positive/negative, subject/object. These concepts are 'circles' since each of the pair directs us to the other, which then returns us to the first again". Inwood, "Commentary", 347.

[64] Ranciére, "Notes".

[65] This is the Hegelian third term which arises from the determinate negation that goes beyond the contradiction while maintaining what was defined within them (Aufhebung). Its existence allows the emergence of the relation between the contradictory terms and intervenes in it by denying the negation and limitation of the first term, aiming at the release of its content through a higher definition, i.e., concept. Lefebvre, *Dialectical materialism*, 19-22.

evaluate and re-evaluate the real, i.e., the social relations because this term results from an existing abstraction. In this case, the one-sided abstract labour [*abstrakte Arbeit*], which is the "essence of today's labour", has turned up through the dialectical subtraction from the concept of "labour" to which all previous forms of labour have been reduced. Under this point of view, the concept of "labour" becomes true in practice and is legitimized from the moment that the people, who embody it as a general or universal in the context of industrial production, make their appearance against skilled labour. Dialectical abstraction is the social relation itself that exists between the worker and other people in the productive process. In this sense, labour is socially determined. In *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx clearly states that labour becomes social "only by taking the form of its immediate opposite, that is, by taking the form of abstract generality". This community "prevents the labour of the individual from being an individual labour and his product being an individual product".[66] He does not mean anything different when in *1844 Manuscripts* mentions that the appearance of industry, which incorporates and absorbs land ownership, confirms the existence of a relation of opposite and complementary terms. The general form of labour encompasses the subjective essence of individual property, i.e., agricultural labour. Thus, industrial capital is nothing, but a fully developed objective form of private property.[67] This means that the relations, which are developing during the process of production, may not be explicitly referred to as "social relations of production" in *1844 Manuscripts*, however,

[66] Marx, *A Contribution*, 9.

[67] The appearance of industry and the commercial system dissolved feudal property and altered the land-agriculture relation, removing from the matter the greatest degree of universality within the limits of nature, because only through labour, that is, agriculture, is there a land for man. Thus, before the capital – labour opposition the property – non-property opposition is indifferent. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 95-97. This opposition is not "real" because the capital "is not yet fully developed", that is to say, it has not yet taken its abstract, pure, form. It is still captive by local and political prejudices. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 138.

they are already present, suggesting the appearance of what György Lukács will name as "social being".[68]

Divisions and dualisms do not arise, according to Marx, from contradictions at the level of language and thinking. It is the result of its very being, of reality (production), since man is being alienated from the product, from other individuals, from his species-being, i.e., from himself and nature.[69] On the level of production, the product is a derivative of labour and the worker's relation to the product and himself produces the relation of other people to production as well as the relation between them. However, the mediation of exchange and trade makes the product independent of the worker. The product is being transformed into an autonomous force [*selbstständige Macht*] that dominates the worker because the human qualities and senses have been transferred to a foreign object (objectification). Nevertheless, from the moment it is transformed into a commodity, the relation between them has been reversed: the matter´s properties have been transferred to the subject, abolishing man´s self-mediating ability as a socially determined being which is realized through labour (subjectification).[70] The alienation of the worker from the

[68] Lukács G., *The ontology of social being. 2. Marx*, trans. D. Fernbach, Merlin Press, London 1978, 7-9.

[69] According to Jean François Lyotard, Marx never loses sight of the loss of immediacy which characterizes the relation of man with nature. In *Libidinal Economy* (1974), he highlights that *nature*, in Marx´s thought, encloses the proper body, the social body and the body of the earth. The worker´s *organic* body is bound up with the earth´s *inorganic* body and this relationship is *given*, not produced. Also, the 'labouring' body enters into productive relations with the earth as a member of a commune. This bound is also *given*, not produced. As Lyotard mentions, "it is within this nature that 'production' is carried out, or rather, this 'production' is nature reproducing itself". Lyotard J. F., *Libidinal Economy*, trans. I. Hamilton Grant, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1993, 130-132.

