Human Diversity
in Context

Edited by
Cinzia Ferrini

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humani nihil a me alienum puto
(Publius Terentius Afer, *Heautontimorumenos*, v. 77, 165 B.C.)

[*die Idee der Menschlichkeit ist*] *das Bestreben, die Grenzen, welche Vorurtheile*
und einseitige Ansichten aller Art feindselig zwischen die Menschen gestellt, aufzuheben
(*Wilhelm von Humboldt über die Kawi-Sprache*. Berlin 1839, Bd. III: 426)

The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us
and incorporated into our common life
(Jane Addams, Speech at the Summer School in Applied Ethics, 1892, 6 July ff. Plymouth,
Mass. Paper published in the *Forum,* Oct. & Nov. 1892).

There is no obstacle in the path of young people who are poor or members of minority
groups that hard work and thorough preparation cannot cure. Do not call for Black power
or green power, call for brain power
(Barbara Jordan, *Campus Speech,* quoted by *The Chicago Tribune*, October 27, 1974)

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CINZIA FERRINI

Introduction

Contextualising *Human Diversity in Context*

1. Thematic Connections and Conspectus

The opportunity to develop these multi-disciplinary studies of human diversity within 'our' geographical, historical and broadly European context, drew upon the need to think about contemporary human issues that challenge our cultural education, deeply involving our intellectual and emotional daily living and ordinary consciousness. These issues affect our empathy and sense of solidarity together with our worries and fears, our political commitments, beliefs and social behaviour. As Hollerich remarks:

> Anguish is defined as fear without a concrete object. This anguish, analyzed by the philosophy of Sartre, destabilizes the human person; in fact, a multiplicity of nebulous fears leads to this anxiety. Some populist policies take advantage of it and give a name to the objects of these fears, which thereby exist and transform into aggression. Enemies are presented to allay our fears: migrants, Islam, Jews, etc. [...] Today in Europe, migrations are a cause of fear; they seem to disturb the internal order of European countries. Immigrants, who at the time of the economic miracle were welcome because they guaranteed economic well-being, have become foreigners: foreigners who, due to their religious and cultural differences, appear as threats to our little world. Negative emotions explode: the other is no longer considered as an opportunity for an encounter, but as someone who deprives us of our identity. (Hollerich 2019, n.p.)

In the last decade European countries have been restlessly animated by national and transborder debates about issues of faith and tolerance; identity and difference; marginalization and integration; heterogeneity and homogenisation; individual freedom and social security, especially when confronting the increasing waves of

forced migration, ethnic cleansing, extra-European immigration, growing minorities representing 'other' systems of belief (whether Islamic, Jewish, or animist, among others), issues of international and foreign policy and organising of public opinion regarding forms of intervention (diplomatic, military, economic, legal) in ethnic conflicts at the Eastern and Southern borders of the European Community.

How can academic research help us understand these issues? Scholars, particularly from the Humanities and Social Sciences, feel compelled to address these major challenges, devising research and cultural strategies to overcome these unavoidable yet unsolved tensions. For instance, to meet challenges represented by fostering union through mutual respect and understanding within a paradoxical context in which signs of economic growth correspond to signs of increasing social inequalities, racial prejudices, and anxiety over the future; or to address issues arising within a contradictory context, where a community's security concerns clash with claims to foster tolerant multiculturalism, and an increasing number of citizens in Europe support their government's domestic right to close harbours and borders, and back its policy of concentrating immigrants in special centres in the name of public security, thus undermining their prospects of integration. Scholars considering and understanding our own times and society confront oscillations between access and restriction, receiving and rejecting, building bridges or walls, all in the absence of any genuine European policy grounded on shared values and concerns. Scholars are acutely aware that confronting otherness requires mature judgment, reflection and the exercise of rational skills to govern these processes in sustainable and civilised way, though so far with little success.

Consider a couple of illustrative examples. First, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Kenichi Ohmae, in his famous 1990 book *The Borderless World*[1], developed such categories as 'fluxes', 'hybridations' and 'post-nationalism', arguing that national borders were less relevant than ever before; his 1995 book, *The End of the Nation-State*, further asserted the obsolescence of the nation-state because it was no longer the optimal unit for organizing economic activity. Later, Germany adopted a 'welcome-culture' (*Willkommenskultur*) and the 'feeling-of-us' (*Wir-Gefühl*) endorsed by President Gauck, but such concepts and related attitudes then collapsed, together with their optimism. Interestingly enough, the sociologist Eric Kaufmann of the London School of Economics and Political Science had criticized Ohmae's 1995 main thesis as "a horrendous simplification that ignores a class of goods that cannot be priced" (like a feeling of historical rootedness essential for people's sense of identity), writing that: "The presence of persistent anomie and social dysfunction in the developed world should have

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[1]   Second revised edition in 1999. See also Ohmae 1995.

served to dampen Ohmae's optimism, but he has shown little inclination to acknowledge the social costs of his borderless world"[2].

Second: literary, historical, social and philosophical studies have unveiled the human production of so many alleged 'facts of nature' and the particular rhetorical strategies used to marginalize dominated people[3]. However, while these critical developments within the Humanities have left few cultural stereotypes unchallenged and while general categorial advances in Western thought have urged us all to reflect on 'hospitality' and 'mutual recognition', the effects of post-colonialism, integration and citizenship, a growing number of socially self-constructed groups (such as those based on race, gender, ethnicity, language, region, sexual orientation, political creed, or religious faith) have instinctively seen their 'others' as threats to their strength and well-being, and so reacted by reinforcing their exclusive and excluding sense of identity, habits and practices. Recently, populations in European countries with (quite) divergent policies, such as France and Britain, have suffered terroristic attacks perpetrated by members of a second generation of immigrants, who turn against societies in which they feel alienated and marginalized, and there is also a dramatic increase in the number of so-called 'foreign fighters' among refugees. The legacy of matters of race and post-colonialism and the sediment of ethnic and religious discriminations still cast shadows, more or less inadvertently: societies receiving refugees need to take responsibility for these issues rather than ignore them (Meer 2019).

In light of René Girard's theories[4], the radical challenge of violent forms of fundamentalism with their public broadcasting of brutal rituals, appears to recreate an original process of (purported) victimization for a sacred foundation of a new social and cultural order which rejects the values of Western civilization and any historical legacy. This radicalization of human difference is pervasive, ranging from social, cultural, political and religious constructions of enemies to racial discrimination. From 2014 to 2019, the renewal of the European Parliament throughout Europe has been accompanied by a continuously increasing number of anti-European parties and widespread popular support of

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[2]   Kaufmann's review is available at: http://www.sneps.net/Cosmo/ohmae2.pdf.

[3]   These include: identifying the shortcomings of post-structuralist analysis; the post-colonial discourse of Said, Spivak, Chatterjee and Bhabha which voiced issues of the marginal; the coining of new philosophical categories to 'encounter otherness' by Derrida, Lacan and Foucault; works on ethics, politics and phenomenology of 'recognition' by American scholars of Hegel like Robert Williams and Charles Taylor, Robert Pippin and Terry Pinkard and revamping the notion of *Anerkennung* by Habermas and Honneth. For an update of the contemporary debate in critical social philosophy inspired by Hegel's theory of recognition see Laitinen & Ikäheimo 2011, Ikäheimo 2014, Testa & Ruggiu 2016 and Testa 2017.

[4]   See for instance Girard 2013.

xenophobic and nationalist movements. It has been remarked that the striking success of misinformation and no regard for providing evidence in the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, as well as in the political debate leading up to the Brexit referendum in the same year, mark the advent of 'post-truth' or 'post-fact' times. According to Paul Redding: "Not only have we entered an era of 'post-truth', the globalising thrust that had dominated the West since the end of the Cold-War has been replaced by the emergence of a new form of *nationalism*" (Redding 2019, 82).

This is why traditional identities and the challenges of pluralism constitute the central topic of research by international organizations across the globe. European cultural institutions have fostered research projects on understanding otherness and processes of othering, of distinguishing however innocently or viciously between 'us' and 'them'. However, despite their wider scope and circulation, when such international studies cover a vast range of institutions, they tend to draw upon a narrower range of disciplines, such as cultural history, social history of ideas, intellectual history or post-colonial studies; or when such studies include a wide range of perspectives, they tend to consider only a few select European institutions. Studies are also produced by research groups of single universities, but their focus tends to be monothematic. Projects recently funded by the European Research Council, which confront a Europe which questions what is European about itself as well as a Europe which must to be able to present itself in new ways to other cultures and civilizations, appear to be confined either to exploring alternatives to the dominant theoretical and political thinking from the selective viewpoints of democracy, constitutionalism, economics and human rights, or to offer a 'grammar' of differences in sets of values based on the single, general notion of 'modes of existence'.

Fukuyama's 2018 book, *Contemporary Identity Politics*, builds on the failures of political theorists and classical economics seeking to explain historical movements in terms of individuals acting to maximise their financial self-interest. Taking issue with the functioning of knowledge in modern liberal democracies, where informed opinion and scholarly articles do not penetrate belief systems charged with emotions and feelings, Fukuyama rejects the usual dichotomy between "reason" and "appetite", enhancing the role of intuitive forces as the emotional components of social action. Humans are powerfully driven by "thymos", a word familiar to readers of Plato's *Republic*, indicating a part of the soul that is the seat of anger, jealousy of one's own dignity and value, sense of shame and pride, desire for respect. Though criticised for conflating an emotion like pride with a norm like dignity[5], Fukuyama's analysis has the

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[5]   This criticism was levelled by Aleida Assmann in her Erasmus Lecture for the Erasmus Medal

double merit to point out excess and arrogant displays of "megalothymia" (by individuals or groups) in populist movements as a key concept to understand the current undermining of the "isothymic", balanced forces of multiculturalism and social cooperation, and to identify mistakes of political elites who focus only on economic rationality, disregarding feelings about national identity and cultural issues[6]. Against this background, the Humanities can contribute to society by integrating a universal point of view (as with the case of human rights) with the interested and personalized points of view of the broader populace[7].

2. The present volume

To take as an object of research feelings about identity, cultural issues, and the depth of emotions pervading the self-narratives of groups with fixed beliefs, is central to the issues of the present volume. This collection seeks to develop new, distinctive strategies to integrate the form and content of 'knowledge' and to awaken the sense of responsibility for social prejudices and 'us/them' dichotomies, by conveying a socially *contextualised understanding* of the complexity of the real world and its cultural and religious structures, facets, objects and of course groups. The aim is to conceptualize accurately and comprehensively and to make generally accessible in explicit form what sensitive intellectuals have already intuited, represented and conveyed adequately, as for example in artistic works exploring and representing the multi-layered character of identities[8].

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and 2019 Heinz-Nixdorf Foundation: "Re-imagining the Nation: Memory, Identity and the Emotions", delivered at the 31st Annual Conference of the *Academia Europaea*, "Building Bridges" (Barcelona, 23-25 October 2019).

[6]   Interviewed by T. Adams for *The Guardian* on September 16, 2018, Fukuyama replies to the question whether Trump's scattershot illiberalism is transitory and irrelevant or a new reality, by remarking: "He is definitely not a blip. The most disturbing thing is the amount of support he gets despite all the damaging, racist, absurd things he does [...] Trump instinctively picks these racial themes in order to drive people on the left crazy and they get more and more extreme in their response".

[7]   According to Redding 2019, who examines the increasing resistance of voters to adopt a universal point of view, philosophy, reconsidering Hegel's lesson (*pace* Popper), can play a role in society as a non-scientistic alternative for reconciling the universal point of view with the views of the broader populace: "by looking at the empirical sciences as the sole epistemic authority to be called upon our collective action and to marginalize the role of philosophical reflection, paradoxically, this has resulted in a threat to the contribution of science itself to the formation and implementation of policy in democratic liberal states, with voters willing to treat a scientific consensus with scepticism" (*ivi*, 85).

[8]   I refer in particular to the drawings, paintings and collages of the Turkish artist Irfan Önürmen (1958). In his 2013 painting "Gaze Series #28" (exhibited in the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art Collection), he "shows the capacity of a subdivided and fragmented facial expression to mirror sociaty and identity. The artist is concerned with the idea of identification in today's world, which

Our contributors were asked to provide a multifaceted, critical examination of the ways, tools and strategies by which European societies have historically envisioned and now confront and construct their perception, representation and evaluation of the unity of humankind within its contextualised diversity.

The essays are written by members of different Sections of the Humanities and Social Science Classes of the *Academia Europaea*, researchers of the Department of Humanities and of the Department of Life Sciences of the University of Trieste, and younger post-doctoral researchers in philosophy, anthropology and literature, with international education and training. Additional entries were invited from Cristiana Baldazzi and Roberta Gefter Wondrich, of the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste, and from Preston Stovall, of the University of Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, according to the criteria of affinity of research interests and competence.

This volume is divided into four main parts. The first part, "We and Our Others: Identifying and Specifying Human Animals" (Chapters 1-3), opens with a rich historical survey of theories of the nature of 'mankind' from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, including less explored authors and circumstances. Wolfgang Proß provides the subsequent contribution a broad political, philosophical, religious and socio-geographical context, intelligible to a wide readership (Chapter 1). He discusses the arguments in favour of human diversity: i. showing how the Aristotelian legacy of 'natural born masters and slaves' was questioned by the emergence of a new historical and geographical attitude describing and representing human beings; ii. highlighting changing views regarding climate as the key cause of human difference through the birth of physical geography; iii. examining the supersession of biblical explanation of human diversity through new insights into human physiology and the social role of language; iv. confronting Meiners' theory of 'races' with arguments favouring a universal humanity (Ferguson, Herder, Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt). Mario Marino (Chapter 2) examines the self-representation humans develop of their species-based identity, digging into the genesis, significance and status of Blumenbach's physical anthropology, together with its iconography. Marino accounts for the theoretical, methodological and moral grounds of Blumenbach's highly influential racial division of humanity by showing its constant evolution, focusing on the empirical and intuitive components of Blumenbach's systematicity, and highlighting how ambivalent concepts, underlying assumptions and unsolved issues conditioned Blumenbach's work

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specifically defines who one is supposed to be, and conveys the repercussions of such identification in his works". On the artist's technique to show "the disparity between real identities and their representations"; see https://ariaartgallery.com/profile/irfan-onurmen/.

(e.g. the privileged status of the Caucasian race), paving the way to its ideological reception in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cinzia Chiandetti (Chapter 3) offers a comparative psychological discussion of the cognitive biases and mental prejudices characterizing the 'us/them' dichotomies used for ingroup/outgroup distinctions, differentiating human beings on the basis of race, gender, religion, socio-economic status, etc., as well as distinguishing humans from non-human animals. Chiandetti points to phylogenetically ancient mechanisms allowing early humans to reason about coalitions and alliances by using a simple cognitive architecture tailored by natural selection to augment survival chances.

Ingroup/outgroup issues are also central to Part 2, "Religious Diversity and Ethnic Identities: Social Groups and Cultural Interrelations" (Chapters 4-6). Gereon Wolters (Chapter 4) addresses the anthropological roots of the success of religion to build cohesion of social groups. Wolters claims that to construct religious otherness confirms group identity, and analyses the role played by violence in processes of othering in the Holy Scriptures of monotheistic religions (ancient Judaism, Christianity and Islam). By contrast, Carmela Baffioni (Chapter 5) examines how hermeneutics may bridge clefts between the religious beliefs and practices among monotheisms, fostering circulation of similar ideas and transmission of knowledge. Examining as a case study of the scriptural narrative of God's gift of language to Adam, Carmela Baffioni provides evidence of cultural transmission and circulation of similar ideas in Muslim and Jewish contexts and between the Muslim East and *al-Andalus,* as the Arabs called the Iberian Peninsula during the seven centuries of Muslim domination. By examining two Arab travelogues of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries describing an Egyptian intellectual's and a Lebanese artist's journey to the former 'mythical' Moorish Spain, Cristiana Baldazzi (Chapter 6) provides a modern example of perspectivism and cultural interrelations with travel as a connective medium. Baldazzi shows the progressive overcoming of a prejudicial 'us/them' dichotomy between Muslim Arabs and Catholic Spaniards through knowledge acquired by experience and direct acquaintance. Both of the examined authors, each in his own way, find themselves at home upon arrival in a foreign Spain. They overcome their sense of otherness by retracing the ancient greatness of Arab civilization in so far as the 'other' has inherited and preserved genuine civic and physical "Arab characteristics". What emerges is an interface between ingroup/outgroup issues with the intention to restore a spirit of national pride by showing how in the past the relation between the Arabs and Europe was overturned in respect to the present.

The third, central part: "The 'I' and the 'We' in Context," is subdivided into two sections of two chapters each (Chapters 7-10). The first section, "The Individual and Communal Perspectives: A Philosophical Approach" (Chapters 7-8) first

addresses Hegel's phenomenological account of the formation of subjective and inter-subjective identity, elucidating the becoming of human selves as subjects of normative statuses, when overcoming their merely natural life through the encounter with their own others (Ferrini, Chapter 7). Yet how can subjective modes of thought become expressions of the collective identity of a community? The modern birth of autonomous intentional collectives is taken as the starting point of Chapter 8 (Stovall). Beginning from Hegel's notion of ethical life, Preston Stovall regards education as an art whose telos is or includes appreciation of values shared across a community. Taking issue with the growing socio-political divisions across Europe and North America today, Stovall examines the impact this polarization now has on the academy and investigates the grounds for assessing what the educator in an autonomous intentional collective ought to be doing.

While the philosophical perspectives of Chapters 7 and 8 help to define the core of modern and contemporary times characterized by the growth of individual and collective autonomy, Chapters 9 and 10 focus on individual autonomy and community relations in periods of group polarization, providing real-life variations of settings for the more general issues about education from Chapter 8, which discusses policy implications of Chapter 7. Both Chapters 9 and 10 argue for a creative and participatory nationalism which challenges the recent turn to populist nationalism involving authoritarian and xenophobic aims[9]. The second section of Part 3, "Ethnic Resilience, National Identities and Diaspora," initially accounts for the Greek Orthodox people's process of national identification through the commercial and intellectual networks built by its diaspora. Focusing on Greek Orthodox trade migration in the Habsburg Empire, Olga Katsiardi-Hering (Chapter 9) presents identity in diaspora as a social phenomenon with distinctive (ethnical, religious, cultural) dimensions and flexible communitarian associations. Moreover, the case study of Greek identity exhibits the concrete interconnection of various themes examined in the previous chapters: 'us/them' dichotomies, processes of othering within religion communities, the continuity

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[9]   For a reappraisal of nationalism as essential to democracy, *contra* its populist interpretation see Tamir 2019. See also Hollerich 2019: "Europe, which is losing its identity, builds bad identities, populisms, where the nation is no longer lived as a political community, but becomes a ghost of the past, a specter that drags behind it the victims of wars caused by the nationalisms of history. Populisms want to stave off real problems by organizing dances around a golden calf. They build a false identity, denouncing enemies who are accused of all the ills of society: for example, migrants or the European Union. Populisms bind together individuals, not in communities where the other is a nearby person, a partner in dialogue and action, but rather in groups that repeat the same slogans, which create new uniformities, which are the gateways for new totalitarianisms". For an examination of the political position and nature of populism, employing analytic techniques of conceptual clarification, see Müller 2019.

of economic and ideological dialogue through travel as a real connecting medium between people, thus offering a first moment of synthesis between contextualised theoretical and historical analysis. By critically discussing and deconstructing stereotypical categories which still pervade current social and legal discourses on ethnic minorities, Paola Toninato (Chapter 10) examines the puzzling case of the cultural cohesiveness of Roma/Gypsies, a people that along the centuries were first subject to policies of exclusion and marginalisation and then to policies of assimilation, to force them to renounce their identity. Toninato integrates Katsiardi-Hering narrative of diaspora, characterized by a continuous dialogue with an original homeland, by reading the Roma centrifugal dispersion as a dynamic adaptation (governed by powerful centripetal forces such as the web of families and the ethics of sharing) to past and ongoing changes in the social and economic environment. She elucidates the reasons for the resilience of such multilingual, non-territorial ethnic minority, and their constitution (in 2000) of a stateless Nation, identifying their innovation and creativity in the political and literary field as the agents who today preserve intra-group cohesion and provide them with a sense of common belonging. The focus is on the rise of an 'autochthonous' Romani written literature, as a crucial identitarian medium and tool, at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The fourth and final Part of this collection: "Injured Identities and Histories of Discrimination" (Chapters 11-13) presents an illuminating diversity of examples and vantage points from literature which overtly concern actual forms of cross-, crossed and multi-cultural experiences and histories. This Part opens with Roberta Gefter Wondrich's (Chapter 11) analysis of Caryl Phillips' postmodernist and postcolonial narratives, which have constantly focussed on issues of belonging, origins, displacement and persecution, identitarian precariousness and the historical process of constructing nationality, engaging with the canonical intertext and two of the most traumatic events of modern history: colonial slavery and the Holocaust. She examines *The Nature of Blood* (1997), which partly rewrites *Othello*, combining it with two historically displaced narratives of the Jewish diaspora set in the fifteen century (C.E.) and in 1948, and *The Lost Child* (2015), which features sort of a prequel to *Wuthering Heights,* a biofictional reimagining of Emily Brontë's last days and the ill-fated love story of a couple differing in both class and race in 1960s England. According to Gefter Wondrich, the disjunctive and multi-layered structure of Phillips' texts conveys both the feature of individual, isolated and plural existential narratives and the imperative of connectedness, affinity and refraction through the cultural and literary endeavour.

Cultural and literary endeavour are also at the core of the last two contributions, which focus on creative literary forms of resilience in life-threatening conditions from the standpoint of the most vulnerable voices. Susana Onega's starting

point (Chapter 12) is awareness that the human symbolic capacity is essential not only for representing and transmitting useful knowledge and strengthening group cohesion, but also and most importantly for (re)shaping of reality through dissociation, as a form of resilience to overcome memories of events undermining one's own sense of identity, such as those endured in internment camps. Dissociation provides human beings with the possibility of perceiving the environment selectively and, consequently, of limiting the traumatic impact of its most threatening aspects without ignoring them. Onega examines the power of this mental resource by analysing the role of classical wondertales as a way of assimilating, transmitting and working through Holocaust trauma. Rosario Arias concludes our collection on human diversity in context (Chapter 13) by focussing on the 'other within others', aiming to re-orient women's position in the history of the Holocaust and in Holocaust literature. Rosario Arias offers a critical study of women's survivor narratives, analysing the specificity of their vulnerability or "gender wounding", defined as "a shattering of something innate and important to her sense of her own womanhood". She examines ways in which the female voice made itself distinctively heard in a women's concentration camp, though it is largely neglected by historians. Her nuanced account of the testimonial literature on female selves' survival strategies as prisoners includes the 'other's other' voice of women as perpetrators. Her chapter provides a climactic conclusion of the processes of othering and estrangement, crossing human identities in various contexts, studied in this volume.

3. EDITORIAL POLICIES

In summarizing the arrangement and concept, the integrity and significant continuities of this volume, the editor aims to highlight the guiding threads designed to link together the wide range of diverse topics and standpoints examined here. Taken as a whole, the collection shows how differences can manifest, articulate and actualise prospects of and for identity when these two extremes are not taken in an abstract, pre-judicial way, as mutually opposed and challenging fixed terms of reference, but are seen and examined in their concrete, living interplay within a variety of contexts.

This volume appears in English for two main reasons. One concerns the *Academia Europaea*. English is its official language, it is headquartered in London and as an international, nongovernmental, non-profit association of leading individual scientists and scholars, it is registered under English charity law. Moreover, given its pan-European scope, English, as the most widely shared language of Occidental scholarship, functions as connective tissue and

communication medium for scholarly exchanges among the members (here of three different nationalities: Italian, German and Spanish). The second reason concerns the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste. One of its strategic aims is to foster internationalisation when supporting research projects, in order to reach wider audiences and to encourage dissemination of its members' scholarly results. To achieve this goal, writing in English and publishing both in print and in open access can be advantageous. In my departmental responsibility for internationalisation, I am especially concerned to facilitate these communications.

These two reasons underlie my editorial policy regarding the language and manners of publication of this volume; yet they also raise a concern, for to choose the Anglophone readership as context of reference requires caution about culturally sensitive issues. Two such editorial challenges concern the degree of awareness of non-sexist language, and the use of the term 'Holocaust'. The editor is aware that, regardless of an author's intention, the generic 'man' or 'mankind' is not interpreted gender-neutrally in the English-speaking world, as testified by the *Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language* issued by the American Philosophical Association on 19 January, 2019[10]. Yet it would have been anachronistic, uncritical and decontextualised to disregard the original term 'mankind' in the English literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, substituting for it 'humankind' (see Chapter 1)[11], whereas it would have been too one-sided to write of an educator or of an educator's students only in terms of 'she' and 'her' (as was done in the first draft of Chapter 8).