[70] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 72-74, 76. According to Ranciére, the difference between *1844 Manuscripts* and the *Capital* is related to the intervention of the subject in the double reversal which takes place in the capitalistic system. He argues that this reversal [*Verkehrung*] constitutes "the enchanted, perverted, topsy-turvy world", as Marx points out in *Capital*. The objectification of the capitalistic relations in *Capital* is not understood as objectification of the subject´s predicates and the subjectification of the thing has to do with the "motive power" of the

object takes the form of opposition between the worker and the capitalist since the other is already there. From the moment he appropriates the product and the labour of the worker, the capitalist excels and dominates him.[71]

In addition, man is alienated from man himself since he is a universal being, in the sense that his relation with nature is dialectical and attempted through his own physical and spiritual activity. Nevertheless, the revelation of this unity and the realization of man, as a conscious being, is not possible when his very species´ existence, i.e., the subject´s objective action, which constitutes the only true objectivity,[72] is substantiated.[73] For Marx, labour is a free conscious activity that composes the whole character of the human species so what emerges is a universal alienation. This means that every human being is alienated from others and that everyone is alienated from the essence of man. Thus, the alienation from the object is nothing but the result of the worker´s alienation from himself or the negation of himself since, in the act of production, he does not develop his mental and physical activity, which labour expresses, freely.[74] Hegel leads the way: the subject, in his attempt to identify the object of his thought, captures it as independent from him. Perception substantiates the object and consciousness perceives it as a sensible object.

relations, constituting an "autonomous subject" and not with the attributes of the subject. Ranciére, "The concept of 'critique'", 360-362.

[71] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 79-81.

[72] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 76-77.

[73] As Mészáros points out, man is the only being who can have a "species consciousness" to which he belongs. To put it in another way: man is the only being who can be aware that, in the context of capitalist production, his essence does not coincide with his individuality. During the production process, human-nature mediation or self-realization (social) is abolished. The abstract concept of the individual dominates, suggesting that human nature is a predicate, that is, a universal category and not something specifically human. In short, Marx's characterization of man as a "species-being" does not refer to the "natural state", reducing the human essence to a simple individuality (biological) but to its distinction and realization through self-mediating human activity. According to Mészáros, Marx's interpretation of alienation not only agrees with Friedrich Engels's earlier statement that it is the "unconscious conditions of mankind", but also broadens it. Mészáros, *Marx´s Theory of Alienation*, 77-78, 81-82.

[74] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 71-75.

Thus, two objects are created: one as it exists and another as it appears in consciousness (division).[75] Labour, is divided too between what exists and what appears, that is, between labour as active property and liberating activity of man and labour as a thing. The problem, however, does not lie in the object itself, but in the rigidity of the concept of "labour" and in the autonomy of one of the terms that constitute it (since it is not perceived in its entirety as a relation). This misconception makes labour compulsory and degrades it into a means of maintaining the worker as a natural subject for continuing to exist as a worker. At this point, Marx introduces the concept of "self-alienation" [*Selbstentfremdung*].[76] In short, the contradiction between labour and private property is interpreted as the contradiction of alienated labour with itself. This contradiction has a latent form since the abstract labour is the man himself, in whose existence the individual property is transferred, leading to the elimination of the subject himself. Finally, since private property is directly related to the man himself and his activity is nothing else but the result of existing alienated labour and not the other way round.[77]

[75] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 58-59. Judith Butler highlights the importance of Hegel′s negation in constituting a non-positivist critique based on the immanent consideration of the relation between nature and life. Butler, "The inorganic body", 4. Mitchell Aboulafia also focused on Hegelian negation. He refers that "There must be a self that can negate, can 'see' what is the opposite of a 'thing' in question, i.e., recognize contradictions, become aware of appearances that were once thought to be the truth. History 'needs' the presence of negation and mediation, the activity of the Subject that can come to know itself as the substance of 'reality' through its own endeavors. 'Something' can become fully known only after it has entailed its opposite, (so that it has returned from its 'otherness'), i.e., only after it has been alienated and 'reintegrated'. All development hinges on alienation, the ability to become other, i.e., the opposite of what appears in order to be fully comprehended; without this process the relations which make something what it is would never be fully known. It might be said that an unconscious 'thing' really is not or only potentially is in retrospect. To be human is to be conscious at some time". Aboulafia M., "Hegel′s dialectic and Marx′s Manuscripts of 1844", *Studies in Soviet Thought* 18, no. 1 (1978): 35-36, doi: 10.1007/BF00832927.

[76] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 72-75.

[77] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 74-79, 81-83, 94.