The term 'Holocaust' is commonly used in Anglo-Saxon culture to refer to the genocide of European Jews during the Second World War, whereas in the rest of Europe and in Israel the trend is to use the Hebrew word 'Shoah'. Both words are controversial and have advantages and disadvantages. 'Holocaust' is often used in its wider, more inclusive meaning, to encompass all ethnic and social groups suffering Nazi persecution or who died at their hands. Since the eighteenth century, the lower-case 'holocaust' has been used to indicate the violent deaths of large human groups. Against it stands the Greek etymology of the word, which retains its meaning of a sacrificial victim, whether a religious offering, or due to some measure of guilt. The term 'Shoah', meaning 'calamity' or 'catastrophe', was used to refer to the Jewish genocide in order to avoid the connotation of ineluctable sacrifice, but as a Hebrew word, its standard use risks suggesting that the Nazi extermination project was restricted to a single people.

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[10]   See https://www.apaonline.org/page/nonsexist.

[11]   In German, the term *Humanität* refers to a product of civilisation, whereas *Menschheit* conveys merely biological connotations.

In 1956, the Jewish poet U. Z. Greenberg entitled his Bialik Award acceptance speech "Destruction of the Diaspora, not Holocaust", thus explicitly rejecting the term 'Holocaust' and also implicitly challenging the term 'Shoah'. A third option was reported in 2012 by Josh Fleet, according to which Itzik Gottesman, Associate Editor of *Forverts*, the Yiddish version of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, said in an e-mail that the Yiddish word for the Holocaust is *Khurbn*, a term derived from a Hebrew word that refers to the destruction of the ancient Temples in Jerusalem[12]. As this issue remains unsettled, the editor allowed full freedom to the contributors in the use of these terms, relying on their professional judgment and awareness of the issues at stake (see Chapters 11-13).

As a distinctive compendium of scholarship reflecting the current state and different fields of studies on identity, otherness and processes of othering, the editor and the authors hope to have produced a valuable contribution to current debates and research. What integrates the *Academia Europaea*'s mission and vision with the research strategies and educational objectives of the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste is the capacity to inspire new thinking to address contemporary challenges[13]. We hope to do so, not as the pastime of someone who can be amused by enjoying serious talk, but in a more productive and engaged intellectual manner, as echoed in this sentence from the dawn of our European cultural tradition:

> nobler far is the serious pursuit of the dialectician, who, finding a congenial soul, by the help of science sows and plants therein words which are able to help themselves and him who planted them, and are not unfruitful, but have in them a seed which others brought up in different soils render immortal, making the possessors of it happy to the utmost extent of human happiness (Plato, *Phaedrus* 276e-277a).

4. The Original Research Project

This collection has a long, somewhat complex background. Its nucleus and rationale originate from a research project highlighting the *Academia Europaea*'s contribution to the European humanistic culture that David Coates, executive

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[12] Fleet 2012; for a survey, see Sullam Calimani 2019.

[13] It is worth noting that beginning from October 2019 a substantial part of the Department of Humanities' multifarious research activities are coordinated within the general frame of a three year common project focused on "Transformations of the Human". The present volume pertains to the thematic area "Human societies: persons, education and rights", research field: "Identity, diversity and pluralism" within that departmental general project. I personally coordinate the project "Identity and Diversity of the Subject in Natural and Social Contexts: a Historical and Philosophical Approach", divided in two parts: "Human Diversity in Context" (together with Cristiana Baldazzi and Roberta Gefter Wondrich) and "Kant and the determination of the concept of race in the philosophy of history" (together with Mario Marino).

secretary of the *Academia,* asked me to design, in my capacity as general project coordinator, on behalf of the Board, in Autumn 2013.

The original research project aimed to bring together scholars belonging to the Humanities and Social Sciences Classes of the Academy of Europe sharing the same vocation and similar research and scientific interests: to study the production, transmission and differentiation of what European societies have assumed and represented as 'human'. The project aimed to examine and assess concepts, practices and institutions concerned with 'identity' and 'otherness'.

Attention was given to the possibility of having to develop new categories and new critical attitudes so as to grasp and establish what now transpires within Europe and between its member nations and their – that is: *our* – neighbours. I entitled that multi-disciplinary project *Human Diversity in Context: Processes of 'Othering', Construction and Dynamics of Identities, Recognition of Valuational Difference in European Traditions.*

I began by considering that even for common sense the notion of diversity is not so vague and indeterminate. The notion of diversity is distinct to those of variety, indicating as it does the specific quality of certain characteristics which diverge from the standard type of some subject. This standard type remains the point of reference. The notion of diversity is also distinct to notions of any difference which we consider extraneous, foreign, unknown or incomprehensible. In philosophy, at least since Plato's *Sophist*, diversity expresses a difference intrinsic to some identity. According to Plato (and then Hegel), any thing or *ens* that IS, has a quality or character which specifies and determines it; for this very reason, its being individuates not only its own limited and finite form, but also whatever does *not* belong to it, or whatever we do not ascribe to it. Accordingly, diversity is dialectically entwined with identity: both arise from the same movement of thought in mutual contrast. Therefore, when applied to human beings, diversity is not 'static' but mobile, insofar as it is prospective; it is not absolute, but relative to the kind(s) of identity constituted at specific times and places by specific groups, or attributed by some group to (purported) others. Such group identities are integral conceptual contrasts, classifications or distinctions; they serve to distinguish purported groups by differentiating them. Such notions of human diversity and identity must *always* be considered *in context*.

This rationale was proposed to members of the *Academia Europaea* from Classics and Oriental Studies, History, Anthropology, Literary Studies, Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Geography and Social Sciences. The result was a major multi- and cross-disciplinary project articulated into 7 Work Packages, with 24 participants total[14]. However, difficulties in fund raising required scaling

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14   The research team leaders of each work package were: Johannes Haubold (University of Durham),

down the plan and seeking partners. A smaller group of scholars invited me to pursue the project with more modest aims and short-term objectives[15]. This led to the international conference, *Human Diversity in Context*, held in Trieste on 25-26 September 2018, when, for the first time, the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste and the *Academia Europaea*, by generous use of its *Hubert Curien 2018 Fund*, linked key research questions in the humanities and the social sciences[16]. Its results confirmed the productivity and feasibility of fostering synergy between the pan-European network of the *Academia Europaea* and members' local university institutions co-financing the event. The essays presented here are largely based upon papers presented to this conference, which was organised in 6 Sessions:

John Tolan (University of Nantes), Cinzia Ferrini (University of Trieste), Sami Pihlström (University of Helsinki), Maria Paradiso (University of Milan), Iván Zoltán Dénes (Henrik Marczali Research Team, Budapest), Susana Onega (University of Zaragoza). The key topics were as follows: WP1 (Haubold): *Classics and its Others: Pathologies of Othering, Cultural Exchanges between East and West and European Traditions of 'Selfing'.* WP2 (Tolan): *Legal Aspects of the Construction and Co-Existence of Religious and Ethnic Identities at the Origin of Modern and Contemporary European Societies.* WP3 (Ferrini): *Describing, Measuring and Classifying Human Beings: Developing Comprehensive Theories and Assimilating Reported Natural Histories of Human Diversity.* WP4 (Pihlström) *Recognizing Religious and Moral Identities: Reason, Freedom, and Valuational Diversity in European Traditions.* WP5 (Paradiso) *Construction and Reconstruction of Identities and Territorialities in the 21st century.* WP6 (Iván Zoltán Dénes) *Trauma Management, Self-Images and Otherness: Competing Regimes of Memory in Divided European Societies.* WP7 (Onega) *Scope and Limits of the Literary Representation of the Human: The 'Otherness' of Trans- and Post-Human Cultures.*

15   They were Paradiso, Onega, Zoltán Dénes, Tolan.

16   The Trieste 2018 conference was followed by the workshop "Beyond Identity? New Avenues for Interdisciplinary Research on Identity" organized in the *Academia Europaea* Wroclaw Knowledge Hub on 8-9 November 2019. This further event was designed "to explore the contemporary issues of identity, devise common approaches and find possible solutions to current identity problems including sectarianism, nationalism, ethnic violence, violent identity politics and identity-fuelled wars". The Conveners (Ireneusz P. Karolewski (MAE) from the Leipzig University, Virginie Mamadouh (MAE) from the University of Amsterdam, and Dr. Dorota Kołodziejczyk from the Postcolonial Studies Center, University of Wrocław) sought to devise an interdisciplinary dialogue spanning social science and humanities, on the fixed aspects of identity-making *versus* socially constructed factors. The workshop aimed "to bring together insights from various disciplines into how individual and collective identities are formed, negotiated and fixed, how individual and collective formats and purposes in identity interact or clash". A further goal was "to debate the long-established, classical research positions and the newest advancements in theory and empirical findings in various disciplines, also to better grasp possible changes of paradigms in exploring identity". See https://acadeuro.wroclaw.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Beyond-Identity-Program-Biograms-and-Abstracts-Book.pdf. Furthermore, a workshop on "Collective Identities, Nations and Social Spheres" will be organised by the Class of Social and Related Sciences and by the Wroclaw Hub of the *Academia Europaea* in Spring 2021 and will highlight key issues in the study of collective identities and their dependence on and consequences for social spheres and the nature of political order.

1. Social Co-Existence of Different Identities: Models of Diversity in Historical Perspective;

2. Comprehending Otherness in Philosophy and Religious Sciences;

3. Identity and Otherness in Cultural Anthropology, Natural History and Comparative Psychology;

4. Human Diversity in Social and Political Contexts;

5. Modern and Contemporary Histories of Self-Identity and Diaspora;

6. Contextualised Perspectives: Story-Telling of Injured Identities in Contemporary Narratives and Histories of Discrimination.

These presentations considered a wide array of topics, focusing the central issue of 'human diversity' from various perspectives. They ranged from the recognition or, if need be, reconstruction of diverse religious identities in dialogue, to the analysis of vulnerable identities wounded by ideological or racial obsessions; from the formation of territorially bounded human collectives and their diasporae to the dialectical examination of processes of 'othering'; from cultural and physical anthropological narratives and classifications of humankind, to exploring cognitive skills humans share and do not share with non-human animals, thus unveiling the neurological roots of our judgments and pre-judgments about the 'us'/'them' dichotomy.

The present volume, though named with the same title, is no mere conference proceedings, as the essays published here are either longer and more nuanced revisions of the oral presentations, or in some cases entirely new research.

John Tolan, who delivered the paper "Legal Construction and Co-Existence of Religious and Ethnic Identities at the Origin of Contemporary European Society" (Session 1), presented results of the research program "RELMIN: The Legal Status of Religious Minorities in the Euro-Mediterranean World (fifth-fifteenth centuries)", financed through an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (2010-2015)[17]. Moreover, in collaboration with the *Academia Europaea*, he organized the conference "Religious Pluralism and Social Diversity: Religions in the European Public Space" (University of Nantes, 3-5 October 2018)[18]. Therefore he was unable to contribute to this volume an entirely original research paper. The same holds for Maria Paradiso. She presented "Ethnic Minorities and Migrants' Success in Embedding Themselves in Destination

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[17]   See Berend *et al.*, 2017.

[18]   See program and rationale at: https://www.ae-info.org/ae/Acad_Main/Past_Events/2011-present/Religious%20 Pluralism%20and%20Social%20Diversity.

Country or Their Majority Space" (Session 4). Her presentation drew upon a co-authored chapter with Itzhak Schnell, Ahmed Diab (Tel Aviv University) in the frame of a FP7 Marie Curie MEDCHANGe project grant coordinated by Maria Paradiso herself. At that time, the paper was forthcoming in a Springer book series[19]. Iván Zoltán Dénes offered a dense and committed socio-political analysis in his opinion paper "Political Hysteria as a Cornerstone for Making Autocratic State" (Session 4), which lay beyond the scope of this scholarly collection[20]. Tullia Catalan (Department of Humanities, University of Trieste) delivered the very first results of her new historical research on "Anti-Semitism and Identities in the Italian Women's Testimonies of the USC Shoah Foundation Archives" (Session 6). She was therefore unable to meet the deadline for this collection. Though their work, for different reasons, does not appear in this set of essays, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to John, Maria, Iván and Tullia for participating in the conference. Although we suffered the absence of Iván, due to unexpected health problems, his paper was read by Tolan.

John, Maria and Tullia chaired sessions, engaged in lively discussion, opened up new cultural horizons by sharing data and methodologies, and so contributed with great professionality and competence to making multi-disciplinarity a real experience in our academic life[21].

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Chapter Titles, Abstracts & Biographical Notes

PART I

WE AND OUR OTHERS:

IDENTIFYING AND SPECIFYING HUMAN ANIMALS

1. *Assimilating Reported Natural Histories of Human Diversity:*
Theories of the Nature of Mankind
WOLFGANG PROß

ABSTRACT: Until the late eighteenth century, a set of arguments provided seemingly valid etiologies for human diversity: they were based on classical antiquity theoories on the influence of climate on the physiology of humans and on accounts of the Bible and its chronology (Cain's secession from his family, Noah and the Flood, the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel). The experience of travellers and missionaries started, from late sixteenth and early seventeenth century onward, to cast doubts on similar assumptions, and natural history systematically developed during the eighteenth century a quite different approach. By comparing the distribution and adaptation of animals to the climate zones of the globe, it became evident that probably only 'mankind' was capable of sustaining itselves under all life conditions, from the torrid zones to the polar regions. The "geographical history of mankind", closely linked to questions of the natural history of the Earth, prompted scientists to substitute assumptions about congenital diversities of humans by looking at them simply as varieties of only a single and identical species. Attention will focus on authors like Aristotle or Hippocrates, who gave rise to the arguments in favour of human diversity, and on their followers till late eighteenth century; and we will outline how these views were deconstructed by new ways of conceiving the relationship between humans and their habitat, by a new chronology of the Earth and by a more exact knowledge of human physiology. In a set of famous lectures, given in Berlin in 1827/28, and in the first volume of his masterpiece *Kosmos* (1845), the famous naturalist Alexander von Humboldt summed up the results of the debate, by denying the validity of any concept of different races and defending the unity of humankind in its variegated forms. The term "diversity" will be used in the

following essay regarding theories that admit fundamental differences among humans, allegedly founded in nature; "variety" will designate the belief in the existence of one single human species, notwithstanding its various appearances in body, habits and culture.

BIONOTE: *Wolfgang D. Proß* studied literature and philosophy in Munich, Pavia and Oxford. He taught in Munich, Giessen and Vienna, and in 1988 he was appointed full professor of German Literature and Comparative Studies in Bern. He is currently Emeritus Professor. His specific field of inquiry is the relation between literature and scientific and political thought in the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries. He has extensively published on Campanella, Vico, Muratori, Albrecht von Haller, Rousseau, Herder, Georg Büchner; on philosophy of history and natural sciences in the Age of Enlightenment; on problems of literary theory, but also on Händel, Mozart and eighteenth century theatre. He has published an edition of works by Johann Gottfried Herder (Vol. I: *Herder und der Sturm und Drang*; Vol. II: *Herder und die Anthropologie der Aufklärung*; Vol. III: I*deen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 2 Vols. München – Wien: Hanser 1984-2002). Among his publications: "Naturalism, Anthropology and Culture", in: M. Goldie & R. Wokler (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*. Cambridge University Press 2006; "Kolonialismuskritik aus dem Geist der Geschichtsphilosophie: Raynal, Herder, Dobrizhoffer und der Fall Paraguay", in: Y.G. Mix & H. Ahrend (Hg.), *Raynal – Herder – Merkel. Transformationen der Antikolonialismusdebatte in der europäischen Aufklärung*. Heidelberg: Winter 2017; "The Order of Being and the Order of Ideas: The Historical Context of Herders *Essay on Being*", in: J.K. Noyes (Ed.), *Herder's Essay on Being. A Translation and Critical Approaches*. Rochester N. Y.: Camden House 2018; "Geschichtliches Handeln und seine Nemesis. Visionäre der Geschichte in der Zeit der Französischen Revolution", in: K. Bayertz & M. Hoesch (Hg.), *Die Gestaltbarkeit der Geschichte*. Hamburg: Meiner 2019. In 2012 he was elected member of the *Academia Europaea*, in 2016 he was awarded the Herder Medal by the International Herder Society.

2. *Natural History, Racial Classification and Anthropology in J.F. Blumenbach's Work and Reception*
MARIO MARINO

ABSTRACT: Against the background of the paradigm shift in natural history that took place in the late eighteenth century, the influential works of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840), *De generis humani varietate nativa*,

Handbuch der Naturgeschichte, *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, published beetween the last three decades of the eighteenth cnetury and the beginning of the nineteenth, offered the first modern racial classification of human varieties. This essay discusses the development of such an intellectual enterprise by especially focusing on the role of climatic and cultural factors in the variation of human nature, the theoretical presuppositions and methodological foundation of craniological classification and the alternative between variety and race. The aim is to show the theoretical, methodical and conceptual shifts as well as the ambivalences inherent to Blumenbach's classification. Highlighting these arguable aspects would help to understand their controversial reception in the anthropology and history of science of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

BIONOTE: *Mario Marino* graduated at the University of Pisa (2002) and carried out his doctoral studies at the Scuola Alti Studi Fondazione Collegio San Carlo Modena (Ph.D. in Cultural Sciences: 2003-2006). After six years of post-doctoral research at the University of Jena (2004-2010) where he participated in the section on "Anthropologie und Kulturmorphologie" of the national project "Ereignis Weimar-Jena. Kultur um 1800", he was visiting professor of Philosophy and Italian Culture at the "Adam Mickiewicz" University, Poznań (2010-2012). Since 2014 he is assistant professor (Akademischer Mitarbeiter) at the Brandenburgische Technische Universität Cottbus-Senftenberg, where he is collaborating at present with the chair of Technoscience Studies. He has extensively published (in German and Italian) on philosophy and anthropology in the Enlightenment and racism and racial theories, with a focus on Herder, Gehlen and Primo Levi. He is the editor of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*. Göttingen, 1790-1811. Reprint: Hildesheim, 2014; and the author of *Da Gehlen a Herder. Origine del linguaggio e ricezione di Herder nel pensiero antropologico tedesco* (Il Mulino 2008).

3. *How the Evolutive Continuity of Cognition Challenges 'Us/Them' Dichotomies*
CINZIA CHIANDETTI

ABSTRACT: 'Us/Them' is a dichotomy used to differentiate human beings on the basis of race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, and so forth, but it is also used to sort humans from nonhuman animals. Here, I discuss cognitive biases and mental shortcuts that characterize both discriminations. The ingroup/outgroup bias, ruling racist positions, has is profound roots in predisposed and phylogenetically ancient abilities that enhanced early hominines' survival chances by supporting categorization at different levels. Such abilities, along

with a set of basic cognitive capacities (the so-called "core knowledge"), have been shaped by evolution, are inherited from our ancestors, and are shared with other animal species. The criteria for inclusion/exclusion in the 'us/them' categories can change by virtue of previous experience, and some preliminary evidence suggests that the cognitive continuum that characterizes all living species can probably lead people to understand that the differences in mental abilities between species are just a matter of degree, as Darwin correctly suggested. Whether a similar effect can apply to other biased evaluations like those based on religion and gender, thus intervening to overcome cultural racism, is a possibility that remains to be investigated in future studies.

BIONOTE: *Cinzia Chiandetti* is Associate Professor in Cognitive Neuroscience and Animal Cognition at the Department of Life Sciences at the University of Trieste. She graduated in Psychology at the University of Padova and obtained a Ph.D. in Neuroscience at B.R.A.I.N. Centre for Neuroscience, University of Trieste. She has been a post-doc at CIMeC Centre for Mind/Brain Sciences, University of Trento and she gained experience in foreign labs as visiting researcher (Prof. S. Helekar's Lab, Dept. of Neurology at The Houston Methodist Hospital, Texas; Prof. B. McCabe's Lab, University of Cambridge, UK; Prof. T. Matsushima's Lab, Hokkaido University, Japan; Prof. O. Güntürkün's Lab at Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany). Award holder of a L'Oréal grant for Women in Science in 2010, she is Section Editor of the section Animal Cognition and Psychology for the journal *Biological Communications* since 2016 and Review Editor for *Frontiers in Comparative Psychology* since 2010. She heads the Laboratory of Animal Cognition and her research interests cover the origins of cognition and the development of cerebral asymmetries. She is active in disseminating the scientific achievements of the field to the broad public by attending divulgative science festivals. Her research has attracted media attention; a complete list of scientific publications and media interest is available at https://sites.google.com/site/laboratoryanimalcognition/.

PART II

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES:
SOCIAL GROUPS AND CULTURAL INTERRELATIONS

4. *Constructing the Religious 'Other'*
GEREON WOLTERS

ABSTRACT: As Aristotle already pointed out, *Homo sapiens* is a social animal. 'Social' means that every individual belongs to a group of people or to various such groups. Examples are families, tribes, nations. How are such groups kept together? In my essay, I will show that religion is a primary means of building up the cohesion of social groups, and a first rate component of their exclusive identity, thus involving processes of 'othering'. Constructing religious 'otherness' provides the negative complement of religious identity, and contributes greatly to its consolidation. This is mostly shown with examples from the holy texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In the first section I present some general remarks on group identity. In the next three sections I offer a brief account of the creation or construction of the 'other' in the Sacred Scriptures of the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. I conclude by advancing some general considerations about the role of violence in constructing the religious 'other'.

BIONOTE: *Gereon Wolters* studied philosophy and mathematics at the universities of Innsbruck, Tübingen and Kiel. His main research areas are history and philosophy of science (Ernst Mach, philosophy of biology, logical empiricism), philosophy during National Socialism and World War I, science and religion, consequences of English as the so-called *lingua franca* in the humanities, philosophy of Enlightenment. Visiting lecturer at the University of Zurich (1985-2008) and full professor at the University of Constance (since 1988, currently Emeritus), where he has founded and directed the Philosophisches Archiv. He was research fellow at the Center for Philosophy of Science of the University of Pittsburgh (1996-97), at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (2008/09) and at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies 2009/10. He was elected member of the Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina in 2004 and of the *Academia Europaea* in 2010. – Among his monographs: *Mach I, Mach II, Einstein und die Relativitätstheorie: Eine Fälschung und ihre Folgen* (1987); *Vertuschung, Anklage, Rechtfertigung. Impromptus zum Rückblick der deutschen Philosophie aufs >Dritte Reich<* (2004); *Ambivalenz und Konflikt. Katholische Kirche und Evolutionstheorie* (2010); *Globalizzazione del bene?* (2015). For more publications see: https://uni-konstanz.academia.edu/GereonWolters and his site on ResearchGate.

5. *The "Language of God" in Muslim and Jewish Traditions: A Case Study*
Carmela Baffioni

Abstract: This chapter aims to show how hermeneutics bridges gaps of religious belief and practice between monotheisms, fostering circulation of similar ideas to disveil scriptural knowledge about Adam's divine gift of combining letters into names manifesting the true nature of God's creatures. Here I consider part of an addition to Epistle 50 of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' (the Brethren of Purity). They are the authors of an encyclopaedia that recent scholarship dates at the first half of tenth century at latest. Epistle 50 deals with various kinds of administration or (or "proper attitudes") toward body and soul. The addition is found in the MS Istanbul Esad Efendi 3638 (1287 A.D.). It is an esoteric text aiming to explain the inner meaning of the story of Adam. The final part approaches God's bestowal of language to Adam, and the corruption of language after Adam's fall. Numerous elements are added to the Qur'anic tale of sura 2, vv. 31-37 that differ from the biblical account in *Genesis*. First, I compare this chapter with the views about divine language of the Spanish mystic and thinker Abraham Abulafia (1240-1291 [?]), who grounded his kabbalistic view on divine language. My comparison moves from how the Arabic text may be better understood with help from Walter Benjamin's article *On Language as Such and on the Language of Man*, likely influenced by researches of Gershom Scholem on the same topic. Despite the noticeable differences between them, the historical proximity of the anonymous author of the addition and Abulafia legitimates their comparison; we have a collateral evidence of the circulation of these ideas in the Muslim and Jewish contexts and between the Muslim East and al-Andalus. Second, as is known, Abulafia developed his theories on the basis of the first Judaic script on this topic, the ancient *Sefer yeṣirah*. Common issues between the Arabic addition and the *Sefer* demonstrate the circulation of similar ideas in Muslim and Jewish esoteric contexts. Third, ideas common to the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and the commentaries of Dunash ibn Tamīm and Shabbetay Donnolo on the *Sefer yeṣirah* open a debate on the spread of the encyclopaedia in the Southern Italian scholarly milieu and bring further elements in favour of the Fāṭimid commitment of the Brethren of Purity.

Bionote: *Carmela Baffioni* is presently a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. Until 2012 she served as full Professor of History of Islamic Philosophy at the Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale". She is member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, of the *Academia Europaea*, and of the Academie Internationale d'Histoire des Sciences, and a founder member of the Section of Arabic Studies in the branch of Near Eastern Studies of the Accademia Ambrosiana (Milan). Her publications include studies on the

transmission of Greek thought into Islam and the Latin reappraisals of Arabic heritage; on al-Kindī, al-Farābī, Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd; on Ismāʿīlī thinkers such as Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī and Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī; and on philosophy of nature, atomism, and embryology. She has written books on Aristotle's *Meteorologica*, IV (1981), on Arabic atomism (1982), on the history of Greek thought in Shahrastānī (1990); a commented translation of Averroes' commentary on *Poetics* (1990); books on the history of Islamic thought; and the revision and edition of the catalogue of the manuscripts of the Ahel Habott Foundation, Chinguetti (in Arabic and French; 2006). Since 2010 she focused on preparing arabic critical editions and english translations of the 'Epistles of the Brethren of Purity' (the Ikhwan al-Safa'). Her third publication in the field (with Ismail Poonawala), *Sciences of the Soul and Intellect, Part III: An Arabic Critical Edition and English Translation of Epistles 39–41* (2017), was awarded by the Iranian Academy of Science 2018 prize. In 2019 she published a new edition with translation and commentary of Epistle 50 in C. Baffioni, W. Madelung, C. Uy & N. Alshaar ed. and trans., *On God and the World. An Arabic Critical Edition and English Translation of Epistles 49–51*, New York: Oxford University Press – Institute of Ismaili Studies.

6. *Mirror Images in* al-Andalus*: The Quest for Self-Identity in Two Arabic Travelogues*
Cristiana Baldazzi

Abstract: This essay aims to bring to light the approach to Spain that two Arab intellectuals, the Egyptian writer Aḥmad Zakī (1867-1934) and the Lebanese painter Muṣṭāfà Farrūkh (1901-1951), had in common. Both of them wrote a travelogue: Zakī's *Riḥla ilà l-muʾtamar* was published in 1893 and Farrūkh's *Riḥla ilà bilād al-majd al-mafqūd* (was published in 1930. Zakī, in keeping with the methodology that was typical of the classical Arab travelogue (*adab al-rihla*), described all the European cities he visited on his way to his ultimate destination, the Congress of Oriental Scholars in London. On his return journey he stopped off in Spain which, he admitted unequivocally, was the country where he felt most at home. Farrūkh, on the other hand, went directly to Spain to gather evidence on the artistic heritage that the Arabs had left in Andalusia. Despite the differences in their works, both authors find in Spain a testimony to the ancient glory of its Muslim past, a fact which was in direct contrast to what they considered to be the general ignorance of other European countries at the same period. For both the authors, Spain was an example of the past greatness of Arabic civilization that belonged to the West as much as it did to the East and should, therefore, be considered by the Arabs as a means whereby they could emerge from the impasse of their decline. It was in the Other which they found in Spain that they

discovered themselves: they saw the Spaniards of their day as being similar to the Arabs because it was precisely to the latter that they were indebted for their own talent. They were, in fact, a mirror image that both authors could make work in the construction of the idea of a modern Arabic State.

BIONOTE: *Cristiana Baldazzi* is Senior Lecturer in Arabic Language and Literature at the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste. Her research interests include: autobiographical literature (memoirs and diaries) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Palestine and Egypt with special reference to political history (parties and associations) and social history (*Il ruolo degli intellettuali arabi tra Impero Ottomano e Mandato: il caso della famiglia Zu'aytir 1872-1939.* Neaples: Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli 2005); travel literature between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a specific focus on national identities and the process of modernisation (*Lo sguardo arabo: immagini e immaginari dell'Occidente.* Trieste: EUT 2018).

PART III
THE 'I' AND THE 'WE' IN CONTEXT

III.1 – THE INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNAL PERSPECTIVES: A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

7. *Freedom through Otherness: Hegel's Lesson on Human Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity*
CINZIA FERRINI

ABSTRACT: Hegel speaks of human self-knowledge in terms of "self-elevation" above the singularity of sensation to the universality of thought and as addressing human truth and knowledge. However, if we regard his famous injunction "know thyself" as meaning that a self-conscious I must become another for itself, *only in order to be able to identify with itself*, then our self-knowledge would rest upon a hypertrophy of the subject's sense of identity. For this reason Hegel has been charged with subordinating concrete difference and real alterity to abstract and idealistic self-identity. Is this Hegel's lesson on our subjective identity? To answer this question I examine how the phenomenological path brings to light the awareness of the common rationality of human beings in terms of the subject's capability *to know oneself as oneself within the others* passing through the necessity

of negating the self-sense of one's own natural essential singularity. My aim is to show how Hegel's initially abstract subjective identity (the 'I') is torn out of its simplicity and self-relation (I am I), loses its independent punctual subsistence and, by overcoming the indifference and immediacy of what is other than itself, assumes an inter-subjective and objective dimension. I shall account for the 'I''s phenomenological process of transforming the accidentality, externality and necessity of its outwardness and inwardness into the socially shared spiritual representations, purposes and norms of any historical statal community of human agents. By focusing on the master-serf relationship and on the import of what appears to be objectified in the serf's work for the externalization of the master's own inwardness, I highlight Hegel's idea of freedom as intersubjective cognitive and practical actualization. In Hegel's absolute idealism, *relational* characteristics enter the definition of what is substantial in human individuals *qua* embodied 'Egos', embedded in an interconnected totality.

BIONOTE: *Cinzia Ferrini* (Laurea cum laude and Ph.D. in Philosophy, University of Rome "La Sapienza") studied as doctoral student at the State University of New York at Stony Brook (1985-1986), as visiting researcher at the Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam (1988-1989), as *Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiter* at the University of Bern (1992-1994), as an Alexander v. Humboldt fellow at the German Universities of Wuppertal (1994-1995) and Konstanz (1996, 1997, 1998-1999), before being permanently appointed at the University of Trieste (2000) as a researcher in history of philosophy, where she is currently teaching "History of modern and contemporary philosophy" as aggregate professor with full professorship habilitation. Her main research areas are early modern (*L'invenzione di Cartesio. La* disembodied mind *negli studi contemporanei: eredità o mito?* Trieste 2015) and German classical philosophy (*Dai primi hegeliani a Hegel*. Neaples 2003); she has published widely in international peer-reviewed journals and *Companions* (Wiley-Blackwell, Bloomsbury, Palgrave Macmillan) on Kant and the empirical sciences (editing the international collection *Eredità Kantiane*. Neaples 2004) and on Hegel's logic, phenomenology and philosophy of nature, also in relation to aspects of ancient and contemporary thought. She served the *Academia Europaea* as member of the Board of Trustees (2008-2013), co-organizing sessions of the annual meetings on behalf of the Humanities cluster (Naples 2009, Paris 2011 and Wroclaw 2013); she is an appointed member of the *AE* Section Committee of Philosophy, theology and religious studies since 2020. For more information, see http://www.units.it/persone/index.php/from/abook/persona/7342).

8. *Education is the Art of Making Humanity Ethical*
Preston Stovall

Abstract: Beginning from Hegel's notion of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) as a mode of consciousness governed by the norms of a historical community, this essay examines the role of education in shaping contemporary communities of autonomous people. It does so by defending a version of the idea that an educator has, among her other tasks, the role of helping her students appreciate the values that are shared across her community. In the course of the examination I relate this idea to trends in the European Enlightenment, research concerning political polarization in Europe and North America today, and the impact this polarization is having on the academy. In the process I argue that the modern university educator has the task of cultivating in students an attitude of critical inquiry whose results are not coerced by the social conditions under which that inquiry takes place, and I offer some pedagogical proposals for the university educator facing the situation we are today.

Bionote: Preston Stovall is currently a post-doctoral researcher in philosophy for a project on inferentialism and collective intentionality at the University of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic. He received his B.A. from Montana State University, his M.A. from Texas A&M University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. He works in metaphysics and the philosophy of language, informed by the work of the German idealists and the American pragmatists.

III.2 – Ethnic Resilience, National identities and Diaspora: Modern and Contemporary Histories

9. *Diaspora and Self-Representation: The Case of Greek People's Identity, Fifteenth- Nineteenth Centuries*
Olga Katsiardi-Hering

Abstract: In the long space-time between the late fifteenth and early nineteenth centuries Greek Orthodox people from Southeastern Europe have established communities / "colonies" / *paroikiai* in various cities in central, northern Europe, at the Mediterranean and at the Black Sea. The reasons for this were political, cultural and economic. Their establishment in the host cities was a result of their interest and, of course, a consequence of the privileges granted to them

by the local authorities, more or less because of their special economic interest. In these diaspora communities Greeks, Serbs, Albanians, Aromunians and Bulgarians, founded their Greek Orthodox churches, and organised their common communities. Very often and, particularly, during the eighteenth century, they conducted different forms of organisation, following their own forms of national identification. The common Orthodox dogma was not sufficient as a combining element. The *Jus-nationis* took the important place of the *Jus religionis*. The commercial and intellectual networks, built by these diaspora Greek Orthodox people, were another interesting phenomenon of this long space-time. The co-existence of Greek Orthodox with other Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Armenian, Jewish people in the diaspora led, from the mid-eighteenth century, to the more or less intense strengthening of the 'us' towards to the 'others'. The formation of the nation states in Southeastern Europe (the first among them being the Greek one, in 1830) was also a result of this long and interesting process of national identification.

BIONOTE: *Olga Katsiardi-Hering* is currently Emeritus professor of Modern Greek History (1453-1828) at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (since 2003, currently Emerita). Her main research topics are: Greek Diaspora (fifteenth-nineteenth cent.), Migration, Historical Anthropology, Family History, Urban history, Greek Enlightenment, European Idea, Culture and Identity, Historical Cartography, Greek Revolution in the Austrian archives (economic and diplomatic aspects). She was visiting professor at the University of Vienna (Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies) in 1994-1995 and 1999-2000. In 2008, she became member of the International Scientific Committee of the "Istituto Internazionale di storia economica 'F. Datini'" (Prato), and since 2016 member of the 'Giunta' of the same Committee. In 2015 she has been elected member of the PRO ORIENTE-Kommission für südosteuropäische Geschichte, in 2016 corresponding member of the "Istituto Siciliano degli Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici 'Bruno Lavagnini'". In 2016, she was also elected member of the *Academia Europaea*. She co-edited a number of collections on her research field, among which (with M. Stassinopoulou): *Across the Danube. Southeastern Europeans and Their Travelling Identities (17th-19th C.),* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). Among her monographs: *The Greek community in Trieste, 1750-1830*, (in Greek), Athens 1986, 1-2 Vols. (Italian translation: *La presenza dei Greci a Trieste (1751-1830)*, Trieste 2018). She authored more than 45 essays. For more information: http://en.arch.uoa.gr/fileadmin/arch.uoa.gr/uploads/cvs/katsiardi_en.pdf and see: http://www.ae-info.org/ae/Member/Katsiardi-Hering_Olga.

10. *When National Assimilation Policies Encounter Ethnic Resilience: The Case of Western European Roma*
Paola Toninato

Abstract: Soon after the first nomadic 'Gypsies' appeared in Western Europe they were labelled as 'undesirable' and subjected to state control. The chapter discusses in its first part the main types of public policies enacted from the sixteenth century onwards in order to exclude and ultimately assimilate Romani groups within mainstream European society. These policies were based on a number of deeply engrained views and stereotypical categories that still pervade the public and legal discourse on 'Gypsies'. Focusing on the Western European context, the chapter deconstructs in the second part misleading 'Gypsy' categories by contrasting them with the Roma's own experiences, and highlighting the non-binary, non-exclusionary logic underlying their self-definitions. In the face of relentlessly hostile attitudes, the resilience demonstrated by Roma and Sinti enabled them to actively adapt to the changing socio-political circumstances without losing their ethnic identity. Two recent instances of resilient cultural strategies are analysed: the rise of a transnational written Romani literature and the emergence of the Roma/Gypsies as a political subject which challenges the traditional national-identity paradigm through the adoption of non-territorial, diasporic models.

Bionote: *Paola Toninato* (Laurea cum laude and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature) is Associate Research Fellow at the University of Warwick, UK. Her research is interdisciplinary, encompassing Italian and Comparative Cultural Studies, Ethnic and Migration Studies, and Literary Anthropology. Previously she has worked in the Department of Sociology of Warwick and in the Department of International Development of the University of Oxford, where she collaborated with Professor Robin Cohen on his ESRC-funded programme on creolization and mixed identities and on a jointly edited publication entitled *The Creolization Reader: Studies in Mixed Identities and Cultures*. Her project "The Making of Gypsy Diasporas" was funded by the AHRC programme *Diasporas, Migration and Identities*: http://web.archive.org/web/20150215055840/http://www.diasporas.ac.uk/. The research involved fieldwork among Roma in Northern Italy and a six months Research Fellowship in the Department of Psychology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Verona. Her recent book publications include the monograph *Romany Writing: Literacy, Literature and Identity Politics* (Routledge, 2014), and *Differences on Stage*, co-edited with A. De Martino and P. Puppa (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), which was nominated for the George Freedley Memorial Award of the Theatre Library Association.

PART IV

INJURED IDENTITIES AND HISTORIES AND DISCRIMINATION

11. *The Exhausted Intertext as Cultural Memory: Erased and Displaced Identities in Caryl Phillips*' The Nature of Blood *and* The Lost Child
ROBERTA GEFTER WONDRICH

ABSTRACT: Caryl Phillips is the most acclaimed British living writers of Caribbean origin and his output has constantly focussed on issues of belonging, origins, displacement, dramatizing the condition of unbelonging and identitarian loss (and particularly of the African diaspora and the slave trade) with novelistic strategies that can be broadly ascribed to postmodernism and postcolonialism. His ambitious historical novel *The Nature of Blood* (1997) features a rewrite of *Othello* and two narratives of the Jewish diaspora set respectively in the fifteenth century and in 1948, and his recent *The Lost Child* (2015) combines three narrative threads: a sort of prequel to *Wuthering Heights* – a crucial intertext in Philips' literary *Bildung* and a key text in late twentieth-century literary representations of British identity – a dramatization of Charlotte Bronte's last days and an ill-fated love story between a black Caribbean and a middle-class English woman in 1950s England. This essay will investigate how Phillips' literary agenda valorises the apparently unstable connection of the rewrite with the original as a subtle critique to the idea of the intertext itself as a source of cultural memory. Much like the two literary models – Othello and Heathcliff – are displaced, other, and ultimately self-consciously destructive characters, Phillips' contemporary subjects – which include the traditional figures of the orphan and the outcast and exile – remain adrift in environments which either erase or displace their identitarian heritage and their possibility to belong. The intertext is thus no longer a cardinal feature in the construction of the new text, postcolonial/postmodern/neo-historical, in so far as it constitutes the object of a revisionist process, but rather a pre-text, where hints and elements of ambiguity, instability and ambivalence are retrieved, amplified and transfigured to produce a critique of the West's own displaced history of oppression and amnesia.

BIONOTE: *Roberta Gefter Wondrich* is Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of Trieste. She is managing editor of *Prospero, Rivista di letterature e culture straniere. A Journal of foreign literatures and cultures*, published by the University of Trieste Press, EUT. She has specialised in contemporary Irish fiction, on which she has written a book and many articles. Her field of interest includes the contemporary English and Irish novel, neo-Victorianism, James

Joyce, J. M. Coetzee, thing theory, biofiction and maritime studies. Her recent and forthcoming publications include book chapters in edited volumes by Palgrave, Legenda Oxford, Brill. She is currently working at a book on the cultural object in contemporary fiction in English.

12. *The Role of Symbolisation in the Shaping of Reality and Identity:*
Tales of Woundedness and Healing
Susana Onega

Abstract: The essay begins by endorsing Merlin Donald's description of symbolisation from "the mimetic mind," through the birth of language and, with it, of narrative thought, to the eventual development of complex systems (ritual, myth, religion, art and literature) that would be essential for the shaping of reality and identity. The cognitive imperative to orient ourselves in the world by ordering and classifying it, is constantly curtailed by the human capacity for self-knowledge, which includes the shattering perception of our own mortality. Confronted with the open quest for the meaning of reality, human beings have developed the capacity to take distance from their ordinary experience and maintain simultaneously separate and contradictory bodies of knowledge, so that, as the psychoanalyst Sandra L. Bloom remarks, we may "know without knowing". Transition rituals an artistic performances are common forms of achieving collective states of dissociation that attenuate the traumatic impact of reality and enhance the social cohesion of the group. But staying in a sustained state of dissociation or negative relationship with our empirical consciousness entails the risk of self-fragmentation. As Boris Cyrulnik argues, this risk is reduced through creativity and storytelling, since "as soon as we put sadness into a story, we give a meaning to our sufferings". Drawing on this, the essay offers examples of spontaneous engagement in creative activities as a form of resilience in such life threatening conditions as those endured by inmates of Nazi camps, or by Guantánamo prisoners in the context of the "War on Terror". It then goes on to consider the role of classical wondertales in the transgenerational transmission of awful but necessary knowledge, and ends with a brief comment on the paradigmatic use the British writer of German-Jewish origin Eva Figes (1932-2012) makes of myth and wondertales as a way of assimilating, transmitting and working through her Holocaust trauma.

Bionote: *Susana Onega* is currently Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the Department of English and German Studies of Zaragoza University. She is a coopted member of the *Academia Europaea* since 2008, and an appointed

member of its Section Committee of Literary and Theatrical Studies since 2015. She is also the former President of the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies (AEDEAN) and the former Spanish Board member of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE). In 1990 she won the Enrique García Díez Research Award granted by the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies. She was granted the title of Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck College (Univ. of London) in 1996. She has been the head of a competitive research team (http://cne.literatureresearch.net) from 2003 until her retirement in 2019. She has written four monographs and numerous book chapters, monographic sections and articles on the work of contemporary writers (such as Peter Ackroyd, A. S. Byatt, J. M. Coetzee, John Fowles, Anne Michaels, David Mitchell, Bharati Mukherjee, Charles Palliser, Sarah Waters and Jeanette Winterson), on narrative theory and on ethics and trauma, among others. She has also edited, or co-edited sixteen volumes. The latest one, co-edited with Jean-Michel Ganteau, is entitled *Transcending the Postmodern: The Singular Response of Literature to the Transmodern Paradigm* (Routledge, 2020). Extended CV available at: http://cne.literatureresearch.net/images/cvs/2016/ONEGA_15_02_2016.pdf).

13. *The "Other" Voice in Survivor Narratives: A Gender-Based Approach to the Holocaust*
Rosario Arias

Abstract: In this essay I undertake a gender-based approach to survivor narratives written by women, a controversial topic among historians of the Holocaust. Two oft-quoted texts in survivor narratives, Primo Levi's *If This is a Man* (1947) and Elie Wiesel's *Night* (1960), among others, have always attracted critical attention since they were first published. However, women's survivor narratives have been conspicuously absent from critical study, or rather, they have not been analysed from the specificity of a gender approach. Since the 1990s, Carol Ritter, Joan Ringelheim and Sara Horowitz have been keen to produce the perspective of the 'other' voice by paying attention to the way women are figured in texts by men, to the way women's personal experiences are portrayed in women's narratives, and finally, the significance of gender in understanding the Holocaust as a whole. In this sense, the conceptualisation of "gender wounding", defined as "a shattering of something innate and important to her sense of her own womanhood", will be crucial in my take on women and gender in the Holocaust. For example, Charlotte Delbo's trilogy *Auschwitz and After* (1995), which consists of three volumes, *None of Us Will Return* (1946/1965), *Useless Knowledge* (1946-47/1970) and *The Measure of Our Days*

(1960s/1971), translated into English by Rosette C. Lamont, has contributed to a more nuanced analysis of survivor narratives, in general, but also of the gender aspects narrated in her text, in particular. When her husband was killed in May in 1942, and she was transported to Auschwitz, alongside two hundred and thirty other Frenchwomen, most of them members of the Resistance, and who had been arrested not for ethnic or religious issues, but for political issues. Delbo stayed in Birkenau, (the female side of Auschwitz, and a satellite camp) until January 1944, and then she was sent to Ravensbrück, a women's concentration camp. Interestingly, this camp has been neglected in the work of the historians. Sarah Helm, in her *If This Is a Woman: Inside Ravensbrück: Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (2015), whose title plays with Levi's well-known title, attempts to set history right in giving Ravensbrück, as well as the stories generated in the camp, the place it deserves in the history of the Holocaust. Therefore, in my essay I deal with the ways in which the female voice, a vulnerable 'other' within others, is heard, and how this will help the reader re-orient women's position in the history of the Holocaust and in Holocaust literature.

BIONOTE: *Rosario Arias* is Professor of English Literature at the University of Málaga (Spain). She has been a Board member of the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies (AEDEAN) for the period 2016-2019, and is an active member of the *Academia Europaea* since 2016 (http://www.ae-info.org/ae/User/Arias_Rosario). She has published a number of articles and book chapters on neo-Victorian fiction, trauma, haunting and spectrality, the trace, and memory and revisions of the past in contemporary fiction. She has co-edited (with Patricia Pulham, University of Surrey) *Haunting and Spectrality in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Possessing the Past* (Palgrave, 2010). In addition, she has also published the volume *Science, Spiritualism and Technology*, a facsimile edition of Spiritualist texts, which belongs to the collection *Spiritualism, 1840-1930* (Routledge, 2014). Professor Arias has written on the work of contemporary writers (Sarah Waters, Hilary Mantel, Margaret Atwood, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ian McEwan, and Kate Atkinson, among others). She is Principal Investigator of one funded research project, and head of one research group. She is Coordinator of a Doctoral Programme, and Head of Department since 2013 (ongoing). She is currently working on a monograph on neo-Victorian fiction and tactility.

PART I

We and Our Others: Identifying and Specifying Human Animals

1

Assimilating Reported Natural Histories of Human Diversity: Theories of the Nature of Mankind

WOLFGANG PROß

Introductory Remarks

We will start this survey of theories of the nature of mankind from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth century by going back to a case which had to be decided by the Court of Sessions in Edinburgh in January 1778. Joseph Knight, born in Africa, kidnapped and abducted by slave traders to the West Indies, had been sold to a Sir John Wedderburn, of Scottish origin, an owner of sugar plantations in Jamaica. In 1769 Knight was brought to Scotland, where in 1774 he started to fight with legal means for his release from slavery respectively from "perpetual service". Wedderburn, incensed by what he termed the "ingratitude" of his "slave", threatened to take him back to Jamaica and to put him on sale; after Knight had left his house without permission, his "owner" had him arrested. Eventually Knight obtained his freedom by a surprise decision of the highest civil court of Scotland, in a vote of eight against four judges[1]. The case, interesting in itself, because it preceded by almost thirty years the abolition of slave trade in the British Empire in 1807, deserves attention because of some of the persons

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[1]   For information concerning the facts see Knight 2007; there is no edition of the records of the case, and only a fictionalized biography of Knight by Robertson 2003.

involved in the proceedings: foremost the lawyer, historian and philosopher Henry Home Lord Kames, who was one of the judges, then the writer Samuel Johnson and his friend James Boswell, who took part in the public debate on the case. The verdict against Wedderburn was accompanied by the remark of Lord Kames: "we sit here to enforce right and not to enforce wrong". This is rather striking, as the judge was just preparing the second edition of his *Sketches of the History of Man*, which were to be published in the same year, after a first version in 1774. In a *Preliminary Discourse, concerning the Origin of Men and of Languages* for the new edition, Lord Kames advocated the existence of different races of men:

> If the only rule afforded by nature for classing animals can be depended upon, there are different species of men as well as of dogs: a mastiff differs not more from a spaniel, than a white man from a negro, or a Laplander from a Dane. And if we have any belief in Providence, it ought to be so. Plants were created of different kinds to fit them for different climates, and so were brute animals. Certain it is, that all men are not fitted equally for every climate. (Kames 1778, Vol. I, *Introduction*: 20)

Lord Kames, obviously, set aside his professed belief in providence in favour of humanity; whereas he was convinced that God had created different – he avoids saying: 'superior' and 'inferior' – races; but in the court room he did not hesitate to defend the natural right of a fellow human being to freedom and incolumity. We have to disregard the wording of the sentence that today may sound offensive, and just take in the argument; the verdict ruled that

> the dominion assumed over this Negro, under the law of Jamaica, being unjust, could not be supported in this country to any extent: That, therefore, the defender had no right to the Negro's service for any space of time, nor to send him out of the country against his consent: That the Negro was likewise protected under the act 1701, c. 6. from being sent out of the country against his consent[2].