The dialectical development of the concept of "alienated labour" opens the restoration of the "private property" category, to which Marx returns in the second Manuscript, defining it as a relation. Private property is its relation to labour, to capital and the connection between these two. The latter constitutes the relation of private property, which is a latent state, since abstract labour forms an abstract existence (worker) without its physical and social qualities.[78] This relation is transformed into alienated labour due to the unilateral dominance of an abstract term that has become autonomous and independent instead of existing in relation to the other as a term that is opposite, but complementary. Nevertheless, capital and labour constitute an internal unity of mutual interdependence and freedom, based on their identity and otherness. The movement of this relation is captured in two phases. The first one is characterized by the unity of the two which is direct or mediated. The second one is characterized by their separation which leads to a double opposition: a) opposition of the two, autonomy and exclusion of each other, and b) opposition of each one to himself.[79]

3. The overcoming of private property, the sublation of alienation and the transformation of the Political Economy

Once the internal relation, between private property and labour, has been revealed, Marx proceeds to the third Manuscript on the question of the abolition of private property. The "positive" overcoming of the latter ensures the revolutionary concept of "alienation" [*Entefremdung*] and the revelation of the fundamental contradiction between human (existing) substance and human subject. This separation, based on the alienated labour, that private property fulfills, also contains the solution: *sublation*. The latter is carried out at both, the level of production (opposition) and that of

[78] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 87.
[79] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 92.

consciousness (contradiction), aiming at the "emancipation of all human senses and attributes"[80] ("positive critique").

The "positive" overcoming of private property is the result of dialectics as the procedure of a "positively" oriented negative which, on the one hand, negates and, on the other, affirms. The activation of the positive function of negation of dialectics is intertwined with the idea of progress as the mutual passage from one term to the other, from the sensible to the conceivable, or from the quantitative to the qualitative. In any case, dialectics is related to the element of change and the conception of "being" with terms of "becoming". Nevertheless, becoming, in Marx, is conceived without transcendental reductions, as a natural and human process, i.e., as a social activity. Marx turns to subjective registration of the motion of thinking as a reflection of the object´s real movement. The dialectics, he uses, is not that of the idea or concept, but that of the real or praxis that is incorporated in theory.[81] For Marx, the motion of thinking is the simple presentation that *exists* in man and the presentation as it is for him outside of him as a *real object*.[82] Hegel identifies being with thinking, i.e., the real subject with the predicate, rendering the real object fantastic. For Marx, this identification prevents the change of the palpable world. For him, being is the subject and thinking is the predicate. Marx attempts to emphasize the specific subject in the given primordial (material or real) relations in order to avoid the transformation of the active element of social life into a passive one. Consequently, he presents alienation as a connecting link between individuals. Alienated labour is the result of real social conditions and not something fantastic. It derives from the lack of rational human dominance of praxis, which represses creativity, leading to ideology or religion. The comprehension of becoming or of real motion of thinking encloses the objective and the subjective: objectivity lies in the

[80] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 83, 107.

[81] For Marx, theoretical oppositions between subjectivity and objectivity, spirituality and materiality, activity and passivity, can be sublated only through the practical energy of man within the social frame. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 109.

[82] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 139.

subject's objective action.[83] Marx remakes theory to practice through a constant critique of reality. In other words, he revolutionizes everyday relations by "radicalizing" the primordial productive force of the human world, aiming at a practical critique.

The revolutionization of the real aims at the de-ideologicalization of both, science and philosophy, i.e., at the repulsion of being's substantiation, through dialectics. According to Hegel, dialectics contains negativity, alienation, and de-objectification. It also perceives the objective man as the result of his labour.[84] Nevertheless, Marx frees theory from the one-dimensional conception of the real, realizing the role of contradictions in which the theoretical subject itself is involved as a constitutive element. Practice does not emerge unless the sublation of contradictions and the unity of theory and practice obey the logic of historical becoming. Thus, Marx raises the question of changing the world through the entry of the negative into the positive and vice versa. For Marx, the motion of thinking does not consist in method, but in reversal, in reality itself, contributing to the transformation of the conditions of production and creation. In short, the overcoming of the contradiction between necessity and freedom is attempted through the social-human existence since man participates, with all his essential forces, in the thematization of human reality. The activation consists in the

[83] Self-objectification is intertwined with the approach of the organs of individuality (sight, hearing, emotion, desire, activity, love) which have a communal form towards the object. This relationship of man with the world is characterized by the sense of having (possession). The sublation of private property aims at the emancipation of all human senses and attributes, making them rational in their immediate practice. As Marx puts it, "They relate themselves to the *thing* for the sake of the thing, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man and vice versa". Only in this way does the thing become a human object and the human being becomes objective, i.e., when he does not lose himself in it. When objects confirm his individuality, then he himself becomes the object. In order not to lose himself in the object, the thing must become a social object for man and man a social existence for himself. Only then does the object become a social being. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 106-107.

[84] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 149-150.

objectification [*Vergegenständlichung*] of oneself, i.e., of its existence as a subject (existing substance).[85]

The whole world (real objective) is conceived as a process, as a constant movement of transformation and change, as a place of contradictions, and as a system of multiple relations. Unlike Hegel, these relations are not internalized in Marx's thought. They are not a purely subjective element but the result of composition among objective beings and creative activity (labour). This latent state of the real subject is the real essence of the existing thing and not its sublation, as Hegel believes.[86] In other words, the abolition of alienation allows Marx to turn negative criticism into a positive one as long as is not limited to the private property – labour contradiction (negative side), but also includes the *social necessity* of the oppositions arising from this contradiction (positive side). For Marx, human life "now needs the abolition of private property" but it "needed private property for its realization".[87] Marx talks about the (ontological) necessity of a *real* sublation which escapes economists. Therefore, their theoretical systems are characterized by a deficit of social dynamism and historicity

[85] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 99-111.

[86] Hegelian sublation, for Marx, keeps politics under the authority of State which remains abstract universal and particular during the passage from civil-bourgeois society to the State. Marx, in his early writings, argues that in-between them there must be a "break", a discontinuity, a revolution. Politics is a matter of *practices*, i.e., a process which goes beyond institutions and transforms social life or activity. For Marx, Hegel does not manage to bring the contradictory movement to the concept. On the contrary, he gives it the appearance of a dialectical deduction from the concept. Marx argues that State in Hegel is not the Thing of the Logic, as it should be, but The Logic of the Thing. Hegel errs in empiricism, using Logic as proof of the State instead of doing the opposite. For Marx, State is an "organism living", producing new life as a result of the "association of men free who mutually educate each other" which is subordinated, on the one hand, to the rational and, on the other, to the public forms of its existence. Kouvélakis E., "Marx 1842-1844: de l'espace public à la démocratie révolutionnaire", in Kouvélakis E., (ed.) *Marx 2000*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 2000, 89-102. .

[87] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 133.

which arises from the competition between private property and labour.[88]

The "positive" overcoming of private property, in terms of dialectics, includes two negations. The *first negation* arises from the concealment of objectified labour, as a necessary relation of unity and separation, leading to universal alienation. It's the socialization of capital (primitive communism) which merely contributes to the transformation of the workers' relation to their labour, as well as of the whole community, into an abstract capitalist. It's the "logical expression of private property '...' in the form of envy and the urge to reduce to a common level"[89] which leads to a "fantastic universality" through the equalization of wages. It's the first positive abolition of private property and it's placed in the future, far ahead of the political action that will create the necessary conditions for the abolition of universal alienation.[90] The *second negation* consists in the sublation of otherness, based on which the identity of the subject is constituted (for-itself), restoring the relationship with the object, i.e., the product or commodity (in-itself). Nevertheless, its content or essence remains to be comprehended as a reflection of the real motion in thinking and not just as a concept (self-consciousness). Thus, Marx defines the essential dimension of human existence, based on the social practice itself, as a grid of materialistic relations that mediate this relation, keeping the distance between the *object* (product or commodity) and the *thing* (phenomenon).[91] The transition to socialism, which

[88] For Marx, according to Mészáros, Political Economy can -at best- recognize the subjective side of the conflict between private property and labour, that is, the conflict at the individual level over "goods" and/or "property." Such an approach reproduces alienated social relations because it attributes the causes of the conflict to "egoistic *human nature*". For Marx, on the contrary, is the examination of the social side of the conflict that exacerbates competition, hastening its annihilation (social necessity). Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 112-114.

[89] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 101.

[90] Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 129.