Evidently, in the case of Joseph Knight two views of humanity became an issue in the late eighteenth century; we will summarize them in the form of a tabular survey, and insert the names of several prominent authors who were mainly responsible for the conflicting arguments:

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[2]   The Act mentioned in the verdict refers to a law passed by the Scottish Parliament to the effect of *Habeas Corpus* in the eighteenth century; it was known as *Criminal Procedure Act 1701 c. 6.*, and is partially still in vigour. Originally it was labelled as an *Act for preventing wrongful imprisonment and against undue delays in trials.*

I. Constructing Human Diversity: Its Origins in Nature and Creation	II. Deconstructing Human Diversity: 'To Recognize Humanity in its Varieties'
1. Human diversity is a result of birth: Aristotle, *Politics* and Paolo Paruta's objections (1576)	1. The discussion of human varieties and its sources: Giovanni Botero's *Relationi universali* (1591/1596) and John Barclay's *Icon animorum* (1614)
2. Human diversity is a result of climate: Hippocrates, *Airs, Waters and Places*, and some of his followers: Jean-Baptiste Dubos (1719), Montesquieu (1748), William Falconer (1781)	2. A theory of varieties – Changing paradigms I: Geography, the distribution of plants, animals and humans on Earth, and 'physical climate' (Nicolas Desmarest, E. A. W. Zimmermann, Herder)
3. Human diversity is a result of God's creation of different races: Henry Home Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774, revised 1778)	3. A theory of varieties – Changing paradigms II: Defining 'humanity' by human physiology; the arguments of erect posture and language (Daubenton, E. A. W. Zimmermann, Herder)
4. Anthropological History in the Making I: The atrophy of the theory of 'influences' in the question of races in the eighteenth century (Christoph Meiners)	4. Anthropological History in the Making II: Histories of Mankind – From Ferguson and Herder to Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt

We will discuss the arguments in favour of diversity or variety of humans in four points:

– firstly, by starting with Aristotle and his theory of 'masters and slaves by birth', and its refutation by Paolo Paruta (1576). This dispute coincided with a growing awareness that classical concepts were not adequate to the realities that presented themselves to explorers and missionaries from the sixteenth century onward. Giovanni Botero's description of the world (1591/96) and John Barclay's survey of nations (1614) helped to shape a new attitude in the outlook on human variety in geography and history;

– secondly, by looking at Hippocrates and his assertion that climate is responsible for human diversity. Until the late eighteenth century, such views regarding climate zones were commonplace, and upheld by famous authors like Jean-Baptiste Dubos, Montesquieu or William Falconer. But a change in this paradigm was brought about by a shift in the concept of climate, newly

based on physical geography and its impact on the distribution of plants and animal life on Earth. 'Climate', when it is not supported by the study of physics, turns into an accidental factor that may help to shape varieties, but is unable to create different races of man;

– thirdly, by giving a brief account of the explanation of the existence of different tribes or races of men on the authority of the Bible (Kames 1778). A change in this paradigm was brought about by new insights into the physiology of humans and the role of language in the shaping of their social life (Daubenton, Zimmermann, Herder). Since these are common features to all human varieties, the theory of different races may be unreservedly dismissed;

– our last point will illustrate the theory of the two different 'races' of men, invented by Christoph Meiners (1785), and confront this atrophied version of the climate theory with arguments in favour of the unity of mankind in its varieties and its history, from Adam Ferguson and Herder to Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt[3].

1. 'Masters and Slaves by Birth': Paolo Paruta's Refutation of Aristotle and John Barclay's Concept of Human Variety

Samuel Johnson and James Boswell had, in the case of Joseph Knight, made the remark that "no man is by nature the property of another", and that there was no proof that Knight "had given up his natural freedom". It was a thrust directed against some basic views established originally by Aristotle in the first book of his *Politics*: a slave belongs wholly to his master, not to himself; despite being human, the simple fact that he is a slave proves that it is his nature that makes him a servant (*Politics* 1254a). The difference between master and slave corresponds to the difference between soul and body, or between humans and animals. As the body has to be guided by the soul and the animal by humans, the slave has to submit to his master, for his own good; in this respect he is not different from a domestic animal. And nature has made the bodies of freemen and of slaves different; the latter is strong in his body, in order to be fit for service, the former is "erect and unserviceable for such occupations, but serviceable for a life of citizenship" (*Politics* 1254b). And finally: "It is manifest therefore that there

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[3]   It is impossible to give a survey of the research on the field of historical anthropology, within the limits of this paper; for general information I refer to the pioneering studies by Duchet 1995 (first published in 1971), Bitterli 1982 (first published in 1976) and Rossi 1979; for more recent studies see Cañizares-Esguerra 2001, Zedelmaier 2003, Lüsebrink 2006, Gisi 2007, De Angelis 2010, Abbattista 2011 and Vermeulen 2015.

are cases of people of whom some are freemen and the others slaves by nature, and for these slavery is an institution both expedient and just" (*Politics* 1255a)[4]. Almost fifty years before Hugo Grotius was to open the debate on natural law (*De jure belli ac pacis*, 1625), the Venetian historian and politician Paolo Paruta (1540-1598) had already challenged vigorously these views on the supremacy of one part of mankind, and the usefulness of servitude for the other[5]. In his work on the improvement of political life (*Della perfettione della vita politica*, 1576), he started from three guiding principles:

– it is against reason for a man to exercise power over somebody who is his similar;
– the dominion of man over his fellow man is exclusively based on human law, not on nature;
– only acts of violence furnished the cause for inventing terms like 'liberty' and 'slavery'. (WP trans.)[6]

Quite unconditionally, Paruta insisted that all positive civil laws were ultimately arbitrary and led to inequality and despotism. The notions of 'master' and 'slave' were the sign of a depraved humanity:

I don't see what should create such a difference between humans; everyone is of the same constitution, due to his rational soul which is, according to its own nature, endowed with the same forces and capacities. Because man is superior in this respect to the brute animals, he deserves to have been made their master. […] But I know of no natural or divine reason that demonstrates why a man should be the master of his fellow man. Therefore, all forms of dominion are based exclusively on human law; and since human law deviates from natural law, it is neither just, nor a law in the true sense. But in Nature's offspring you'll never encounter such injustice; she never permits inequalities of this kind to equal beings, such as dominion and servitude which we find among humans who are of the same species. […] Hence, only violence is the reason why these notions of 'dominion' and 'servitude' have found their way into the world. We have a sign of this, since there is nothing that whoever wears human

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[4] On Aristotle's naturalistic, and partially historical, explanation of slavery and its social justification, see Bodei 2019, Chap. II, 57-91, with ample bibliography. *Ed. note.*

[5] According to Bodei's reconstruction, the Aristotelian concept of natural subjection was officially condemned for the first time on 4, December 1511 by the Domenican Antonio de Montesinos in Hispaniola. His sermon against the *servidumbre natural* was attended by Bartolomé de Las Casas and was followed by the expulsion of Montesinos from the island by a royal decree approved by the Domenicans' highest authority. Later, in *Relectio de Indis* or *Libertad de los Indios* (1539) the theologian Francisco de Vitoria proposed an alternative interpretation of Aristotle's theory, by substituting justification for dispossession and slavery due to rational deficiency by birth of a human being with justification for submission due to (temporary) immaturity, comparable to legal minority, i.e., children's obedience to fathers prior to adulthood (see Bodei 2019, 126-129). *Ed. note.*

[6] Paruta 1619, Book III: 308: "Non par ragioneuole, che l'huomo habbia dominio sopra l'altro huomo simile à lui". – "Il Dominio dell'huomo sopra l'altro huomo è fondato sopra la legge humana". – "La violenza ha introdutti nel Mondo i nomi di libertà, e di seruitù".

form tries to eschew and holds more in abhorrence than servitude; it would not be so, if servitude were something natural with us. (WP trans.)[7]

This was not merely an academic dispute. In the age of discoveries from Columbus onward, theoretical concepts of antiquity – like those of Aristotle – were crucial in describing and understanding populations and cultures of previously unknown territories. The traveller Amerigo Vespucci described in his *Mundus novus* (first published under this title in 1504) the way of life of indigenous people he had met with near the coast of Brazil, in the following terms: "They know neither property nor kings, there is no state, matrimony is no institution; and, since they have no idea of religion, they have no temples, but they cannot be regarded as idolaters". Then he added a surprising remark, in order to characterize these people he might have easily called 'barbarians': "They live according to nature, and they may be called Epicureans rather than Stoics" (WP trans.)[8]. Whether "Epicureans" was the appropriate designation of an indigenous people, is not the question; it shows how keenly the problem of adequate perception and description of cultures so different from European civilization was felt in the reports of early explorers and missionaries (see Proß 2017, 24-26). It led to a reappraisal of the relation between terms coined by the European tradition, and experiences to which such concepts and words were hardly doing justice.

Giovanni Botero, author of a description of the territories of the globe as far as they were known by the end of the sixteenth century, deemed it necessary to add some reflections on this problem. Several years after he had published his *Relationi universali* (1591/96), he wrote a fifth part of his work (1611), which remained unpublished until 1895; he started this supplement by insisting on the superiority of the actual world over classical erudition. For the observation of what is actually happening helps to shape knowledge of the world from immediate experience; it is therefore of far greater value:

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[7]   Paruta 1619, 308-309: "Io non veggo […] qual cosa possa fare tale distintione tra gli uomini; hauendo ogni vno la stessa forma, che è l'animo ragioneuole dotata di sua natura delle medesime forze, & virtù; per le quali auanzando d'assai gli animali bruti meritò, che sopra loro le fusse dato l'imperio. […] Ma che l'uomo dominar debba all'altr'huomo, non so, qual ragione nè diuina, nè naturale il ci dimostri: onde rimane fondato il dominio sopra la sola legge humana; la quale, dalla naturale dipartendosi, non è nè giusta, ne uera legge: ma nelle opere della natura non si scorge giamai tale ingiustitia, che ad vguali, come sono gli huomini d'una medesma specie, sieno cose tanto disuguali concedute; quanto sono il dominio, & la seruitù. […] Dunque solo la violenza è quella, che introdotti ha nel mondo questi nomi di libertà, & di seruitù. Segno ne veggiamo, che niuna cosa altrettanto è fuggita & aborrita da chi ha pur faccia d'huomo, quanto la seruitù, il che non auuerebbe, quando ella ci fusse cosa naturale".

[8]   See the edition of Vespucci by Wallisch 2012, 26: "Non habent […] bona propria […]. Vivunt simul sine rege, sine imperio […]. Tot uxores ducunt, quot volunt. […] Preterea nullum habent templum et nullam tenent legem; neque sunt idolatre. […] Vivunt secundum naturam, et epicurei potius dici possunt quam stoici".

> Albeit every man of judgment, who takes pains to instruct his contemporaries and posterity of events present or past, deserves praise and recommendation, it seems to me more commendable to illustrate the present, instead of the past. The achievements of our age are far more alluring by their novelty, than those of the past, that have been treated by so many writers and in many languages. For you sharpen your prudence far more by looking at modern things than at antiquity; modern things show what is happening nowadays in the world, antiquity only what has been in the past. It may help to pass judgment on the present from events in the past; nevertheless, your judgment will be much more apposite, if it is based on what you see or touch yourself, rather than relying on the achievements of the Greeks or Romans […]. (WP trans.)[9]

At the beginning of the seventeenth century appeared a book, which exercised despite – or perhaps because of – its small size, great impact on the development of the category of variety for the perception of the history of nations, and in all regions of the world. It is the *Icon animorum* (1614) by the Scottish writer and satirist John Barclay, translated into English as *The Mirror of Minds* by Thomas May in 1631. Little known today, for almost two centuries it had been constantly in print, was widely read in Europe and was part of the syllabus in schools; it had great influence in the shaping of historical attitudes, in the works by Charles de Saint-Évremond, Montesquieu, Beat Louis de Muralt, Voltaire and in Herder's philosophy of history[10]. According to Barclay, human variety has two sources: the different "genius" of a specific age and the particular "spirit" of the territory where people are living. The level of culture or civilization does not create distinctive features between nations; they are varieties of the same species. The first chapter states that nations are subjected to the life circle of four ages (childhood, youth, middle age, old age), and the title of second chapter announces his belief,

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[9]   Botero/Gioda Vol. III, 1895 presents the first edition of the posthumous fifth part of the *Relationi* from the archives (36-327); see the opening passage: "Come che io stimi degna di molta lode, e di molta comendatione ogni fatica, con la quale huomini giuditiosi diano noticia a' suoi coetanei, e a' posteri delle cose passate o presenti: nondimeno molto più comendabile mi pare l'illustrare i tempi presenti, che i passati, perché i successi dell' età nostra hanno assai più del dilettevole, per la loro novità, che quei de i tempi passati, tante volte scritti e in diverse lingue espressi: sì, perchè la prudenza molto più con la sperienza delle cose moderne, che con quella delle antiche, si affina, perchè le moderne ti rappresentano quel, che passa hoggidì per il mondo; l' antiche quel, ch' è passato. E sebene da gli accidenti trascorsi si può far giuditio de i presenti: nondimeno molto più sicuro sarà il giuditio, fondato sù quel, che tu vedi, e che tocchi, che l' appoggiato alle prodezze de' Greci, o de' Latini […]" (36-37; see further Gioda 1895, Vol. 2: 620-660). – For a general appraisal of Botero see the excellent study by Descendre 2009.

[10]   Mark Riley's introduction to his edition of Barclay's text in Latin, with Thomas May's translation from 1631, supplies valuable information on the sources and a survey on the editions and translations of the *Icon* from 1614 up to 1800 (Barclay 2013, *Introduction*: 14-15 and 43-47). For the impact of Barclay's work on the development of a new historical attitude see Hassinger 1978, 5-8; 143-146; 157-158; 171-173 and 178-183.

[t]hat every age almost hath a particular genius different from the rest, that there is proper spirit to every region, which doth in a manner shape the studies and manners of the inhabitants according to itself. That it is worth the labour to find out those spirits[11].

The genius of a nation may change not only because it is subject to the stages of the life cycle, and to the affections and temper of men; their attitudes and habits are shaped by the particularities of their native country:

[...] we may distinguish the difference of the ages not more perfectly by the motion of the stars than by the deflection of mankind into divers dispositions and abilities. But there is another force that ravisheth away the minds of men and maketh them addicted to certain affections; namely that spirit, which being appropriate to every region, infuseth into men, as soon as they are born, the habit and affections of their own country. For as the same meats according to the various manners of dressing may be changed in taste, but the inward quality of nourishing or hurting can by no qualification be altogether lost; so in every nation among all the tides of succeeding ages, which alter the manners and minds of men, one certain quality remains never to be shaken off, which the Fates have distributed to every man, according to the place wherein he was born[12].

Even the character of a region may be subject to change, according to climatic variations: fruitful countries may become deserts, and wastelands turn fertile; similarly, the character of nations may alter, and a warrior tribe will turn peaceful and civilized, whereas a highly cultivated nation might revert to barbarism (Barclay 2013, Chap. II, §4: 79; §5: 81). Man is the mirror of nature; his various appearances and manifold capacities match her varieties and changeability:

But man, created after the image of the deity and for whose sake especially all other ornaments of the world were framed, is the greatest instance of this beauty of variety. For men have not only in their bodies a difference of habits and proportions, but their minds are fitted for so many things, that no picture can with more colours or

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[11]   Barclay 2013, Chap. I: 59 ("Aetates hominis quattuor: pueritia, adolescentia, aetas virilis, et senectus"; 58); Chap. II, 77 ("Saecula paene singula suum genium habere, diversumque a ceteris. Esse praeterea cuilibet regioni proprium spiritum, qui animos in certa studia et mores quodammodo adigat. Hos spiritus investigari operae pretium esse"; 76).

[12]   *Ivi*, Chap. II, §11: 85 ("Ita saeculorum aetatumque discrimina non melius ex siderum motu quam ex humani generis in varia ingenia ac studia deflexione distinxeris. Sed alius praeterea impetus animos rapere solet, certisque affectibus addicere: ille nimirum spiritus qui, singulis regionibus proprius, nascentibus hominibus patriae habitum et cupiditates statim ingenerat. Nam ut iidem cibi pro condientium arte saporem quidem mutant, ceterum interna vis alendi aut nocendi nullis blandimentis in totum corrumpitur, ita in omni gente per aestus succedentium saeculorum mores animosque mutantium haeret quaedam vis inconcussa, quam hominibus, pro condicione terrarum in quibus nasci contigerit, sua fata diviserunt"; 84).

lineaments delight the eye of the beholder than are drawn by the fates in the minds of men. What orders or ranks of virtues and vices, what excellencies of arts, what subtleties of wit has not Nature stored up in this magazine of wisdom? But there is no diversity which is more worthy of wonder than this, that men born to liberty (for how could they govern themselves, and by their own endeavours, deserve praise or infamous punishment) should also be servants, their own dispositions and the fate of the times wherein they live forcing them (as it were) into certain affections and rules of living. For every age of the world has a certain Genius, which overruleth the minds of men and turneth them to some desires[13].

Therefore, as Barclay adds in the title of Chapter Ten, it is possible only to describe some characteristics of a nation; it would be a vain attempt to anticipate all the variations in the behaviour of men[14]. The task of the observer is consequently quite specific: he is bound to adapt himself to various types of behaviour, and this requires the capacity to set aside one's own beliefs and judgments. The mind of a writer should be trained in the habit of adopting different attitudes with different people:

> And seeing that nothing is more beneficial than from the genius of divers nations *to instruct our mind so that he will be able to vary with various nations*, and to know what to expect or fear from them, it will be worth our labour to define here the especial manners of some nations, *so that from the common disposition of many men, we may find out the distinctive traits in particular persons.* (trans. modified, WP)[15]

Barclay's notion of human variety as a guiding principle for history and cultural geography became of special importance for Herder's *Another Philosophy of History on Behalf of the Evolution of Mankind* (*Auch eine Philosophie der*

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[13]   *Ivi*, Chap. II, §5: 79-81 ("Sed ille cuius gratia ceterarum rerum ornatus institutus est, ille ad divinitatis memoriam specimenque homo compositus praecipue nascitur in huius varietatis venustatem. Nam non modo diversos in corporibus habitus sortiti mortales sunt, sed et animos adeo multis simul rebus idoneos ut nulla pictura pluribus coloribus possit aut lineis delectare intuentes, quam quas in hominibus fata duxerunt. Quae virtutum aut vitiorum series, quae artium sublimitas, quodve calliditatis ingenium non est in hoc sapientiae penetrali a natura reconditum? Nulla tamen quam magis admirere diversitas, quam in libertatem hominem nasci (qui enim aliter se regere possent, laudemque vel cum poena infamiam, ex susceptis studiis mereri?) simulque servire, ad quosdam scilicet affectus, ac vivendi paene normam sua indole vel temporum sorte adacti, nam omnia saecula Genium habent, qui mortalium animos in certa studia solet inflectere"; 78-80).

[14]   *Ivi*, Chap. X: 219 ("Praeter patriae indolem, dari cuique mortalium suos affectus atque ingenium. Praecipua investigari posse, non scribi omnia"; 218).

[15]   The translation of 1631 (*ivi*, Chap. II, §12: 87) does not do quite justice to Barclay's key notion: *sic animum instruere ut diversus sit cum diversis*; I have tried to render it more adequately ("Et quoniam nihil utilius, quam ex genio variarum gentium *sic animum instruere*, *ut diversus sit cum diversis* cognoscatque quid a quaque expectandum aut timendum, operae pretium erit aliquot populorum praecipuos mores in conspectu ita dare, *ut, ex communi multorum hominum indole privatam in singulis deprehendas*"; 86, emphasis added WP).

Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit, 1774)[16]; when he critizised the "weakness of generalizations" in historiography and stressed the importance of "speaking in a *differentiating* manner of *distinct* events", he took up Barclay's insistence on the requirement that the writer's mind should adapt itself to the mentality of each nation and to variable historical circumstances. Each historical phenomenon has, according to both authors, to be described with regard to the conditions of the habitat of a nation and to the spirit of the age, so that its individual traits may be rendered visible[17].

2. The Tradition of Antiquity on Climate – Changing Paradigms I: From Climate to Physical Geography

Looking at Barclay's discriminating perception of the role of different habitats and ages that help to shape the customs and behaviour of a nation, it might come as a surprise to see how a second concept of classical antiquity could endure until the late eighteenth century, without being seriously questioned. It is the theory on climate and its permanent impact on human life, resulting in two quite different species of mankind, and a third one in between. In his treatise on *Airs, Waters and Places*, Hippocrates illustrates first the influence of waters and seasons on health in general; then he draws a comparison between the continents, Europe in the North, with cold and snowy regions at the limits of the world, the *ultima Thule*, and Asia and North Africa (Egypt and Libya) in the South, with hot and rainless deserts at the other edge of the world. Asia is generally capable of producing more varieties in the forms of life and its inhabitants, because she presents larger stretches of favourable climate:

> I hold that Asia differs very widely from Europe in the nature of all its inhabitants and of all its vegetation. For everything in Asia grows to far greater beauty and size; the one region is less wild than the other, the character of the inhabitants is milder and more gentle. The cause of this is the temperate climate, because it lies towards

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[16]   The English version is mine; the title of Herder's first essay in the philosophy of history is not easy to translate. Michael N. Forster's version in his volume of texts by Herder in English – *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* – is perhaps not a quite happy solution (Herder 2002, 272).