[91] Aboulafia points out that Marx maintains the differentiation between concrete and totality unlike Hegel, where the movement of thinking 'contains' all the moments of the past. However, he argues that Marx misunderstood the concept of Hegel's "alienation". Marx thinks that Hegel

marks the beginning of world history as a self-mediating process, requires a double formation or displacement. On the one hand, that of a theoretical and practical sensorial consciousness of man (universality) since "thinking and being are '...' no doubt *distinct* but, at the same time, they are in *unity* with each other"[92] and on the other, that of a "positive human individual consciousness", i.e., of individual consciousness which is sublated in the universal.[93] In conclusion, private property (capital) and its movement (production-consumption) is a material, sensorial, expression of alienated life while institutions, laws, science, art, religion, etc., are simply "modes of production" subjected to its principles. The "positive" overcoming of private property requires the positive overcoming of individual alienation and the return from each of these modes of production to social existence. As Marx points out, the positive sublation of private property reveals the way in which "man produces man – himself and other man '...' Likewise, however, both the material of labour and man as the subject, is the point of departure as well as the result of the movement (and precisely in this fact, that they must constitute the point of departure, lies the historical necessity of private property). Thus, the *social* character is the general character of the whole movement: *just as* society itself produces *man as man*, so is society produced by him".[94]

conceives it "as an abstract reflection of an alienated mode of production", thus identifying objectification with alienation. Aboulafia, "Hegel's dialectic", 41, 44.

[92] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 105-106.

[93] As Marx highlights in *Capital*, "The capitalist mode of appropriation, which springs from the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of its proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a natural process, its own negation. This is the negation of the negation. It does not re-establish private property, but it does indeed establish private property on the basis of the achievements of the capitalist era: namely co-operation and the possession in common of the land and the means of production produced by labour itself". Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Volume I,* 929.

[94] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 104.

Although *1844 Manuscripts* are indeed "an evident expression of a position in movement", as Marcello Musto claims,[95] Marx's aim and methodological approach are concrete. Starting from a real economic fact, "private property", Marx arrives at the thematization of the economic category of "alienated labour", just as Political Economy does. Nevertheless, through the dialectical development of the concept of "labour", he reveals the essence or content of the political-economic fact, returning to a transformed Political Economy, as the basis of every revolutionary and transformational movement.[96] Under this perspective, it seems that in *1844 Manuscripts* we can trace what Lukács points out for the mature Marxist studies: Marx's economics starts from the totality of the social and returns to it.[97] But, in *1844 Manuscripts*, is obvious that Marx's economics have incorporated the experience of consciousness. In short, the mental determination of the object of Political Economy is the result of its very movement (self-relation) which, through dialectical negation, division, duplication of opposites and self-reflection within the other, leads to the thematization of the political-economic fact as a product of historical conditions (becoming). Aiming at the connection between theory and practice, Marx seeks to transform Political Economy into a "human science". If the industry is the historical (external) relation of nature and, consequently, of natural science to man, then the natural essence of man or the human essence of

[95] Marcello Musto adds that manuscripts are "not homogeneous or even closely interconnected between their parts". Musto M., "Marx in Paris: Manuscripts and notebooks of 1844", *Science & Society* 73, no. 3 (2009): 392.

[96] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 82, 103. Louis Althusser criticizes this return which is attempted, through the removal of Political Economy and Philosophy, because Marx resolves the contradiction between them through "alienated labour" and the conception of Man (the essence of man). Althusser, *For Marx*, 229-230. On the contrary, according to Herbert Marcuse, Marx's positive critique of the Political Economy lies precisely in offering the foundation of a real political economy which, in a completely transformed way, forms the scientific background of the communist revolution. Marcuse H., *Studies in critical philosophy*, Beacon Press, Boston 1973, 5.

[97] Lukács, *The ontology of social being*, 12.

nature can be understood. Such an orientation can lead to the replacement of human science with natural science and vice versa.[98] In this case, we can talk about "a single science" with genuine content,[99] because the existing essence of this historical relation coincides with the human subject itself which is always in the human mind as a prerequisite. In other words, the subject is no other than the "object" of the activity itself. It is reality itself as a product of history. Its movement, and not the movement of the concept, as Hegel believes,[100] is the one that constitutes the real and the concrete as a thought. The