[17]   For Herder's reception of Barclay see Proß 2020 (forthcoming); the impact of the *Icon animorum* is reflected in some of the catch phrases in *Auch eine Philosophie*: for Herder every phenomenon in history has to be regarded as "*National, Säkular*, und am genauesten betrachtet, *Individuell*"; he speaks of "Schwäche des allgemeinen Charakterisierens", and historians should be able "das *Unterscheidende unterscheidend* sagen zu können"; see *Auch eine Philosophie*, Erster Abschnitt; HWP I 1984: 611 and 614. For Barclay's impact on his *Outlines of a Philosophy of History of Man* (*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1784-91) see below the text and notes 54 and 55.

the east midway between the [sc. winter and summer] risings of the sun, and farther away than Europe is from the cold. Growth and freedom from wildness are most fostered when nothing is forcibly predominant, but equality in every respect prevails. (Hippocrates, *Airs* 1923, Chap. XII: 105, 107)

The temperate zone is safe from excessive heat and droughts, and of the oppressive dampness of rain and cold; its inhabitants enjoy the abundant growth of fruits and trees, healthy waters, harvests are plentiful and the rearing of cattle is easy. Men are healthy, of a fine physique and mild manners. There is one drawback in this zone of permanent spring: the easy way of life will not produce the qualities of "courage, endurance, industry or high spirit", which depend on a changeable climate (Hippocrates 1923, Chap. XII: 109). After examining the ethnographic data on tribes and nations of the then known parts of both continents Hippocrates draws, from the difference between Europeans in the North and Asians in the South, a series of conclusions that became anthropological stereotypes: in the Northern climate that changes frequently, men have to react to unpredictable situations; their mind is more active, and meekness and gentleness will be supplanted by impulsive temper. This is reflected in their social institutions: European nations are warlike and of a rebellious and independent spirit; they despise the dominion of kings, since it engenders cowardice. In the more uniform climate of Asia, the inhabitants submit easily to despotism; as Hippocrates explains, "uniformity engenders slackness, while variation fosters endurance in both, body and soul; rest and slackness are food for cowardice, endurance and exertion for bravery" (Hippocrates 1923, Chap. XXIII: 133). In the last chapter, Hippocrates states that in principle "you will find assimilated to the nature of the land both the physique and the characteristics of the inhabitants"; temperature of the country and temperament of people are in unison:

For where the land is rich, soft, and well-watered, [...] and if the situation be favourable as regards the seasons, there the inhabitants are fleshy, ill-articulated, moist, lazy, and generally cowardly in character. Slackness and sleepiness can be observed in them, and as far as the arts are concerned they are thick-witted, and neither subtle nor sharp. But where the land is bare, waterless, rough, oppressed by winter's storms and burnt by the sun, there you will see men who are hard, lean, well-articulated, well-braced, and hairy; such natures will be found energetic, vigilant, stubborn and independent in character and in temper, wild rather than tame, of more than average sharpness and intelligence in the arts, and in war of more than average courage. (Hippocrates 1923, Chap. XXIV: 137)

Aristotle in his *Politics* gave this theory on the parallelism between intellectual and moral dispositions and climate a particular twist. Hippocrates had not associated the inhabitants of the temperate zone with special force of character, as we have

seen; this was now accomplished by Aristotle, by confining the temperate zone to the geographical latitude that stretched from the Greek colonies in Asia minor to Greece herself and her colonies in the Magna Graecia and Sicily:

> The nations inhabiting the cold places and those of Europe are full of spirit but somewhat deficient in intelligence and skill, so that they continue comparatively free, but lacking in political organization and capacity to rule their neighbors. The peoples of Asia on the other hand are intelligent and skillful in temperament, but lack spirit, so that they are in continuous subjection and slavery. But the Greek race participates in both characters, just as it occupies the middle position geographically, for it is both spirited and intelligent; hence it continues to be free and to have very good political institutions, and to be capable of ruling all mankind if it attains constitutional unity. The same diversity also exists among the Greek races compared with one another: some have a one-sided nature, others are happily blended in regard to both these capacities. (Aristotle, *Politics* VII, 1327b)

From the beginning of the seventeenth century onward the traditions of Hippocrates and Aristotle gained widespread attention, especially in the discussion of the reasons for the rise and decline of arts and sciences in classical antiquity, and in modern times; it is known as the famous *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* (see Fink 1987; Proß 1994). Particularly the Abbé Dubos and his *Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting* (*Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture*, 1719; fourth edition 1740) deserve to be mentioned; it was his extensive treatment of Hippocrates – whose name Dubos never mentions – in part two of his work that presumably attracted Montesquieu's attention and inspired the discussion of the same topic in the *Esprit des lois*. In six extensive chapters, Dubos had illustrated the impact of of climate, water, soil and air on mankind, on physical appearances, mental capacities, and the consequences for the culture of a nation; climate is in his eyes far more potent than any biological or genetic factors[18]. Montesquieu followed Hippocrates and Dubos in six books of his famous work (from Book XIV to XIX)[19], starting with this remark:

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[18]   Dubos 1740, Vol. II, Sect. XV: 267: "C'est de tous le tems qu'on a remarqué que le climat étoit plus puissant que le sang & l'origine". The titles of the chapters on climate in this volume are: Sect. XV: *Le pouvoir de l'air sur le corps prouvé par le caractère des Nations* (251-276); Sect. XVI: *Objection tiré du caractere des Romains & des Hollandois. Réponse à l'objection* (276-289); Sect. XVII: *De l'étenduë des climats plus propres aux Arts & aux Sciences que les autres. Des changemens qui surviennent dans ces climats* (289-294); Sect. XVIII: *Qu'il faut attribuer la difference qui est entre l'air des differens païs, à la nature des émanations de la terre qui sont differentes en diverses regions* (294-304); Sect. XIX: *Qu'il faut attribuer aux variations de l'air dans le même païs la difference que s'y remarque entre le génie de ses habitans en des siécles differens* (304-312); Sect. XX: *De la difference des mœurs & des inclinations du même peuple en des siécles differens* (313-319).

[19]   For the *Esprit des lois* see Montesquieu, *Œuvres*, 1818, Vol. I-III; for Books XIV-XVIII see Vol. I: 362-484, for Book XIX Vol. II: 1-42. The discussion of climate deals with the following aspects: *Des lois, dans le rapport qu'elles ont avec la nature du climat* (Book XIV); *Comment les lois de l'esclavage*

> If it be true that the character of the spirit and the passions of the heart are extremely different in various climates, then laws must accordingly follow the difference of these passions, and the difference of these characters. (WP trans.)[20]

Climate was, for Dubos, responsible for the development especially of the arts and their fate in history; for Montesquieu the general form of societies depended equally on its influence, and on the nature of the territory; both shape the bodies and moral dispositions of the inhabitants, and laws, consequently, take them into account. Nations in Northern climates are warriors and conquerors, keen on safeguarding their liberty; people in the South fall easily a prey to despotism, or are frequently subdued by invaders from the North. Regarding the influence of the territory on the laws, it is evident for Montesquieu:

> that democracy is more convenient for barren countries than monarchy, where the soil needs all the industriousness of the inhabitants. Liberty is, by the way, in this case some sort of compensation for the hardship of their toils. (WP trans.)[21]

If the treatment of climate in Dubos and Montesquieu had had a focus in establishing its importance for arts or laws, in the *Remarks on the Influence of Climate* (1781) by the physician William Falconer (1744-1824) such a focal point seems to be lost[22]. The rather long-winded title of this work lists a series of six "causes" or "influences" that affect people of different nations in various ages: climate, geographical situation, nature of the territory, population density, kinds of food, and ways of life. All of them put their mark on social abilities and institutions of nations; Falconer specifies the areas of their effects once more in a list: dispositions and temper, manners and behaviour, intelligence, laws and customs, form of government, and finally the religion of various nations. Accordingly, the work is organized in six books following the order of the six

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civil ont du rapport avec la nature du climat (Book XV); *Comment les lois de l'esclavage domestique ont du rapport avec la nature du climat* (Book XVI); *Comment les lois de la servitude politique ont du rapport avec la nature du climat* (Book XVII); *Des lois, dans le rapport avec la nature du terrain* (Book XVIII); *Des lois, dans le rapport qu'elles ont avec les principes qui forment l'esprit général, les mœurs et les manières d'une nation* (Book XIX). – For a survey on Montesquieu's treatment of climate see Müller 2005.

[20]   Montesquieu 1818, Vol. I; *Esprit des lois* XIV, Chap. I: 362: *Idée générale*: "S'il est vrai que le caractère de l'esprit et les passions du cœur sont extrêmement différentes dans les divers climats, les *lois* doivent être relatives, et à la différence de ces passions, et à la différence de ces caractères".

[21]   I quote here from Jean-Baptiste Le Rond d'Alembert's *Analyse de l'Esprit des Lois*, printed in Montesquieu 1818, Vol. I: LV-LXX, here LXV: "A l'égard des lois relatives à la nature du terrain, il est clair que la démocratie convient mieux que la monarchie aux pays stériles, ou la terre a besoin de toute l'industrie des hommes. La liberté d'ailleurs est, en ce cas, une espèce de dédommagement de la dureté du travail".

[22]   For Falconer see Gisi 2007, 106-111.

influences; but what it actually achieves, is rather an aggregate of remarks on episodes of the history of mankind, than a systematic treatment of a precise concept. In his *Preface*, Falconer admits of this disadvantage, excusing it with the interference and overlapping of separate influences:

> The effects of Climate, &c. are all of them general, and not particular; and if a considerable majority of the nations as well as individuals, that live under a certain climate, are affected in a certain manner, we may pronounce decisively on its influence, even though there may be some exceptions. It must likewise be taken into consideration, that the influence of one of the above causes often corrects the other. [...] But the effect of the climate, in these instances, is not suppressed, but overpowered; it still exists, but its effect is not discernible [...]. The effects of each of the causes here described when combined together, overpower, temper, and modify one another in many instances; but have each of them a separate existence and action, however they may concur with one another in the general effect. (Falconer 1781, *Preface*: IV-VI)

But in a rather short separate *Introduction* he placed before Book I of his work, he saw it necessary to examine briefly a recent approach to the influence of climate on humans: it had been presented by the German naturalist Eberhard August Wilhelm Zimmermann in his first attempt at a zoogeography (*Specimen zoologiae geographicae*, 1777). A more comprehensive work on this theme by the same author had started to appear in 1778, explicitly on both the geographic history of man and on that of quadrupeds and their general distribution on Earth (*Geographische Geschichte des Menschen und der allgemein verbreiteten vierfüßigen Thiere*). Its first volume would have been still of greater interest for Falconer than the *Specimen*, but it had either escaped his attention, or presumably he was unable to read German. That men are not equally fitted for all climates and that they resemble plants and animals in this respect, had been the central thesis of Falconer's predecessor Lord Kames; Zimmermann now had taken a diametrically opposed stand: men are by nature capable of living everywhere, unlike quadrupeds[23]. This attempt to prove that humans, as the highest developed animals, were enabled by their faculties to spread over the globe, without being subject to the influence of climate, was in Falconer's eyes mere presumption[24]. But the argument Falconer now put forward, that

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[23]   Falconer refers to Zimmermann 1777, Chap. I, § XXXI: 51; quoted below in note 31.

[24]   "Vegetable productions, separately considered, appear to be limited by nature to a certain climate and situation. [...] The same is true, though with greater latitude, of the animal kingdom, in which the general rule prevails as in the vegetable. The exact boundaries of this limitation are not ascertained, but we are not, on that account, less certain of their existence, although the difference produced in the perfection of the animal or vegetable is not considerable, when the alteration in these circumstances are but small. Man, however, appears to be an exception to this rule, and to be enabled to subsist in almost every climate and situation. He reigns with the lion and the tyger

man was owing his survival in all climates more to his rational capacities than to his natural outfit, was rather inconsistent. Falconer seems to have forgotten that, in his description of the influence of climate upon the intellectual faculties in hot, cold and moderate zones, he himself had left almost nothing to the incentive of the intellect (Falconer 1781, Book I, Chap. XIV-XVI: 50-74). And his claim, that most inventions were made in hot zones, because they surpassed moderate climates in intellectual fertily, was somewhat bizarre (Falconer 1781, Book I, Chap. XIV: 59-60); according to tradition, those were the parts of the world where climate rendered people principally slack and lazy. What is more, Falconer himself resorted to a physiological argument that was apt to disprove his criticism of Zimmermann: a special reason for capacities which distinguish men from animals originates in the increased circulation of the blood through the brain and assures human intellectual superiority over the 'brutes' (Falconer 1781, Book I, Chap. XVI: 74). Falconer took this argument from the *Anatomy of the Brain* by Thomas Willis (*Cerebri anatome*, 1664); obviously he disregarded that this would apply indiscriminately to the constitution of all men, which would of course not be affected by any influence of climate. The arguments in favour of a theory of the "universality of the human species", which he had opposed in Zimmermann, gained therefore in probability, instead of being undermined[25].

The theory of climate as the cause of so many differences in humans obviously got entangled in a series of problems and self-contradictions, due to the lack of precise definitions of its constituents and its field of application. The concept of climate zones was too vague and simplistic, to keep pace with new discoveries and scientific developments in geography, geology, and physics; it became clear that it was necessary to combine geographic description and analysis of territories with physical observations of the influence of atmosphere and temperature, and to follow their impact on the geographical distribution of organisms, of plants, animals and humans as well. Further, the presumed influence of climate on humans lacked physiological proof to decide, whether there existed separate races or whether humanity had one common origin, as the highest and most complex species of the animal kingdom. The simple distinction

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under the Equator, and associates with the bear and the rein-deer beyond the Polar circle. Nor is man less capable of subsisting on a great variety of aliments, than he is able to endure a great difference of climate, the former of which circumstances, as well as the later, is very properly adduced by naturalists as a great presumption that he was intended by nature to inhabit every part of the world. But notwithstanding this assistance afforded by nature, it may be justly doubted if this universality of the human species be not owing more to his rational faculties, which enable him to supply the defects, and correct the exuberances of particular climates and situations, than merely to his animal formation" (Falconer 1781, *Introduction*: 1-2).

[25]   For the important role of Willis in the development of anthropology in the context of Richard Cumberland's concept of natural law see De Angelis 2010, 375-382.

of three climate zones did not do justice to the varieties of the territories of the Earth, and especially not to the fact of the permanent changes on the surface of the terraqueous globe. These changes were suggesting that the Earth had undergone in its history slowly advancing transformations in smaller and larger areas, as well as dramatic and catastrophic revolutions. When attention started to focus on such data, a dramatic history of the Earth and the evolution of mankind started to unfold. And this had consequences for the established chronology and the history of mankind; it was no longer possible to keep the history of the Earth, from the supposed moment of its creation onward, within the chronological framework of 6000 years accorded by the Bible, and therefore, the evolution of mankind had to be regarded from a new prospective[26].

We will for now take just a look at one aspect of the process that dismantled the climate theory; it is a rejection of its inevitable determinism. Climate becomes decisively a *causa secunda* in the terminology of the time, a secondary and accidental factor for the outward appearance of humans and their abilities of mind, as well as for the development of social institutions and cultural techniques. The impending shift to a scientific approach announced itself rapidly within a few years, in the *Encyclopédie* by Diderot: in 1753, two articles on *Climate* were published in the third volume, by unknown authors. The first article showed that the traditional concept of climate zones was of no use for a scientific approach to geography[27]; the second article insisted that the theory lacked physiological proofs for the influence of climate on humans[28].

Four years later, the seventh volume of the *Encyclopédie* (1757) presented two articles on geography and its relevance for the relationship between climate and territory, and this time we know their authors: in the first case, it was Robert de Vaugondy, the King's official geographer. He introduced the distinction between "natural geography" (the topography of the habitat of a certain people and the

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[26]   It is not possible to give detailed accounts of some of the influential naturalists and historians, like Buffon, Boulanger, Ferguson, Goguet, Albrecht von Haller, Linné, Peter Simon Pallas or Cornelis de Pauw, and many others. For the combined study of the evolution of the Earth and the history of mankind, see Oldroyd 1979, Rossi 1979, Zedelmaier 2003, Gisi 2007 and Poole 2017; for a short survey see Proß 2011, 217-220.

[27]   *Encyclopédie* Vol. III, 1753 [Anonymous] *Climat (Géographie)*: 532b-534a; the article on climate from a geographical point of view discarded completely the familiar notions of climate zones; the author simply presented a division of the globe in 24 zones, twelve by degrees of latitude from the Equator to the North Pole, and again twelve to the South Pole. Each zone presented therefore simultaneously various different climates, depending on specific geographic factors (532b).

[28]   *Ivi*, [Anonymous] *Climat (Medicine)*: 534a-536a; its author was still convinced of the value of the Hippocratic tradition, but stressed the necessity of proving the real or pretended effects of climate on human physiology (534b). He praised Montesquieu, because he – without being a naturalist – had hinted at this problem; see *Esprit des lois* XIV, Chap. II: *Combien les hommes sont différents dans les divers climats* (Montesquieu 1818, Vol. I: 362-367).

description of its resources) and "physical geography" (the geological strata of the same area)[29]. Nicolas Desmarest, author of the second article, outlined the different areas of research for the new discipline of "physical geography" and formulated their main objectives: its foremost aim should be the exploration and analysis of the layers of the Earth, from its surface deep down into the interior of the globe; further the explanation of geological causes of alterations of these layers, and, thirdly, the observation of the influences of atmosphere, sunlight, temperature, air, wind and water on the surface of the Earth. Whereas the first two areas would provide scientific results of a more general kind, the third would help to clarify some of the notions of the Hippocratic tradition, and either explain the causes of these phenomena, or prove that the assumption of an impact of climate was wrong[30].

The scientific program developed by Desmarest was taken up in the extensive study by E.A.W. Zimmermann on the *Geography of Humans and Quadrupeds* (1778-1783) mentioned above; he emphasized the necessity of studying climate phenomena methodically, on the basis of physical laws. A "physical theory" of climate would explain that the distribution of animals and plants on the globe depended on physical regularities; but at the same time it would prove that humans were exempt from such laws, to which his unique physiological outfit was not subject. The principle of this theory had been sketched already in the *Specimen* (1777):

> By the gracious assistance of Nature men were given the complete dominion over this earth; but by what right, what skill or what capacities they were entitled to such a claim? There had been attempts to solve the problem if animate beings are standing in the closest possible relationship to humans; answers, as we know, referred at first to the argument of the order and regularity of their teeth, then to the similarity of outward appearance and inner structure, in order to admit the classification of both under the same species. But there is a difference, and it is unmistakable and irredeemable, unswerving and lasting: indeed, the human mechanism is contrived with such art and wisdom, that man is capable of sustaining himself in regions, which are as different as possible as to the variety of climate and the quality of soil; he is able to convert whatever is eatable and drinkable, into a nutritive juice and into the energy of his blood, he can bear all vicissitudes in such manner that nothing will endanger his congenital qualities, and he will not surrender to degeneration and never loose those qualities which belong exclusively to him. (WP trans.)[31]

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[29] See *Encyclopédie* Vol. VII, 1757 [Robert de Vaugondy] *Géographie*: 608b-613b.

[30] *Ivi,* [Nicolas Desmarest] *Géographie physique*: 613b-626a; see 624b.

[31] Zimmermann, *Specimen* 1777, Cap. I, "De animalibus per totum terrarum orbem dispersis, eorumque degenerationibus", §XXXI: 51: "quo jure, qua arte, quibus viribus hoc totius terrae dominium, quod natura fautrice ipsis datum videmus, [sc. homines] vindicare sibi potuissent? si etiam, quod jam aliquoties ex dentium ordine & aequalitate tentatum esse constat, fieri posset, ut animantes propter

Zimmermann here alludes first to the attempts by Carl Linnaeus at the clarification of the relationship between humans and the higher developed mammals in the twelve different editions of his *Systema naturae* between 1735 and 1766-1767, by comparing the order of their teeth; and secondly to the numerous anatomical reports on the similarities and differences between apes and man, starting with Edward Tyson's first study on the anatomy of orang-utans (*Orang-Utang, sive Homo Sylvestris*, 1698), to the more recent *Nomenclature des singes* by Buffon (1766), or contemporary studies by the Dutch Petrus Camper. For Zimmermann, the barrier between animals and humans was the chief argument for the unity of the human species, and therefore he considered climate as an influence of secondary importance, if of any at all. In his *Geographical History of Man and Quadrupeds*, he presented more specific physiological proofs for his theory, and we will come back to them. For now, it is enough to observe his influence on Herder's *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, as the title has been translated in the english version published in 1800 (*Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1784-1791).

Herder took up both points, the sharp division between animals and humans, and the corresponding treatment of climate as of limited influence on humans. In the first two chapters of Book IV of the *Ideen* he discussed the difference between apes and men and quoted extensively the anatomical and physiological arguments that vindicated the special place of man in the animal kingdom[32]. And, once more in accordance with Zimmermann, he stated in Book VII that climate was a notion which allowed of no generalizations; its impact may be sensible rather in fluids, air and atmosphere and it is of regional and historical relevance in certain areas or periods. For a geography of humans, climate may be considered – and here Herder reverts to the lesson given by John Barclay – as a particular feature in tribes or nations within the defined area of their habitat,

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exteriorem corporum structuraeque similitudinem homini quam proxime jungerentur, quin eidem submitterentur classi. haec tamen infallibilis, nec inficianda, nec unquam intermoritura, quae utrosque disjungit, differentia perstat semperque durabit, hominis nempe machinam tanta arte & sapientia exstructam esse, ut in regionibus & coeli varietate & disparili terrarum habitu disjunctissimis vivere, omnia, licet quam maxime inter se diversa sint, esculenta & potulenta in succum & sanguinem vertere, omnes ferme vicissitudines ita ferre possit, ut naturae suae nihil damni exinde adtrahatur, a seipso nunquam degeneret, & nunquam sui dissimilis evadat" – This was the passage that Falconer had attacked in the *Introduction* to his *Remarks*; see *supra* note 23.

[32]   Herder 1800, *Outlines* Book IV.1: *Man is organized to a Capacity of Reasoning* (71-82); Book IV.2: *Retrospect from the Organization of the human Head to inferior Creatures, the Heads of which approach it in Form* (82-85). – See *Ideen* IV. 1: *Der Mensch ist zur Vernunftfähigkeit organisiert* (HWP III.1: 107-121); *Ideen* IV.2: *Zurücksicht von der Organisation des menschlichen Haupts auf die niedern Geschöpfe, die sich seiner Bildung nähern* (*ivi*, 122-126); for the sources Herder had used in these chapters, see my commentary in HWP III.2: 235-267.

especially in those stages of development, in which men have not yet arrived at agriculture and depend upon what nature offers them freely. In the end

> climate does not force, but incline: it gives the imperceptible disposition, which strikes us indeed in the general view of the life and manners of indigenous nations, but is very difficult to be delineated distinctly[33].

3. Human Diversity according to the Bible (Lord Kames) – Changing Paradigms II: Defining Humanity by Erect Posture and Language

Besides the dogm of 'natural born' masters and slaves, and the idea of the permanent influence of climate on appearances and institutions of men, it had been of course the Bible that had provided reasons for the establishment of human diversity. These were taken especially from the episodes of the *Old Testament*, referring to the secession of Cain from his family (*Genesis* 4), to the table of nations with its description of the descendants of the three sons of Noah and their distribution over the Earth (*Genesis* 10), and to the story of the tower of Babel (*Genesis* 11). Up to the late eighteenth century, despite some doubts raised already in the seventeeth century by the debate on the Pre-Adamites, these hallowed texts were treated as factual evidence for the existence of different branches of humans. The episode of the tower of Babel with its report of the confusion of languages and of the dispersion of men provided for Lord Kames the clue for explaining the – in his eyes – radical difference of languages and of the nations who spoke them. In the *Preliminary Discourse* to the second edition of his *Sketches* (1778) he started by faithfully reproducing the vague arguments of the Hippocratic tradition:

> Thus upon an extensive survey of the inhabited parts of our globe, many nations are found differing so widely from each other, not only in complexion, features, shape, and other external circumstances, but in temper and disposition, particularly in two capital articles, courage, and behaviour to strangers, that even the certainty of different races could not make one expect more striking varieties. (Kames 1778, Vol. I: 72)

His chain of reasoning took, however, a somewhat surprising turn: it is not the influence of the climate that is the cause of the differences among various groups of humans; it is, according to Kames, a pre-existent physiological difference that induces men to take their abode in those regions to which they are adapted by

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[33] Herder 1800, *Outlines* Book VII.3: 176-177; see *Ideen* VII.3, HWP III.1: 244-245: "Endlich: das Klima zwinget nicht, sondern es neiget: es gibt die unmerkliche Disposition, die man bei eingewurzelten Völkern im ganzen Gemälde der Sitten und Lebensweise bemerken, aber sehr schwer, insonderheit abgetrennt, zeichnen kann".

Nature, respectively by God's will. Only in those particular climate zones for which they have been quasi 'ordained', they are able to maintain their physiological uniformity and the peculiarity, which distinguishes them from other groups or tribes. For Kames it would have been a 'miracle' if the different appearences of men had developed from a singular species of humans:

> But not to rest entirely upon presumptive evidence, to me it appears clear from the very frame of the human body, that there must be different races of men fitted for different climates. Few animals are more affected than men generally are, not only with change of seasons in the same climate, but with change of weather in the same season. Can such a being be fitted for all climates? Impossible. [...] But the argument I chiefly rely on is, That were all men of one species, there never could have existed, without a miracle, different kinds, such as exist at present. Giving allowance for every supposable variation of climate or of other natural causes, what can follow [...] but endless varieties among individuals [...] so as that no individual shall resemble another? Instead of which, we find men of different kinds, the individuals of each kind remarkably uniform, and differing no less remarkably from the individuals of every other kind. Uniformity without variation is the offspring of nature, never of chance. (Kames 1778, Vol. I: 73-74)

Whereas Kames regarded the descent of seemingly different kinds of men from one common species as a 'miracle', in which he was not willing to believe, he had no qualms to accept a far greater miracle, since it rested on the uncontroversial truth of the biblical tale. By whom or how the different kinds of humans had been placed in their appropriate habitat, was no matter of concern for him

> It is thus ascertained beyond any rational doubt, that there are different races or kinds of men, and that these races or kinds are naturally fitted for different climates: whence we have reason to conclude, that originally each kind was placed in its proper climate, whatever change may have happened in later times by war or commerce. (Kames 1778, Vol. I: 75)

He even remarked that the adherence to the report of the *Genesis* had a special advantage, because it gave reasons why the progress of humanity had never followed a coordinated course or similar pattern, and why each nation or tribe chose its own pace of prosperity

> Thus, had not men wildly attempted to build a tower whose top might reach to heaven, all men would not only have had the same language, but would have made the same progress toward maturity of knowledge and civilization. That deplorable event reversed all nature: by scattering men over the face of all the earth, it deprived them of society, and rendered them savages. From the state of degeneracy, they have been emerging gradually. Some nations, stimulated by their own nature, or by their climate, have made a rapid progress; some have proceeded more slowly, and some continue savages. (Kames 1778, Vol. I: 83-84)

No miracle of this kind for Herder; the titles of the first two chapters of Book VII of the *Ideen* announced his creed: "Notwithstanding the Varieties of the human Form, there is but one and the same Species of Man throughout the Whole of our Earth"; and: "The one Species of Man has naturalized itself in every Climate of the Earth"[34]. What he considers as a "miracle" is of a quite different brand, and it goes back to the classical poet Ovid and his description of the creation and of man, in Book I of the *Metamorphoses*: the elements had been populated with fish, animals and birds, but one form of life was missing; whether it was an unknown creator of the universe, or a Prometheus who gave man his shape and inspired him with life, is not important. What counts is the way in which man differs from animals:

> Thus, while the mute creation downward bend | Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend, | Man looks aloft; and with erected eyes | Beholds his own hereditary skies. | From such rude principles our form began; | And earth was metamorphos'd into Man[35].

It is not the mind or the soul, that creates the difference; it is man's erect posture that elevates him above the animals, according to the pagan poet. In comparing Zimmermann to Falconer, we remarked before the importance the first had attached to physiological arguments for the sharp line he drew, within the animal kingdom, between man and the rest of the quadrupeds and mammals. Significant changes in the concept of humanity were, in fact, based on such arguments and were to eliminate all notions of radical differences between the tribes and nations of men in favour of the unity of mankind.

A decisive contribution came from a French anatomist and physiologist, who had collaborated extensively with Count Buffon on the *Histoire naturelle*: Louis Jean-Marie Daubenton (1716-1799). In a rather short, but crucial memorandum he had read before the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris in 1764, published in 1767, Daubenton substituted Ovid's poetic description of the erect posture of man by an anatomical explanation, based on the function of the *foramen magnum*, the large oval opening (*foramen*) in the occipital bone of the skull in humans and animals:

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[34]   Herder 1800; *Outlines* Book VII.1: 163, and Book VII.2: 167; see HWP III.1, *Ideen* Book VII.1: 227: "In so verschiedenen Formen das Menschengeschlecht auf der Erde erscheint: so ists doch überall Ein' und dieselbe Menschengattung"; *ivi*, Book VII.2: 232: "Das Eine Menschengeschlecht hat sich allenthalben auf der Erde klimatisieret".

[35]   For the translation of Ovid (*Metamorphoses* Book I, vv. 84-88) I have used the famous version published in 1717 by Samuel Garth, John Dryden *et al.*; see the original text: "Pronáque cùm spectent animalia cætera terram; | Os homini sublime dedit: cœlúmque tueri | Jussit, & erectos ad sidera tollere vultus. | Sic, modò quæ fuerat rudis & sine imagine, tellus | Induit ignotas hominum conversa figuras" (Ovid 1772, 3).

The *foramen magnum* is the entrance, through which the medullary substance must pass the cranial cavity into the bony sheath formed by the vertebral or spinal column; this is its first and foremost function. But there is another one, and almost equally important: there are two nodes placed on the margins of this access, which are more elevated than the rest; they touch the first of the cervical vertebrae, and, together with these vertebrae they are a sort of hinge or rather a knee joint on which all movements of the head must be performed. (WP trans.)[36]

Daubenton next describes the different positions of the *foramen magnum* in man and quadrupeds, in fish and oviparous animals, in order to draw some important conclusions, especially regarding the difference between man and orang-utan:

Such a marked difference was not to be regarded as a simple variation; Mr. Daubenton supposed that that it had to be regarded in relation to the different posture, to which man and the other animals are destined: for man, being formed to walk upright and on his two feet, it was necessary that his head kept balance on the vertebral column. It was absolutely unnecessary for him to lower it comfortably to the ground […]. (WP trans.)[37]

Animals pick up their food from the ground; man has hands to bring it to his mouth, and therefore has no need to stoop down. It would be difficult for him to walk on all fours, even if he preferred to do so, whereas it is completely natural for animals:

By contrast, since quadrupeds are forced to look for food on the ground, it was needed that their heads were somehow pensile and their jaws rather elongated; consequently the hinge of the head had to be placed at the part of its back, where it may actually be observed. (WP trans.)[38]

The position of the *foramen magnum* may vary: in toads, frogs, fish or reptiles the head and the direction of the body form an absolutely straight line, and

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[36] "Le grand trou occipital est l'ouverture par laquelle la substance médullaire doit passer par la boite du crâne dans la gaîne osseuse, formée par la colonne vertébrale ou épine du dos: c'est le premier & le principal de ses usages, mais il en a encore un autre presqu'aussi important; deux points placés sur les bords de cette ouverture, & plus relevés que le reste, touchent à la première des vertebres du cou, & sont avec ces vertebres, comme la charniere ou plutôt le genou sur lequel se doivent exécuter tous les mouvemens de la tête" (Daubenton 1767, 97).

[37] "Une différence aussi considérable ne pouvoit pas passer pour une simple variété; M. Daubenton soupçonna qu'elle devoit tenir à l'attitude différente à laquelle l'homme & les autres animaux sont destinés; l'homme formé pour aller debout & sur les deux pieds, avoit besoin que sa tête fût en équilibre sur la colonne vertébrale, & il n'étoit nullement nécessaire qu'il la pût aisément baisser jusqu'à terre […]."(*ivi*, 98).

[38] "Les quadrupèdes, au contraire, obligés de chercher leur nourriture à terre, avoient besoin que leur tête fût comme pendante & leurs mâchoires très allongées, il falloit donc que la charnière de leur tête fût placée tout-à-fait à la partie postérieure, & c'est aussi ce que l'on observe" (*ivi*, 99).

therefore the foramen is exactly at the back of the head. The closer the animal organism approaches the human form, the more it moves down to the basis of the crane, as in the apes, who may even imitate human behaviour, walk on their hind legs and feed with their front paws. But the barrier between them and humans remains insurmountable. Daubenton concludes by praising the infinite wisdom of the creator in achieving such a variety in animals by using this simple expedient in their organisation[39], but he refrains from drawing further conclusions.

Not so Zimmermann and Herder; for them the upright posture is the key to man's singular position in the animal kingdom, and even human language depends on it. In his survey of the results of anatomical comparisons between humans and different kinds of apes, given by Blumenbach, Buffon, Camper, Daubenton, De Pauw or Tyson, Zimmermann arrives at the conclusion that there can be no doubt that humans are a separate species in the animal kingdom, but that within this species there are no differences as to what constitutes the essence of 'humanity'[40]. There are especially two authors he attacks constantly: Rousseau, for the quip in his second discourse *On the Origin of Inegality* (1755) that orangs refrain from using language, in order to escape slavery[41]; and the Italian physician Pietro Moscati and his memorandum on the differences between humans and animals, for asserting that it would be more natural for man to crawl on all fours (*Delle corporee differenze essenziali che passano tra la struttura dei bruti e la umana*, 1770)[42]. Zimmermann insists especially on the fact, that all over the world discoverers have never met with tribes which, even if their standard of living and of social organization could be regarded as rather rudimentary, lacked language, as orangs and all other apes do. And of course it is evident, that these various kinds of apes are incapable of living outside their natural habitat; they remain prisoners of this habitat, since they lack the skill to overcome by artificial means unsuitable climate conditions in order to survive; and humans are able to adjust to these not only on physiological grounds, but because they are tool-makers. The erect posture enables them not only to use their hands freely, but they are capable of inventing instruments in order to shape their surroundings according to their needs.

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[39]   *Ivi*, 100.

[40]   Zimmermann 1778-1783, Vol. I (1778): 117-129; this passage has been reprinted in the documents of my edition of Herder's *Ideen* (HWP III. 1: 1095-1103).

[41]   Rousseau 1975; see *De l'origine de l'inégalité*, note (j): 106-112.

[42]   Moscati's treatment of the question found favour even with Kant, who published a review of the German edition of this work in 1771; for a comprehensive treatment of the problem of the erect posture in Rousseau, Moscati and Kant see Bayertz 2014, 183-206.

Herder took up these essential points in the first two volumes of his *Ideen* (1784-1785); but already before he knew about Daubenton's study from Zimmermann's *History* (1778), he had dedicated a justly famous study to the question of the *Origin of Language* (Über den Ursprung der *Sprache*, 1772). The Academy of Science in Berlin had proposed in 1770 a competition on the question if language was an invention man could arrive at by his own abilities, or whether the biblical account was true, and God had breathed language into Adam himself. The text is one of the founding moments of philosophical anthropology, and Herder developed his reply to the question of the Academy by contrasting the instinct of animals, which is not able to overstep a limited capacity of perception, and man's unfettered access to the realms of experience and illimitable capacities to act. Since man is not constrained by instinct and, therefore, hampered in his experience of the surrounding world, he becomes, as Herder says,

> free-standing, can seek for himself a sphere that is suitable to provide him with a reflection, he may even mirror himself within himself. No longer an unerring machine in the hands of nature, he becomes the object and the goal of his own craftsmanship. This disposition of his forces in their totality may be termed *ad libitum*, 'understanding', 'reason', 'awareness' etc. – for me this is of no consequence, provided such terms are not meant to designate abstract forces of the mind or higher gradations of those capacities we also find in animals. *It is the general disposition of all the forces man is provided with*; *the complete husbandry of his nature, in his acts of feeling and discerning, discerning and desiring*; or rather: it is *the single positive force of thinking, which is tied to the specific organization of man's body, and what is called reason in him, in animals becomes craftsmanship. In man it is deemed liberty, in animals it becomes instinct*. The difference is not a gradual one, or a supplementary dose of forces, but it consists in a totally different direction and deployment of all his forces. (WP trans.)[43]

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[43]   Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*: "Da er [der Mensch] auf keinen Punkt blind fällt, und blind liegenbleibt: so wird er freistehend, kann sich eine Sphäre der Bespiegelung suchen, kann sich in sich selbst bespiegeln. Nicht mehr eine unfehlbare Maschine in den Händen der Natur, wird er sich selbst Zweck und Ziel der Bearbeitung. Man nenne diese ganze Disposition seiner Kräfte, wie man wolle, *Verstand*, *Vernunft*, *Besinnung* usw. Wenn man diese Namen nicht für abgesonderte Kräfte oder für bloße Stuffenerhöhungen der Tierkräfte annimmt: so gilts mir gleich. *Es ist die ganze Einrichtung aller Menschlichen Kräfte; die ganze Haushaltung seiner sinnlichen und erkennenden, seiner erkennenden und wollenden Natur;* oder vielmehr – Es ist *die einzige positive Kraft des Denkens, die mit einer gewissen Organisation des Körpers verbunden bei den Menschen so Vernunft heißt, wie sie bei den Tieren Kunstfähigkeit wird: die bei ihm Freiheit heißt, und bei den Tieren Instinkt wird. Der Unterschied ist nicht in Stuffen, oder in Zugabe von Kräften, sondern in einer ganz verschiedenartigen Richtung und Auswickelung aller Kräfte*". (HWP II, 251-357; here: 271-272). Michael N. Forster's selection of works by Herder 2002 contains a complete English version of the *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, which I have consulted; but I prefer to present a rendering of my own which is more explicit (Herder 2002, 65-164; here: 82-83). – Main sources for Herder's treatment of the contrast between the instinct of animals and human reason are: Condillac's *Traité des animaux* (1755), the article on *Instinct* in Vol. VIII of the *Encyclopédie* (1765) and the treatment of this subject by Hermann

Already in the *Treatise* he had called language "a distinctive character of the human species" ("einen eignen Charakter der Menschheit"), and which is common to all men; the third and fourth books in the first Volume of the *Ideas* elaborated these features, with the help of the arguments Daubenton and Zimmermann had provided[44].

4. How to Write a History of Mankind: Diversity and Varieties of Men in Meiners, Herder and Alexander von Humboldt

In 1785 Herder published the second volume of his *Ideen*, in which he tried to establish some general principles regarding how humans created social and cultural techniques, in order to survive under different living conditions. His main aim was to show that mankind depend, from the outset of their history, on the ability to satisfy basic needs for which natural environment is not providing freely: Rousseau's idea of man living in a blissfully indolent natural state had proved wrong, even for the islands of the Pacific Ocean, explored by Bougainville and Cook[45]. Against Rousseau, Herder took the part of Adam Ferguson, who had opened his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) with an eulogy on the creative power of mankind:

Samuel Reimarus (*Allgemeine Betrachtungen über die Triebe der Thiere, hauptsächlich über ihre Kunsttriebe*, 1760, revised 1762); see the commentary to Herder's *Treatise* in HWP II: 950-954.

[44] See especially the following chapters of Herder, *Outlines* 1800: Book III. 4: *Of the Instincts of Animals* (59); Book III.5: *Advancement of the Creature[s] to a combination of several Ideas, and to a particular freer use of the Senses and Limbs* (63); Book III.6: *Organic Differences between Men and Beasts* (67); Book IV.1: *Man is organized to a Capacity of Reasoning* (71); Book IV.2: *Retrospect from the Organization of the human Head to inferior creatures, the Heads of which approach it in Form* (82); Book IV.3: *Man is organized for more perfect Senses, for the Exercise of Art, and the use of Language* (85); Book IV.4: *Man is organized to finer Instincts, and in consequence to Freedom of Action* (89). For the original texts see *Ideen*, HWP III.1, Buch III.4: *Von den Trieben der Tiere* (91); Buch III.5: *Fortbildung der Geschöpfe zu einer Verbindung mehrerer Begriffe und zu einem eigenen freiern Gebrauch der Sinne und Glieder* (96); Buch III. 6: *Organischer Unterschied der Tiere und Menschen* (101); Buch IV.1: *Der Mensch ist zur Vernunftfähigkeit organisiert* (107); Buch IV.2: *Zurücksicht von der Organisation des menschlichen Haupts auf die niedern Geschöpfe, die sich seiner Bildung nähern* (122); Buch IV.3: *Der Mensch ist zu feinern Sinnen, zur Kunst und zur Sprache organisiert* (126); Buch IV.4: *Der Mensch ist zu feinern Trieben, mithin zur Freiheit organisiert* (131).

[45] From the accounts of Jesuit missionaries in the early seventeenth century to the travel reports by Bougainville, James Cook and Georg Forster at the end of the eighteenth century, the descriptions of the life of indigenous nations in both Americas and in the South Sea caused a stir of vivid interest: in the theory of Natural Law and for philosophy, the state of nature became a crucial point in establishing human rights and moral obligations in modern "civilized" cultures. Montesquieu, Muratori, Rousseau, Diderot, Ferguson, De Pauw, Herder, Kant or Raynal are to be named among the illustrious authors who contributed to the debate; see Proß 2017, especially 18-26.

We speak of art as distinguished from nature; but art itself is natural to man. He is in some measure the artificer of his own frame, as well as his fortune, and is destined, from the first age of his being, to invent and contrive. He applies the same talents to a variety of purposes, and acts nearly the same part in very different scenes. He would be always improving on his subject, and he carries this intention where-ever he moves, through the streets of the populous city, or the wilds of the forest. While he appears equally fitted to every condition, he is upon this account unable to settle in any. At once obstinate and fickle, he complains of innovations, and is never sated with novelty. He is perpetually busied in reformations, and is continually wedded to his errors. If he dwell in a cave, he would improve it into a cottage; if he has already built, he would still build to a greater extent. But he does not propose to make rapid and hasty transitions; his steps are progressive and slow [...]. The occupations of men, in every condition, bespeak their freedom of choice, their various opinions, and the multiplicity of wants by which they are urged: but they enjoy, or endure, with a sensibility, or a phlegm, which are nearly the same in every situation. They possess the shores of the Caspian, or the Atlantic, by a different tenure, but with equal ease. On the one they are fixed to the soil, and seem to be formed for settlement, and the accommodation of cities [...]. On the other they are mere animals of passage, prepared to roam on the face of the earth, and with their herds, in search of new pasture and favourable seasons, to follow the sun in his annual course. (Ferguson 1966, 6-7)

But contemporaneously to Herder's second volume, the historian Christoph Meiners (1747-1810) published his *Grundriß der Geschichte der Menschheit*, which went in the opposite direction of Herder's universalism[46]. Its author, however, who taught history at the University of Göttingen, predicted that this *Outline* would establish a completely "new science" of mankind and its historical evolution. Its starting points should be the history of the Earth and the beginnings of human development; its procedures would be based on comparisons between different nations and their levels of culture:

History of mankind, as a science, begins by some hints on the present shape of the Earth and its history, and on the oldest abodes of men; it follows their gradual expansion over all parts of the globe, and details the original differences of wild nations as to the shapes of their bodies and the dispositions of mind and heart. It describes and compares further different levels of culture, food and drink, abodes and clothing, ornaments and particular habits, the education of children and treatment of women, the forms of government and laws, their habits and concepts of decency decency and propriety, of honour and disgrace, and finally the opinions and the knowledge of all nations and especially of those which are uncivilized and half-cultivated. (WP trans.)[47]

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[46]   For a detailed account on Meiners see Gierl 2008.

[47]   I am using here the second edition of the *Grundriß*; see Meiners 1786, *Vorrede*: ** 1 ʳ⁻ᵛ: "Die Geschichte der Menschheit ist eine Wissenschaft, in welcher nach einleitenden Betrachtungen über den gegenwärtigen und vormaligen Zustand der Erde, und über die ältesten Wohnsize der Menschen die allmälige Verbreitung derselben über alle Theile der Erde, samt den ursprünglichen Unterschieden

Interestingly enough, Meiners had added to his volume a – rather critical – survey of some authors that had inspired his project, naming even Herder's first part of the *Ideen*, without taking him really into account; among his models were the *Sketches* by Lord Kames and the *Remarks* by Falconer, whom he critizised for lack of systematicity; and above all Montesquieu, whose *Esprit des lois* had met with his special approval[48]. The traditions of Aristotle and Hippocrates are explicitly present in these books, and his claim to originality seems therefore far less well founded than he pretended. But there is one author whom Meiners had made stand out among his models: Cornelis de Pauw and his *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (1768-1770). De Pauw had given a depreciating account of the two Americas, where nature had proved herself in his eyes as a true stepmother, by withholding all the amenities Europe or Asia could boast of: wasteland, swamps and uninhabitable regions fostered, in an uncongenial climate, only precarious and mutilated life forms in animals and plants. And following the principle of Hippocrates of the assimilation of land and humans, he surmised that this was also true of the inhabitants of America: they had to be, consequentially, mentally and morally feeble, physically degenerate, and therefore an easy prey for the stronger and unscrupulous European colonialists (whose cruelty, by the way, is mercilessly denounced by de Pauw; his book is certainly no justification of racism). Of course, having never visited the continent himself, he was unable to exhibit real proof for the gloomy vision he had sketched of this continent and its inhabitants; but he served Meiners for his own purpose: as a model for the 'discovery', of which he claimed the exclusive merit for himself. It is a freely invented rift that, according to Meiners, splits up humanity first into the totally different branches or stems of "Caucasians" (or "Tartarians") and "Mongolians". Meiners not only dismissed the Mongolians as irrelevant for the development of any civilisation, but he subdivided again the Caucasians into two completely different "races", insisting on the superiority of the European "Celts" over the "inept" Slavs:

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der Völker in der Bildung des Cörpers, und in den Anlagen des Geistes und Herzens aus einander gesezt, und dann die verschiedenen Grade der Cultur, die Nahrungsmittel und Getränke, die Wohnungen, und Kleidungen, der Puz, und merkwürdige Gewohnheiten, die Erziehung der Kinder, und Behandlung der Weiber, die Regierungsformen, und Geseze, die Sitten, und Begriffe von Wohlstand und Anstand, von Ehre und Schande, endlich die Meynungen, und Kenntnisse aller Völker, besonders der unaufgeklärten, und halbcultivirten beschrieben, und mit einander verglichen werden".

[48]   For the list of authors mentioned by Meiners see the last six pages of his *Preface* (*ivi*, ** 6ʳ – ** 8ᵛ); see further the last 44 pages of the *Grundriß* (without pagination), which lists a series of texts he was referring to, sometimes with short comments on their value. Among the authors he mentioned were the Swiss Isaak Iselin and his *Philosophical Conjectures on the History of Mankind* (*Philosophische Muthmaßungen über die Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1764), Adam Ferguson (*An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767), or John Millar (*Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society*, 1771); special praise went to Antoine-Yves Goguet's history on the development of social and cultural techniques (*De l'origine des loix, des arts, & des sciences*, 1758).

The history of mankind alone embraces man as a whole, and shows what he was like, at all times and everywhere, to the last ends of the globe […] Among all the observations presented in this *Outline*, which I think I am entitled to claim as my own, there is no other statement that is better ascertained by proofs and facts, and more fraught with significant implications for many disciplines, than the following: that the human species in its present state is formed by two principal branches, the Tartarian respectively Caucasian and the Mongolian stem. The latter is not only much more feeble in body and mind, but also far more ill-natured and inept than the Caucasian. The Caucasian branch, in the end, is subdiveded into two races, the Celtic and the Slavic; the first is, once more, best equipped as to intellectual capacities and virtues. Only by this observation, to which I am led by facts […], it may be explained, how the human species has spread gradually over the earth and how the different nations descended from each other and how they became related. On these grounds, you may further explain why great legislators, wise men and heroes, and why arts and sciences have arisen and flourished exclusively among certain nations; and why arts and sciences, when they were taken over by other nations, were rather made to deteriorate than to gain in perfection, and lastly, why, regardless of all the pains taken, they could never find favour with some other nations. Further, it will be possible to explain, why a single continent and some specific nations have almost always been those who ruled, while the rest of them were their servants; why from time immemorial the goddess of liberty has taken up her abode within such narrow boundaries, while despotism in its most terrible form erected its unshakable throne among most of the nations of the earth. Finally, it will give the reason why the nations of Europe could, even in a state of ferocity and barbarity, differ so widely from the savages and barbarians of other continents: for they were distinguished by their higher virtues, by their greater susceptibility to enlightenment, and by their social organisation, their laws and art of war, and by their behaviour against women, slaves and conquered enemies. (WP trans.)[49]

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[49]   Meiners 1786, *Vorrede*: **3ᵛ–**4ᵛ: "Die Geschichte der Menschheit allein begreift den ganzen Menschen, und zeigt ihn, wie er zu allen Zeiten und in allen Enden, der Erde beschaffen war. […] Unter allen in diesem Grundrisse enthaltenen Beobachtungen, die ich als die meinigen anzusehen das Recht zu haben glaube, scheint mir keine andere auf so viele Zeugnisse und Facta gegründet und so reich an wichtigen Folgerungen für viele Wissenschaften zu seyn, als diese: daß das gegenwärtige Menschengeschlecht aus zween Hauptstämmen bestehe, dem Tatarischen oder Kaukasischen, und dem Mongolischen Stamm: daß der leztere nicht nur viel schwächer von Cörper und Geist, sondern auch viel übel gearteter und tugendleerer, als der Kaukasische sey: daß endlich der Kaukasische Stamm wiederum in zwo Racen zerfalle, in die Celtische und Slawische, unter welchen wiederum die erstere am reichsten an Geistesgaben und Tugenden sey. Aus dieser Beobachtung allein, worauf mich gerade die Facta hinführten, […] kann man es erklären, wie sich das menschliche Geschlecht allmälich über die Erde verbreitet hat, und wie die verschiedenen Nationen von einander entsprungen und mit einander verwandt sind: ferner, warum grosse Gesetzgeber, Weise und Helden, warum Künste und Wissenschaften nur unter gewissen Völkern entstanden und ausgebildet, warum die leztern von andern Nationen zwar aufgenommen, aber mehr verschlimmert als vervollkommt wurden, und warum sie endlich unter andern Völkern aller Bemühungen ungeachtet keinen Eingang finden konnten: warum ein einziger Erdtheil und gewisse Völker fast immer die herrschenden, und alle übrigen die dienenden waren: warum von jeher die Göttinn der Freyheit nur innerhalb so enger Gränzen wohnte, und der schrecklichste Despotismus hingegen seinen unerschütterlichsten Thron unter den meisten Völkern der Erde aufschlug: warum endlich die Europäischen Nationen selbst im Zustande der Wildheit und Barbarey sich so sehr von den Wilden und Barbaren der übrigen Erdtheile

This theory was certainly not based on real observations, let alone on proofs or facts, of which Meiners was boasting so much; in this respect he was not different from de Pauw. He might have used the treatise *De generis humani varietate nativa* (*On the Congenital Differences in Mankind*, 1776) by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, but he did not take up the arguments the physiologist had introduced into the debate, and the term "Caucasian" was his own invention[50]. What Meiners presented was essentially an atrophied version of the theory of Aristotle: he simply stated that Slavs and Mongols were by nature "inferior races" in comparison to the Celtic branch of humanity. He gave no reason for his view, not even by going back to Hippocrates and blaming an impact of their territories of origin in Central or Northern Asia, or finding some other cause. The only vague assumption he offered, was a presumed general "ineptitude" of developing higher levels of civilization. His position was all the more erratic, since contemporaries like Rousseau, Diderot or Herder thought that Poland, the Baltic countries and Russia under Empress Catherine II were 'young' countries, on their way to new forms of social and political life, without the blemishes and errors of the institutions of the 'older' states of Europe[51]. And as a historian, he should have been familiar with the invasions of China in the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries by the Mongols and Manchus, and the ensuing cultural consequences, both for the conquerors and the conquered.