[98] For Marx, the fragmentation of science renders necessary the mutual passage of Political Economy in Human Science (Philosophy) and vice versa. This process leads to a transformed Political Economy, through dialectics. Dialectics is the key to the analysis and transformation of the capitalistic economy. It runs through the whole corpus of Marx's work, even the third volume of *Capital*, which is the most controversial. This mutual passage explains why the assumption of classical Political Economy "that the cost price of a commodity equal[s] the value of the commodities consumed in its production" does not work in the framework of a revised Political Economy. Marx repeats: "if the cost price of a commodity is equated with the value of the means of production used up in producing it, it is always possible to go wrong". Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Volume III*, 265. Price and value are two different entities. Price is the expression of the worker's relation with the labour (as an individual being) while value is the latent form of the worker's relation with the labour as a product and as an act (as a social being). Determining the cost price of a commodity is one thing and it is what Political Economy does, identifying the value with the price. This analysis begins from a real fact (concrete category) towards an abstractive category, mediated by money. The determination of the value of the produced commodities is another thing which requires the attribution of dialectics in order to reveal the non-mediated "essential relation of labour". It goes backwards: from the abstractive category towards the fact (concrete category). Actually, through dialectics Marx sublates the opposition between the two motions, constituting the "political-economic fact". What results from the synthesis of the two movements or discourses, is the reflection of the product or commodity in thinking as a *concrete totality*, i.e., as a *product* and as a *thing*, making possible the determination of the price (or the value) of production (as a whole). This process signifies the return to a revised Science, as Political Economy and as Human Science, providing the criterion or principle (concrete totality) of any comparison or evaluation among proposals about the capitalist economy and its inequalities.

[99] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 110-111.

[100] Hegel, *Phenomenology*, 28.

understanding of this movement, in Marx, coincides with the sublation of contradictions and the transformation of reality.

Conclusions

In 2015, Marcello Musto argued that in *1844 Manuscripts* Marx "had scarcely begun to assimilate the basic concepts of political economy, and his conception of communism was no more than a confused synthesis of the philosophical studies he had undertaken until then".[101] However, the above analysis shows that, although Marx's thought has not yet been completed, regarding the details and the categories of Political Economy that constitute his later critique, he manages to outline the methodological preconditions for the transformation of Political Economy and society.

For Marx, the dialectical development of economic categories, which includes the analytical approach, explains their change through the revelation of their contradictory structure and the opposition that characterizes the capitalist economic system. Moreover, dialectics facilitates their sublation because dialectics, in Marx, starts from the social being and returns to it. Based on social practice, he reveals the essential content of economic categories, i.e., the relations that are developing during the production process, the realization of which incarnates the human labour. These relations are already there, thus what Marx cares most about is rendering possible the realization of the "essential relation of labour", i.e., of the subject in terms of becoming. Self-realization requires the manifestation or expression of the relationship of man, as a human being, with nature both, in the sense of subjectivity (interiority) and objectivity (exteriority). It also requires their mutual passage from one term that thematizes the object to the other that thematizes the thing (i.e., the motion of thinking). This (double) movement presupposes a methodology capable

[101] Musto, "The 'Young Marx'", 258.

of revealing the common term which holds together in opposition the terms that thematize the object as sensible and as conceivable, as concrete and as a totality. For Marx, the real motion of thinking encloses the subjective and the objective, allowing the mutual passage from practice to theory and vice versa since objectivity is none other than the subject's objective action. The difficulty that arises is to maintain the distance between the object and the thing, as a constitutive element of a practical critique.[102]

Based on social practice and through dialectics, Marx concludes that "private property" is the relation between capital and labour, not only as separation, but also as unity. Nevertheless, if labour is the existing relation of the worker to the product, to the others (workers – owners), to himself and nature, then "abstract labour" is the common term that separates and unites the capital and the labour. By introducing the negative definition of labour in relation to capital, that is, "alienated labour", Marx aims at a "positive critique" ensured

[102] Nowadays, some even talk about humanist and non-humanist tendencies in Marx's discourse which arise from the relationship between Man and Nature, i.e., their separation and unity. This relationship, apart from the ethical responsibility to nature, raises the question about "the necessary and inextricable unity between humanity and nature" which should be part of politics. Lakha F., "Mensch, or (Laboring) Nature: Reading Marx's 1844 Manuscripts in the Era of "Posthumanism"", *Academia.edu*, https://www.academia.edu/33406808/Mensch_or_Laboring_Nature_Reading_Marx_s_1844_Manuscripts_in_the_Era_of_Posthumanism. Nevertheless, this tendency is not new. Through deconstruction, Jean François Lyotard, examines, in *Discourse, figure* (1971), the formation of a non-articulated discourse as a resistance to the dominant discourse which reproduces the capitalistic system. Through a (double) *silent* negation, he reveals the existence of non-salaried relations within salaried relations. The silent expression of their difference constitutes a real critique or anti-speech. Lyotard J. F., *Discourse, figure*, trans. A. Hudek – M. Lydon, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis – London 2011, 30-31. Applying the deconstructive strategy in *Libidinal Economy* (1974), Lyotard re-reads Marx's *Capital* by integrating non-capitalistic activities into the discourse of Political Economy. For him, the concealed liaison between them ensures the necessary distance of a constant critique, causing an economico-political crisis, like those of 1821 and 1929. Their repetition brings the capitalistic system to a dead end. Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, 227-240.