With his division of humanity into the branches of Caucasians or Celts and Mongols, of which only the first were susceptible of cultural refinement, Meiners presented a sharp contrast to Herder's belief into one humanity in variegate shapes. For the author of the *Ideen*, mankind knew basically a threefold history: the first one he shared with all animals; it is the geographical history of man, of

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durch ihre höhern Tugenden, durch ihre grössere Empfänglichkeit gegen Aufklärung, durch ihre Verfassung, Geseze, und Art zu kriegen, durch ihr Betragen gegen Weiber, Sclaven und überwundene Feinde auszeichneten".

[50]   For the aspects Blumenbach introduced into the debate on the term "race", see *infra* Mario Marino's contribution to this volume (Chap. 2).

[51]   Rousseau's famous *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne*, written in 1771-1772, were published in 1782. Diderot had been the guest of Catherine II in Saint Petersburg in 1773, and the essential points of their conversations on the reformation of the Russian state and society have been preserved in his *Records* for the Empress (for the first complete edition of these *Mémoires* see Diderot 1966). While staying in Riga, the young Herder was much taken by the contrast between rural life in Latvia and the artificiality of the – mostly German –upper classes. In the *Journal* of his voyage from Riga to France he envisaged a bright future for the cultural development of the Slavic nations between the Baltic and the Black Seas (*Journal meiner Reise im Jahr 1769*; see HWP I, 409-410); his dream was even to find a position as a counsellor at the court in Saint Petersburg (see Proß 1988). Later on, his chapter on *Slavian Nations* in the last volume of the *Ideen* (1791) was to become one of the most influential texts for the development of national identities in Eastern Europe in the 19th Century (see Herder 1800, *Outlines*, Book XVI.4: 482-484; HWP III/1, *Ideen* XVI.4: 640-643, and the commentary to his sources: HWP III/2, 796-797).

his expansion and migrations over the Earth. In contrast to animals however, his technical ability to adapt himself to differing climatic zones allowed him to spread over the Earth and guaranteed his survival, even under the difficult conditions in the arctic and the torrid zones. Whereas in such territories, he was too busy to supply to his needs in order to develop an elaborate way of life, in regions with a temperate climate his capacities could take him a step forward. Climate is, as we have seen, for Herder only an accidental factor; but the decisive event which may change the history of a tribe or a nation, is the passage from a nomadic state of hunting and gathering or shepherding to a sedentary life, based on agriculture[52]. Fertile climates facilitate this second step into a new phase of history, but this is not the outcome of a desire of improvement; men stumble upon inventions without any design, and new social institutions are established by accident, as Herder states in accordance with Ferguson. The accumulation of cultural techniques in a stage of development, when nature reduces the urgent needs for self-preservation and allows a greater freedom of testing their abilities, may provide them with artificial skills that will be useful for a life even under unfavorable climate conditions. This is the third history of man, in which his industry makes him independent from his natural surroundings; Voltaire already had made the same observation on the development of civilization[53]. Therefore, Herder speaks of a 'second genesis' of man; his biological outfit is for all nations and tribes the same, and the capability of inventing the means to secure his self-preservation is rooted in his organization. And in that sense small human communities, which lead a very modest life on a low scale of domination of nature, and societies, which are based on a complex social system and on elaborate technical know-how, are in the end not different:

> Whether we name this second genesis of man *cultivation* from the culture of the ground, or *enlightening* from the action of light, is of little import; the chain of light and cultivation reaches to the end of the Earth. Even the inhabitant of California or Tierra del Fuego learns to make and use bow and arrow; he has language and ideas, practices and arts, which he learned, as we learn them: so far, therefore, he is actually

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[52]   Herder 1800, *Outlines* Book VIII. 3: 206-207 (HWP III.1, *Ideen* VIII.3: 282-283).

[53]   For a detailed account of Herder's "three histories" see Proß 1999. – For Voltaire see the *Avant-propos* to the *Essai sur les mœurs*: "If you wish to instruct yourself philosophically on the affairs regarding this planet, you will turn first your eyes to the Orient, the cradle of all arts, and which has bestowed everything to the Occident. The climates of the Orient, in close neighbourhood to the South, received everything from nature; we instead, in our northern Occident, owe everything to time, to commerce and to a slowly advancing industriousness" (WP trans.). See Voltaire 1963, Vol. I: 197: "En vous instruisant en philosophe de ce qui concerne ce globe, vous portez d'abord votre vue sur l'Orient, berceau de tous les arts, et qui a donné tout à l'Occident. Les climats orientaux, voisins du Midi, tiennent tout de la nature; et nous, dans notre Occident septentrional, nous devons tout au temps, au commerce, à une industrie tardive".

cultivated and enlightened, though in the lowest order. Thus the difference between enlightened and unenlightened, cultivated and uncultivated nations is not specific; but only in degree. This part of the picture of nations has infinite shades, changing with place and time: and like other pictures, much depends on the point of view, from which we examine it[54].

Barclays *Icon animorum* is taken up here quite explicitly in Herder's expression of the 'picture of the nations' with 'their infinite shades', according to their 'place and time'. There is one 'principal law' in all the developments and changes of the history of mankind,

> *that every where on our Earth whatever could be has been, according to the situation and wants of the place, the circumstances and occasions of the time, and the native or generated character of the people.* Admit active human powers, in a determinate relation to the age, and to their place on the Earth, and all the vicissitudes in the history of man will ensue[55].

Herder's work had great impact on the formation of the brothers Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt and their anthropology[56]. His position on human varieties figured prominently in the famous public lectures Alexander von Humboldt gave in Berlin in 1827-1828, before an audience, where no less than the King of Prussia and his court, but equally members of the lower classes were attending[57]. These lectures on the description of the physical world were an outline of his comprehensive work *Kosmos*, which started to appear in 1845 and which he left unfinished at his death in 1859. In order to complete the survey of our globe he gave in these conferences, Alexander von Humboldt turned

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54   Herder 1800, *Outlines* Book IX.1: 228; see *Ideen* Buch IX.1: "Wollen wir diese zweite Genesis des Menschen, die sein ganzes Leben durchgeht, von der Bearbeitung des Ackers *Cultur* oder vom Bilde des Lichts *Aufklärung* nennen: so stehet uns der Name frei; die Kette der Cultur und Aufklärung reicht aber sodann bis an das Ende der Erde. Auch der Californier und Feuerländer lernte Bogen und Pfeile machen und sie gebrauchen: er hat Sprache und Begriffe, Übungen und Künste, die er lernte, wie wir sie lernen; sofern ward er also wirklich cultiviert und aufgekläret, wiewohl im niedrigsten Grade. Der Unterschied zwischen aufgeklärten und unaufgeklärten, cultivierten und uncultivierten Völkern ist also nicht specifisch; sondern nur Gradweise. Das Gemälde der Nationen hat hier unendliche Schattierungen, die mit den Räumen und Zeiten wechseln; es kommt also auch bei ihm, wie bei jedem Gemälde, auf den Standpunkt an, in dem man die Gestalten wahrnimmt" (HWP III/1, 309-310).

55   Herder 1800, *Outlines* Book XII/6: 348; see *Ideen* XII/6: "[Das Hauptgesetz ist,] *daß allenthalben auf unserer Erde werde, was auf ihr werden kann, Teils nach Lage und Bedürfnis des Orts, Teils nach Umständen und Gelegenheiten der Zeit, Teils nach dem angebornen oder sich erzeugenden Charakter der Völker.* Setzet lebendige Menschenkräfte in bestimmte Verhältnisse ihres Orts und Zeitmaßes auf der Erde und es ereignet sich alle Veränderungen der Menschheitsgeschichte" (HWP III/1, 465).

56   For Herder's influence on the formation of the brothers Humboldt see the fundamental study by Mook 2012.

57   For the circumstances of this event see the *Introduction* to A. von Humboldt 2004, 11-36.

from lecture X onward to the question of man's place in this world; he started with the remark that naturalists should on principle relinquish the theory of different races. Nature has unlimited power to vary the outward appearance of her creatures, without having to create always a new and distinct species (A. von Humboldt 2004, 127-135; here: 129). Despite many obscurities and uncertainties as to the origin of mankind, so he continued in lecture XI, there was no cause for doubting the possibility or likelihood of the unity and common descent of man; what for Lord Kames had been a 'miracle' which was hard to believe, for A. von Humboldt was plain truth. The theory of five principally different branches of humanity, proposed for the first time by Linnaeus, deserved according to him to be totally dismissed; not only for the distinction of races in itself, but even more for the names and descriptions that had been given to the various kinds of men – in his eyes they were an insult to humanity (A. von Humboldt 2004, 136-146; here: 137). And the aspects on which theories of races were mostly based, were of a superficial kind: the textures and pigments of skin, the structure of hair or the facial angle in man are variable, but rather insignificant phenomena, compared to his essential characteristics – reason, language and erect posture (A. von Humboldt 2004, 137 and 146). Especial criticism among the authors he names goes to Meiners, otherwise a historian of merit for A. v. Humboldt, but who is in his eyes responsible for the justification of slavery and of the promotion of slave trade (A. von Humboldt 2004, 142-143). What he demands of anthropology as a science, is best expressed by a remark in Herder's *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* (1797): "to recognize humanity in each human being"[58].

In the first volume of the definitive redaction of the *Kosmos*, Alexander von Humboldt launched in 1845 once more a general attack on all theories that cast doubts on the unity of mankind; no longer did he mention single authors as in his *Lectures*, apart from Aristotle, whom he regarded as the source of these obnoxious views. But he inserted a passionate appeal in favour of humanity from a book by his older brother Wilhelm von Humboldt:

> By asserting the unity of the human species we combat, at the same time, all sorts of an unfortunate belief in the existence of nobler and lower races of men.[*] There are nations that are more pliable, and nations of a higher degree of civilisation and spiritual refinement, but there are no nations of a nobler pedigree than others. All of them are equally destined to liberty: in less refined stages, freedom is the prerogative of the individual; in the state of civil society it can be enjoyed in a community by means of their political institutions. "If we wish to make stand out one idea that distinguished itself in the course of universal history by its increasing persuasiveness, and has given proof of the perfectibility our entire species (a feature that has been contested many

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[58]   Herder 1990; *Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität*, Zehnte Sammlung (1797), Brief 116: 701 (Herder speaks of the necessity of "die Anerkennung der Menschheit im Menschen").

times, and misconstrued even more often): it is the idea of humanity. Humanity is the endeavour to remove the barriers which have been set up hostilely between men by prejudices and one-sided views of all sorts; humanity is, by disregarding religion, nation and colour, the attempt to treat mankind as one closely related stock, as a unity that exists in order to achieve one single goal: the free development of the inner force. This is the ultimate, outermost goal of sociability, and equally the direction imparted to mankind by its very nature to enhance its existence indefinitely." **

* Unfortunately, we find in the *Politics* by Aristotle (Book I. 3, 5, 6) a systematic exposition of the most disagreeable views on the inequality of men in their legal claims to liberty, and on slavery as an institution based on nature herself; they have been reproduced quite often in later times.

** *Wilhelm von Humboldt über die Kawi-Sprache*. [Berlin 1839] Vol. III: 426.

(WP trans.)[59]

Concluding Remarks

In the age of nationalism and colonialism of the nineteenth century however, the tradition of Enlightenment ideas had already begun to wane; and the voices of humanity, science and reason were silenced by ideologies of social Darwinism and racist justifications of the superiority of some 'races' over other so-called 'inferior' varieties of mankind. Men from the technically advanced civilizations had already become inured to setting aside all civilized behaviour in their dealings with people they regarded as different from themselves, resulting in the infamous racial persecutions and colonial oppression in the history of the

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[59]   A. von Humboldt, *Kosmos*, Vol. I, 1845: *Tellurischer Teil des Kosmos*; see the text: 162-386, and notes: 416-493; here: 385-386 (notes: 492): "Indem wir die Einheit des Menschengeschlechtes behaupten, widerstreben wir auch jeder unerfreulichen Annahme * von höheren und niederen Menschenracen. Es giebt bildsamere, höher gebildete, durch geistige Cultur veredelte: aber keine edleren Volksstämme. Alle sind gleichmäßig zur Freiheit bestimmt: zur Freiheit, welche in roheren Zuständen dem Einzelnen, in dem Staatenleben bei dem Genuß politischer Institutionen der Gesammtheit als Berechtigung zukommt. »Wenn wir eine Idee bezeichnen wollen, die durch die ganze Geschichte hindurch in immer mehr erweiterter Geltung sichtbar ist; wenn irgend eine die vielfach bestrittene, aber noch vielfacher mißverstandene Vervollkommnung des ganzen Geschlechtes beweist: so ist es die Idee der Menschlichkeit: das Bestreben, die Grenzen, welche Vorurtheile und einseitige Ansichten aller Art feindselig zwischen die Menschen gestellt, aufzuheben; und die gesammte Menschheit: ohne Rücksicht auf Religion, Nation und Farbe, als Einen großen, nahe verbrüderten Stamm, als ein zur Erreichung Eines Zweckes, der *freien Entwicklung innerlicher Kraft*, bestehendes Ganzes zu behandeln. Es ist dies das letzte, äußerste Ziel der Geselligkeit, und zugleich die durch seine Natur selbst in ihn gelegte Richtung des Menschen auf unbestimmte Erweiterung seines Daseins [...]". **

* Das Unerfreulichste und in späteren Zeiten so oft Wiederholte über die ungleiche Berechtigung der Menschen zur Freiheit und über Sklaverei als eine naturgemäße Einrichtung findet sich leider! sehr systematisch entwickelt in *Aristoteles Politica* I. 3, 5, 6.

** *Wilhelm von Humboldt über die Kawi-Sprache*. [Berlin 1839,] Bd. III: 426.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The debates about human varieties and the equality of all human beings we have followed up from 1600 to 1800, have not been lost altogether: we find their heritage after World War II in the *Declaration of Human Rights*, "regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status", which has been proclaimed by the United Nations in Paris on December 10, 1948. It has been complemented by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* from September 13, 2007; this, however, is not a legally binding instrument or a law bearing document. Obviously, we are still lagging behind the rigorous principles we had quoted initially in the verdict of Lord Kames in the case of Joseph Knight, or in the remarks by Paolo Paruta on Aristotle's *Politics*. Therefore, it is fitting to conclude with the laconic statement "aliud jus, aliud potentia", used by the legal scholar Thomas Johnson in 1737 in his commentary to Samuel Pufendorf's treatment of human equality as a principle of Natural Law:

> Right is one thing, power another. Superior gifts, whether of mind or body, do not quash the equality of men, in order to establish the right of dominion of one human over another. (WP trans.)[60]

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[60]   "Aliud jus, aliud potentia. Superiores facultates (sint animi vel corporis) aequalitatem non destruunt, ut exinde jus imperii in alterum oriatur"; see Pufendorf 1737, Book I, Chap. VII: "It is imperative to acknowledge human equality" (*De agnoscenda hominum æqualitate*) § 2, note 3: 259-260.

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Natural History, Racial Classification and Anthropology in J.F. Blumenbach's Work and Reception

MARIO MARINO

The awful thing is that beauty is mysterious as well as terrible.
God and the devil are fighting there and the battlefield is the heart of man
(Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The present paper examines Blumenbach's contribution to physical and philosophical anthropology by critically discussing the theoretical, methodological and conceptual fundamentals of both his racial classification and related visualisations[1]. In section 1, I sketch a short intellectual profile of Blumenbach

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to provide a general frame for the subsequent argumentation as well as to highlight ambivalences and problematic questions which condition Blumenbach's work and reception. In this context, I analyse some influential visualizations of Blumenbach's legacy produced in his lifetime and today. In section 2, I describe the theoretical and methodological presuppositions and the constant evolution of Blumenbach's racial anthropology, focusing on the theory of natural and human mutability, Blumenbach's definition of human being, and his original use of the image of the book of nature. In sections 3 and 4, I highlight conceptual difficulties and methodological problems concerning both the systematics of Blumenbach's anthropological doctrine and classification and in particular his conception and definition of the 'Caucasian race'.

1. On Blumenbach's Life, Legacy and Iconography: Some Issues at Stake

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach enjoyed distinguished origins and a very long, comfortable life. Born in 1752 in Gotha into a good bourgeois family (his father was a teacher, his mother was the daughter of an important jurist and vice-chancellor of the city), Blumenbach studied first in Jena and then in Göttingen, where in 1775 he obtained the academic title of doctor of medicine with a dissertation containing the first, still quadripartite version of his racial classification. Shortly after, he was nominated curator of the academic museum and professor at the local university, thus commencing long-term research activity characterized by fundamental connections between scientific collections and university teaching. Blumenbach could intensify such connections thanks to the following intertwined factors: 1) the international prestige and authority he soon gained with his spectacular efforts. 2) The fact that Göttingen was at that time under the British Crown, which afforded greater freedom of thought, easier contact with a leading political and scientific community such as that of the British Empire,

and above all a direct and privileged access to the naturalist and ethnological materials coming from the British colonies and from Cook's travels. Blumenbach never left for long periods his adoptive city. The one significant exception was his trip to Great Britain in the early 1790s, which quickly became legendary. In Göttingen he led the rest of his life as an increasingly comfortable and revered teacher and scholar at the center of a great network of international exchanges. He died there in 1840, far advanced in years.

Blumenbach's name is still universally linked to physical and racial anthropology for four main reasons: 1) His famous private collection of more than 200 skulls (which by the end of his life was probably the widest and most complete worldwide, now conserved at the University of Göttingen). 2) The so-called *norma verticalis*, which was a decisive innovation in the method of skull measurement, by viewing the skull from above[2]. 3) The division of Mankind in five principal racial groups, which was – and still is – regarded as the first modern racial classification. 4) Establishing in the anthropological vocabulary the term 'Caucasian' for the type including Europeans[3]. Therefore, it is no coincidence that 25 years ago such an authority as the biologist-historian Stephen J. Gould summed up Blumenbach's work under the heading of "The Geometer of Race"[4].

Blumenbach's personal iconography widely confirms how predominant and – one may say – inescapable is reference to his craniological studies and racial classification. His most popular portrait [Figure 1] – drawn by Ludwig Emil Grimm, the youngest and least known of the Grimm Brothers – shows Blumenbach sitting at home near the skull of "Richard Bruce King of Scotland". According to a true story hilariously told by Blumenbach himself in 1823 during an afternoon tea at his home in the presence of the etcher and some ladies (including his own wife), the popular superstition had assigned to Richard's skull extraordinary powers able to make the person who owned it a strong and brave conqueror. Under the impression of this legend, George IV, King of Great Britain, commanded the skull

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[2] Blumenbach elaborated this method in a close critical discussion with the measurement and classification methodology developed by his Dutch friend and colleague Peter Camper. The latter methodology was based on the so-called facial angle criterion (a lateral view of the head measured and classified according to successive degrees of increasing approximation to a degree of angulation modeled on Greek statuary and considered ideally perfect) and had immediately become very popular among anatomists and scholars. In the third edition of his *De generis humani varietate nativa*, Blumenbach systematically exposes the limits of the codification and use of Camper's criterion as well as the self-perceived strengths of his own criterion (GH 1795, § 60: 200-203).

[3] As Bruce Baum pointed out (Baum 2006, 73, 84-89, 59), the term was first introduced by Christoph Meiners in an explicit and harshly racist context, then adopted and newly defined by Blumenbach after Meiners abandoned it. It is still in use with some differentiations – just to give a couple of examples – by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services and for the controversial racial profiling in the criminal justice system.

[4] Gould 2002.

be brought to him, yet after some time he did not really know what to do with such a fateful piece, so he decided to give it as a present to Blumenbach, who surely could have profited more from it. This anecdote reveals Blumenbach's irony in distancing himself from the Romantic trends of his time, in approaching his work and his objects of inquiry, as well as, in some way, his awareness of the newly achieved autonomy and authority of the physical anthropology he practiced.

Two years later a solemn ceremony for the 50th anniversary of Blumenbach's dissertation took place in Göttingen. The commemorative medal [Figure 2] was financed by an enormous number of subscribers – around 1500, mostly scholars and Blumenbach's correspondents, colleagues, former students from Europe and the rest of the world. The first professor of anatomy and physiology at the University of Berlin, Karl Asmund Rudolphi, coordinated the project. The Latin inscriptions on both sides of the medal state, on the front, *I. Fr. Blumenbach nato Gothae d. 11. Maii 1752 doct. creato Gottingae*, and on the reverse, *d. 19. Sept. 1775 naturae interpreti ossa loqui iubenti physiosophili germanici*. On the face of the medal, one sees an official profile portrait of Blumenbach wearing elegant clothes and decorations of the Hanoverian Order of Chivalry; on the reverse, a triangle, whose vertices are skulls representing three of the five racial types (the Caucasian, the Mongolian and the Ethiopic).

It is worth remarking that the facing image is somewhat problematic, as it does not express Blumenbach's style, nor the attitudes and values of his life[5]. However, the foremost issue concerns the image on the reverse, which represents an equivocal, simplifying and distorting interpretation of ambivalent passages of Blumenbach's work. Blumenbach never spoke of only *three* principal race groups (*Hauptrassen*); he constantly spoke of four and – from the beginning of the 1780s – of five, but he equally defined the American and Malaysian types as "transitions" (*Übergänge*) between the Caucasian race – the primordial one – on the one side and the Ethiopian and Mongolian, respectively (HN 1821, 70). When Blumenbach himself arranges the last three skulls in a unique figure, [Figure 3] his aim is *not* to exhibit any racial classification – thus being consistent with the general assumption of five main races –, but to exemplify the validity of the *norma verticalis* (GH 1795, 204) – hence showing the three skulls as viewed from above. In both illustrations – that of the classification and that of the vertical norm – the skulls are placed at the same level side by side. Oddly, the reverse image of the medal consists exclusively of frontal or lateral views, hierarchically combined in a way suggesting the superiority of the Caucasian race: thus it is difficult to claim that

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[5]   See *Die Blumenbach-Medaille von 1825* in http://www.blumenbach-online.de/Einzelseiten/ Medaille1825.php. Accessed 26 August 2019.

FIGURE 1
Johann Friedrich
Blumenbach.
Portrait by L. E. Grimm
1823

FIGURE 2
Commemorative Medal
1825

FIGURE 3
J. F. Blumenbach:
*DE generis humani
varietate nativa*
(1795): Tab. I
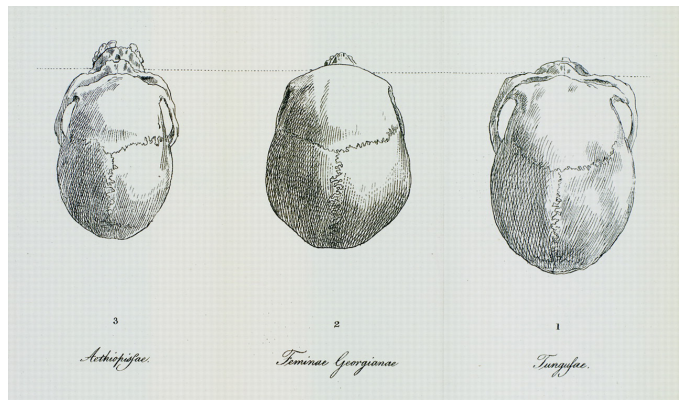
such an image faithfully represents Blumenbach's methodology or doctrine. If Blumenbach interpreted nature "by letting the bones speak", Rudolphi and his colleagues visualized such a 'speech' by representing its message in a distorted and simplified way. One of the aims of the present essay is to explain how and to what extent Blumenbach's writings made this reading possible: I have already mentioned the passage concerning *Hauptrassen* and *Übergänge*, later I return to Blumenbach's understanding of the Caucasian Race.