by the negation of the negation, i.e., the universal sublation of alienation and the contradictions of the capitalist system. This positivity derives from the real movement of the object in thinking as reflection. Reconciliation between being and thinking is a complex process, a set of materialistic relations and mediations. If taken into account, it provides the possibility of revealing the inner-determination of the economic phenomena (which in capitalism reverses the relations of production-objectification). Furthermore, their consideration makes possible the transfer of this determination (of the reversed relations), i.e., its expression or presentation, into reality as a reflection, thematizing the real object of Political Economy. Through the category of "alienated labour" and the simultaneous movement of negative and positive, Marx reveals the "essential relation of labour" as the appropriate criterion or principle for understanding, critiquing, and sublating the contradictions of Political Economy.

Integrating praxis in theory in such a way, Marx manifests his interest in both the empirical and the theoretical basis, as parts of a revolutionary movement which can be found in the movement of private property.[103] In other words, Marx's economics are in direct connection with politics. As he points out in *Capital*, "it is in each case the direct relationship of the owner of the conditions of production to the immediate producers '…' in which we find the innermost secret, the hidden basis of the entire social edifice, and hence also the political form of the relationship of sovereignty and dependence, the specific form of state in each case".[104] Thus, the sublation of private property and the transformation of society requires a double transformation: on the level of economy (necessity) and the level of consciousness (freedom).

[103] Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 103.
[104] Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy, Volume III*, 927.

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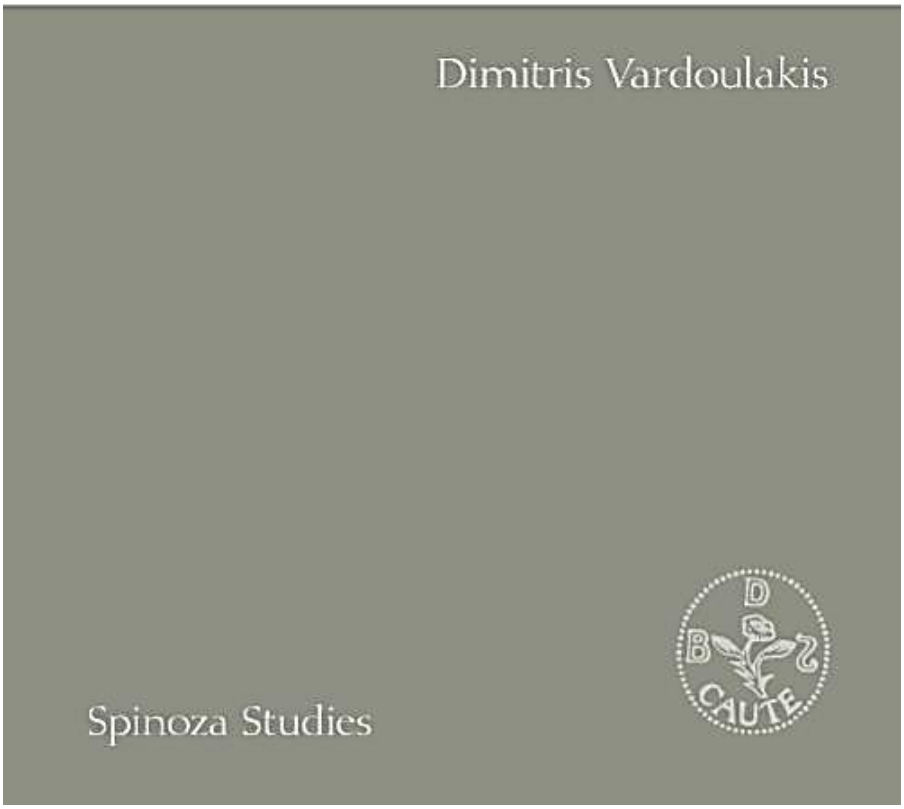

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