The last images I would like to mention are the banners elaborated for the homepage of the great German digitalization project of all Blumenbach's writings and collections. In the older one [Figure 4] (2010), Blumenbach's signature joins his face in Grimm's portrait to the lateral sections of a skull; but now the skull serves as bookend for a row of books. In other words, Blumenbach remains universally associated with his interest for the skulls. However, the contemporary approach to Blumenbach's work and personality regards his cranium research more as an object of historical interest than of current scientific validity: the project does not aim to put forward once again his physical anthropology. The new one [Figure 5] (2018) has no longer ironical or dialectical approach to cranial anthropology: a pre-ordered sequence of images is linked to corresponding digitalized objects, nevertheless, the starting image of the banner is always the synoptic view of both faces of the medal of 1825. The message seems to be in this case that the modern technical innovation of digitalization makes possible an academic re-appropriation, a sort of re-institutionalization, of Blumenbach's legacy in 'his' Göttingen and – thanks to the Web – from 'his' Göttingen into the wide world. But there is no warning on the website that the now 'reloaded' old, official, academic image of Blumenbach transmitted a partial, equivocal and ideologically questionable interpretation of Blumenbach's anthropology. By contextualizing these images I have shown in a striking way how ambivalent the reception and interpretation of Blumenbach's legacy can be. Indeed, one and the same digitalization project, in 2010 and 2018 has elaborated two images – which are divergent and at the same time deeply immersed in the history of science and in Blumenbach's personal iconography – apparently endorsing a problematic interpretation of his racial classification, presented as representative for all his anthropology[6].

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[6]   See for a further, astonishing evidence the controversy between Thomas Junker and Stephen J. Gould on the visualization of Blumenbach's racial classification in Gould's essay on Blumenbach (Junker 1998 and Gould 1998).

FIGURE 4 – www.blumenbach-online.de: Banner 2010

FIGURE 5 – www.blumenbach-online.de: Banner 2018

2. ANTHROPOLOGY AS A PART OF NATURAL HISTORY: MUTABILITY OF NATURE AND THE STUDY OF HUMAN NATURE AND VARIETIES

If a synthetic definition of Blumenbach's concept of natural history is needed, then likely it is this: a science of natural mutability. According to Blumenbach, all nature is subject to change: earth, rocks, plants, animals. The sheer diversity of human beings is first and foremost an expression of such mutability, and therefore of its being a natural phenomenon, even if not all causes of human diversity are directly natural (some are effects of the technical-cultural transformations by which nature is subjected to human activity). To define this vast phenomenon of production of races and intra-specific varieties, Blumenbach adopts a term, typical of the coeval natural history, though at that time it was not necessarily connected with theories of degradation, literally indicating varieties (e.g. created by grafting in agriculture or breeding in zootechny) di-verging from or de-veloping out of a standard original kind: he speaks of "degeneration" (*Degeneration* or *Ausartung*)[7]. The complexity of this phenomenon and the interactions of all the many factors concurring within it, afford no general systematic account of the action of these many factors, neither in mechanical terms nor as a two-way causality. Nevertheless, Blumenbach believes that is plausible 1) to consider a plurality of principal causes, and 2) to prove their impact on specific objects of inquiry[8]. Regarding the first point, Blumenbach – like Georges Buffon – identifies these causes in climate, nutrition and forms of life. Regarding the second, he focuses on domesticated animals, especially on pigs. He does so for epistemological reasons and as an argumentative and theoretical strategy. Thanks to its genealogical traits (unanimously accepted by scientists), its omnivorous character, and its widespread presence on planet Earth, not to mention its being the closest to man among the domesticated animals, the pig appears to provide the most meaningful and pertinent object to investigate "degeneration" and its causes[9].

Such an association between human being and pig induced the author of the most quoted history of anthropology in German academia, Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann, to praise Blumenbach as a "precursor" to Eugen Fischer's theory of domestication. For Mühlmann, a student of Fischer, "the domestication thesis was [...] in and for itself older [...], Posidon, Blumenbach and Lawrence had cultivated similar thoughts [...]. But Fischer founded it according to genetic theory" (Mühlmann 1968, 59, 188-189). Wondering to what extent Blumenbach

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[7] See for example BN 1790, 33-49.

[8] BN 1790, 35; BN 1806, 29.

[9] BN 1790, 37-39, 47-48, 54; BN 1806, 33-35, 38, 46-47.

could be interpreted in such a way, in his comprehensive and unparalleled history of science and culture at the University of Göttingen from Enlightenment to Romanticism, Luigi Marino gave two skeptical answers (L. Marino 1975, 120). On a philological level, he stated how difficult it was to solve the problem with the very few available data offered by Blumenbach. On a theoretical level, he added that Blumenbach seemed much more interested in the classification of races. In my view, neither Mühlmann nor L. Marino got the point right.

Mühlmann's interpretation is grounded on a reconstruction of Blumenbach's path of thought: Blumenbach would have first (1779) interpreted racial differences along the lines of the traditional doctrine of 'environment' (climate, nutrition, etc.), while only later (from 1789 on) he would have associated the diversity of human races with the "degeneration" of domestic animals. However, in fact none of Blumenbach's writings present human racial marks in perfect parallelism with marks of domestic animals. This is only a negative and indirect argument against Mühlmann's reconstruction, but a direct source, the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, attests that Blumenbach's research on domestic animals was not meant to replace that of degeneration. On the contrary, the former became a confirmation of the latter precisely because the "degeneration" of domestic animals helped to prove the force of the principal causes of degeneration.

Most decisive, the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte* proves that Blumenbach limits the assimilation of man to domestic animals the very moment he affirms it. When Blumenbach defines the human being as the most perfect among domestic animals, he also points out that only the human animal can be called truly domestic, essentially and primarily (BN 1790, 48). In contrast to all non-human animals that humans domesticate (and in contrast to what is presumed by any theory of domestication), the human being does not originate from an isolated and savage state of nature[10]. Against a contemporaneous background,

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[10]   As to the direct and immediate historical context of Blumenbach's assumption, to claim, after Rousseau, that society was the proper original naturally domestic state of mankind, implies at least reference to Voltaire, *La philosophie de l'histoire* [1765], Chap. 7: "Entendez-vous par sauvages des animaux à deux pieds, marchant sur les mains dans le besoin, isolés, errant dans les forêts, *Salvatici, Selvagi*, s'accouplant à l'aventure, oubliant les femelles auxquelles ils se sont joints, ne connaissant ni leurs fils ni leurs pères; vivant en brutes, sans avoir ni l'instinct ni les ressources des brutes? On a écrit que cet état est le véritable état de l'homme, et que nous n'avons fait que dégénérer misérablement depuis que nous l'avons quitté. Je ne crois pas que cette vie solitaire, attribuée à nos premiers pères, soit dans la nature humaine. Nous sommes, si je ne me trompe, au premier rang (s'il est permis de le dire) des animaux qui vivent en troupe, comme les abeilles, les fourmis, les castors, les oies, les poules, les moutons, etc. Si on rencontre une abeille errant, devra-t-on conclure que cette abeille est dans l'état de pure nature, et que celles qui travaillent dans la ruche ont dégénéré? [...] Ne voyons-nous pas en effet que tous les animaux, ainsi que tous les autres êtres, exécutent invariablement la loi que la nature donne à leur espèce? L'oiseau fait son nid, comme les astres fournissent leur course, par un principe qui ne change jamais. Comment l'homme seul aurait-il changé? S'il eût été destiné à vivre solitaire comme les autres animaux carnassiers, aurait-il pu contredire la loi de la nature

since Blumenbach claims that the original condition of human beings is nothing but a social and cultural one; he thus stands in continuity with both the structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauß (who accordingly quotes the corresponding passage from the *Beyträge* in his pioneering study of the elementary structure of kinship: Lévi-Strauss 1969, 5) and the Philosophical Anthropology of Arnold Gehlen (who maintained that for natural reasons the human being is a cultural being)[11]. In fact, Blumenbach's definition of the human animal underlines the peculiar place, or better the unique specificity, of man within the animal kingdom. Ultimately, the true meaning of the definition lies in the fact that man, physiologically speaking[12], is the most plastic and open to the world of all animals, the least dependent on or determined by nature's surroundings, the most open to the greatest differentiations.

To identify and classify these differentiations objectively, Blumenbach elaborates a method based on three rules[13]. The first rule requires always considering the general physiology of organized bodies: man is one living organism among others, and the understanding of man must be based on comparing it to the structures of other species' organism[14]. The second rule elaborates the first: it rejects direct comparisons between extreme cases, because differences blend into each other between one case and the next, so that, if intermediate states are overlooked, the extremes become too great to be accounted for within the same interval[15]. Many elements constituting the

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jusqu'à vivre en société? et s'il était fait pour vivre en troupe, comme les animaux de basse-cour, eût-il pu d'abord pervertir sa destinée jusqu'à vivre pendant des siècles en solitaire? Il est perfectible; et de là on a conclu qu'il s'est perverti. Mais pourquoi n'en pas conclure qu'il s'est perfectionné jusqu'au point où la nature a marqué les limites de sa perfection?" (https://artflsrv03.uchicago.edu/philologic4/toutvoltaire/navigate/703/1/8/, 111). See also Montesquieu, *Lettres Persanes* [1721] XCIV and THN [1739], 234: "In all creatures, that prey not upon others, and are not agitated with violent passions, there appears a remarkable desire of company, which associates them together, without any advantages they can ever propose to reap from their union. This is still more conspicuous in man, as being the creature of the universe, who has the most ardent desire of society, and is fitted for it by the most advantages". *Ed. note.*

[11]   See Gehlen 1983a, b and 2004. Gehlen explicitly refutes the hypothesis of a wild natural state of human being for anthropological, sociological and political reasons in Gehlen 1983c, 130-133.

[12]   BN 1790, 50-55, especially 54-55.

[13]   BN 1790, 59-61; BN 1806, 51-54.

[14]   John Locke had already developed this comparative approach to the *principium individuationis* of the human being. The identity of the same man "is nothing but a participation of the same continued life by constantly fleeting particles of matter in succession vitally united to the same organized body" (*Essay*, Book II, Chap. XXVII, § 6) and as such does not differ from the identity of animals and vegetables (*ivi*, §§ 4 and 5); moreover, it implies reference to the sensed aspect of the human organism, that is, its figure. *Ed. note.*

[15]   See furthermore the observation in BN 1806, 69, which is insofar important, as it states that, in the study of the differences between the dissimilar varieties, one must consider the characters as a whole

theoretical basis of this rule are obviously reminiscent of Buffon's nominalistic and anti-metaphysical paradigm, revisited and expanded by Herder and Forster against Kant – although Herder and Forster expanded and generalized Buffon's paradigm to include all of nature[16]. These elements are: 1) the use of the term *Nüance* (*shade*); 2) the very idea that the human species, as any other species, comparatively consists of a gradual series of internal differentiations; 3) the idea that the separations among such intraspecific differentiations are in reality "nothing more than very arbitrary boundaries among the varieties" (*keine andere als sehr willkührliche Grenzen zwischen diesen Spielarten*: BN 1790, 81). Incidentally, these elements are crucial to defining the status of classification as inherently different from the mirror of nature. The third rule recommends building an anthropological collection, an empirical data base, that should be as strong, comprehensive and focused as possible, because our knowledge of natural history rests on "intuitions", which means here a *sensible*, sensory notion. In this context, Blumenbach recalls in his own original way Galileo's image of the book of nature: this point is of such a tremendous historical and methodological relevance that it deserves closer consideration.

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and not just some of them – not only the skin color, for example, and another couple of things, but the whole, because the organism, writes Blumenbach, is a system, a natural system ("*natürliches System*"). See also BN 1806, 77, where the comparison between an ugly specimen of Negro and the aesthetic ideal of classical Greece is disputed, here with reference to the shape of the face: this procedure would indeed contradict the rule in question, to which Blumenbach refers here, and would therefore not be scientific. As it will happen with regard to the beauty of the Caucasian race, which I will discuss later, here too Blumenbach relativizes the belief that blacks would be ugly while whites would be beautiful – that is, he relativizes the idea of a racial exclusivity of aesthetic values.

[16]   It is worth noting that in the 1752 Preface to the second volume of the German translation of Buffon's *Historie der Natur* (published separately in a French Translation in 1751) Haller criticizes Buffon's theory of an organic active (nutritive, generative) homeomeric and non-teleological matter, universally diffused within all animal and vegetal substances, equally suitable to become a man, animal or plant. At first, Haller acknowledges that Buffon's opinion: "derives its greatest probability from the universal conformity of Nature as a whole. [...] From salts to snowflakes, to the trees of Diana, to the feathery plumes of ice, there extends an uninterrupted chain of organisations, which without any other artistry (*art*) are produced by the force of attraction alone" (Lyon & Sloan 1981, 315). Nevertheless, he remarks that Buffon cannot explain the 'right' order followed by organized particles which correctly join separated parts of a body *according to an unvariable plan*, stressing that he needs a force which has foresight, can make a choice, has a goal, and that against the laws of blind combination always and unfailingly brings about the same end (*ivi*, 320). As regards organic formations, Haller emphasizes (in a passage also quoted in Herder's *Ideen*, Book 7, §1) the infinite diversity within individuals of the same species, which makes it "almost impossible to provide a description". Distinctive singular empirical apparences cannot be composed in a unique picture without the help of a hypothetical leading thread (*Leitfaden*) bringing order into observed peculiarities and filling the blanks of truth. As Haller had stated in his Preface to the first volume of Buffon's *Historie der Natur*: "All the parts of human science would become nothing but fragments (*Fragmenten*) and individual shreds without connection and unification (*einzelne Bruchstücke ohne Zusammenhang und ohne Verbindung*), if we did not fill in the missing parts with probabilities (*mit dem Wahrscheinlichen*), and construct a building instead of a ruin" (Lyon & Sloan 1981, 301). *Ed. note*.

3.   THE BOOK OF NATURE AND THE END OF NATURAL HISTORY: ON DIRECT AND INDIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE

Blumenbach's variation on the image of the book of nature, taken from the first part of the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, where it appears in contexts and wordings which were modified between the first and second editions, abundantly illustrates the epistemological and cultural turning point that Wolf Lepenies would call, two hundred years later, the end of natural history (Lepenies 1980) – which is to say the transition, occurring swiftly in the last decades of the eighteenth century, from natural history as description of nature to natural history as the historicity, temporality, and mutability of nature through time. Lepenies, however, neglects not only the *Beyträge,* but all Blumenbach's work: he cites Blumenbach very rarely, and mostly in relation to Kant. This is all the more incomprehensible since Blumenbach was *the* most famous and widely read historian of nature at that time. What is more, in the *Beyträge* Lepenies would have found not only countless examples of Blumenbach's great contribution to establishing the method representative of the new natural history, but also splendid corroboration of the value of his own thesis, according to which the end of natural history coincides with the transition from nature, understood and read as a body of texts, to nature as the book of nature – a field of observations and experimentation. In the first edition of the first part of the *Beyträge*, the book of nature is recalled in part of Chapter 11, which responds word by word to Meiners' critique of the comparative study of skulls of different populations (BN 1790, 62-78). Although this chapter was removed from the second edition, the section that interests us, together with a couple further significant passages, is incorporated into Chapter 10, now titled "On anthropological collections" (BN 1806, 55-66). The elimination of the previous Chapter 11 should not be interpreted as symptomatic of a reconsideration, nor as an admission of defeat, by Blumenbach. Instead, because the key issue in his controversy with Meiners is defining the correct method of anthropology, it appears much more likely that Blumenbach, reassured by the consensus now achieved by his anthropology, believes his exposition can simply omit polemics addressing his old opponent.

Meiners had questioned Blumenbach's assessment of entire populations based on the shape of a single bodily part, and of this same bodily part on the basis of single bones. Lastly, as one reads a bit later in his critique, Meiners succinctly questioned Blumenbach's pretension to classify the human species on the basis of single physical traits. Against such an alleged generalization of a single anthropological-physical criterion, Meiners indicated other criteria, for instance historic-geographical ones. Blumenbach shares Meiners' doubts, but he argues that Meiners' objections do not pertain to his own methods, because he

does not stretch the natural method beyond reliability, control and experience[17]. Regarding the limits of intuitive knowledge, and its necessary integration with reliable information and others' experiences, Blumenbach fully agrees with Meiners: This praxis is adopted by all scholars of natural history. Blumenbach's point is that the scholar of natural history must not renounce direct experience and intuitive knowledge – that is, in this case, the comparative and direct study of skulls – merely because such experience will never be complete. It is the scholar's "mandatory obligation" (*unabbitliche Verpflichtung*) – Blumenbach dictates – "to do anything in their power to acquire first of all as much personal experience as possible" (BN 1790, 69).

This idea of expanding the field of possible direct experience while remaining within the limits of experience itself shows some analogies to Kant's tenets in the First *Critique*, in particular with reference to the crucial emphasis on direct experience, whereas the idea of critically recurring to indirect experience when direct experience no longer helps – i.e., a critical stance towards indirect sources – seems closer to Herder's and Forster's approaches. Precisely regarding the relations among direct experience of nature, indirect experience of nature, and knowledge of nature, in the first edition of the first part of the *Beyträge* Blumenbach introduces the image of the great book of nature (BN 1790, 69-70).

In the second edition, the scenario changes; Blumenbach limits himself to expounding the three rules of his method, using the image of the book of nature to explain the third rule, which calls for preparing an anthropological collection as broad and as diverse as possible. Here he distinguishes between the direct, intuitive knowledge that the observer draws from nature, and

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[17]   In particular, on the one hand, his research would be based on findings of different provenance and nature (including the indirect ones, of "reliable observers"), which are evaluated and cross-checked: in this regard, Blumenbach's thesis is that certain congruities among the data cannot be reasonably explained as pure accidents when the origins, ages, and types of converging findings are so different. On the other hand, he explains that he uses the findings for the purposes for which they are suitable, providing then some examples: craniology would not be suitable for determining the diet adopted by various peoples, but it would be very useful when it comes to the question of the "national formation of human varieties" (BN 1790, 68). Generally Blumenbach states that "there is no more fervent friend of the natural method in natural history, and particularly in that section of natural history that concerns the human stock, than myself; since so often, and precisely in relation to the society in question, I have warned against judgments based on the formation of a single body part; nor have I in general, however, used a piece of my collection for the history of man other than for what this was good" (BN 1790, 67). Blumenbach takes the opportunity to separate himself – and his discipline – from the summarizing and generic spirit of those writers who simply put together information from travel reports. Here the great importance of the *anschauliche Kenntnis* is reiterated, which in the case of physical anthropology is obtained through the direct analysis of the physical structure of the human being, compared with that of other animals and, when it is not possible to directly experience such structure, with the data provided by other observers deemed reliable with good reason.

indirect knowledge – i.e., information gathered from other people: he speaks of the former as the "revealed book of nature" (in the first edition, he had written instead of "the word revealed in the book of nature")[18], and of the latter as "a sort of symbolic books".

To my knowledge, the only scholar to quote and highlight this passage is Bruce Baum, who claims that it indicates that at the beginning of the nineteenth century Blumenbach "reflected on the 'symbolic' character of any reading of nature" (Baum 2006, 91). In my view, Baum misinterpreted the passage, likely misled by Bendyshe's nineteenth-century English translation of the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, Part one, second edition. Bendyshe did not understand what Blumenbach meant by the expression *symbolische Bücher*, but, since he had to translate it, he opted for "a kind of symbolical writing" (AT 298), thus completely obscuring its meaning. The original expression has, in fact, a precise theological meaning with which Blumenbach plays. Already extant in the Patristic tradition, in the Protestant theology of the end of the seventeenth century the expression "symbolic books" designates those texts that various Christian denominations considered exclusively their own (e.g., the various catechisms of the Protestant Churches). During the eighteenth century, the authority attributed to such symbolic books by orthodox Protestant theologians was problematized first by the Pietists and then questioned even more by the Neologists (Beutel 2009, 113). If one considers the enormous importance given to experience and sensation within the Neological milieu, it cannot be by chance that Blumenbach adopted that very image to question the pretense of indirect knowledge to subordinate direct knowledge to itself. Therefore, the meaning of the analogy between the relation of the believer to the Bible and to those symbolic books, and of the natural scientist to the knowledge of nature, is that, as the believer seeking God must stick to the Bible upon which the truth value of the various catechisms depends, so the

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[18]   This, however, is one of the two noteworthy changes to this paragraph made between the first and the second edition; the other concerns the way of dealing with indirect sources and their validity. The latter modification emphasizes the need for a critical attitude toward indirect sources and further warns against the identification or total interchangeability of indirect sources with intuitable reality. The former highlights the distance from a theistic and traditional idea of God's relationship with creation, that is, the disambiguation of natural history and theology. See BN 1790, 69-70: "Alle die Nachrichten von noch so fähigen und glaubwürfigen Zeugen, sind im Grunde doch für den Wahrheitssuchenden Naturforscher nichts mehr und nichts weniger als eine Art symbolischer Bücher, die er mit guten [*sic*] Gewissen nie anders als quatenus unterschreiben kan [*sic*], in so fern sie nemlich mit dem geoffenbarten Wort im Buch der Natur übereinstimmen") and BN 1806, 53: "Denn to die Nachrichten die man darüber, wenn auch mit möglichst critischer Vorsicht aus andern schöpft, sind im Grunde doch für den wahrheitsuchenden Natureshopers nichts mehr nichts weiter als eine Art symbolischer Bücher, die er mit gutem Gewissen nicht anders als quatenus unterschreiben kann, in so fern sie nämlich mit dem geoffenbarten Buch der Natur übereinstimmen [...]". The remainder of the text coincides.

reader of the book of nature seeking truth must gather as much direct, sensible knowledge as possible to be able to read and understand such a book – nature – and to grasp the truth; only knowledge found in *this* book can be endorsed, received, and accepted. The reference text has now become, permanently, nature, to which statements of the other books – those of men – must conform.

4. THE EVOLUTION OF BLUMENBACH'S CLASSIFICATION: MAIN TENDENCIES AND PROBLEMS

On these premises Blumenbach founds and develops the process of defining and revising the classification of human intra-specific varieties which had interested him from the beginning and which covers almost half a century. We can uncover the guidelines, the turning points or the contradictions of such process by comparing the numerous editions of *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*, *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte*, *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte* and *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*.

The first tendency to be noted here is terminological: The word 'race' had been very controversial in the mid '80s[19]. Herder had rejected it as ignoble, while Kant had tried to elaborate a conceptually rigorous definition of the term[20]. Blumenbach, who initially preferred the expression 'variety' (*Varietät* or *Spielart*), was persuaded by Kant's definition and adopted the word *Rasse* explicitly and systematically from the 1795 onward (HN 1797, 23). Most likely, he had theoretical reasons to do so, though he may also have been motivated by strategic considerations. On the one hand, Kant, whose philosophy was the most successful in Germany in the '90s, had favorably accepted Blumenbach's doctrine of the organized living organism and by so doing had given Blumenbach's research the philosophical legitimacy it needed[21]. On the other hand, Kant's

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[19] See M. Marino 2010.

[20] On Alexander von Humboldt's attitude (e.g. in *Kosmos*, 1845) towards the belief in the existence of nobler and lower races of men see *supra* Proß' contribution to the present volume (Chap. 1, § 4). *Ed. note.*

[21] Consider Kant's favouring Blumenbach's "inscrutable principle of an original organization" (i.e. the hypothesis of a *Bildungstrieb*)*,* as *rationally* representing things initially as possible only in accord with the causality of ends (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft* §81, A.A. V, 424); or Kant's unifying theory of the origin of all the racial diversity of humankind, not from the authoritative assertion of the empirical "fact" of one original couple, but from the (rational) *idea* of one original *Menschenstamm*, in view of the full development of all our potentialities as a specie (*Über den Gebrauch teleologischer Principien in der Philosophie* (1788), A.A. VIII, 178, Anm.). Already in the *Bestimmung des Begriffs einer Menschenrasse* (1785) Kant had contrasted the inward rational necessity of hypotheses about natural reproduction which unify teleology and mechanism (*à la* Blumenbach) to the hypothesis of the archaeologist of nature, inspired by comparative anatomy, to account for a coherent kinship

writings on the concept of race between 1777 and 1788 rigorously restricted the definition of the term to the hereditary transmission of physical, and only physical properties, thus nurturing the illusion of protecting human reason and liberty from the threat of naturalism and biological reductionism. Blumenbach was certainly a humanist and mobilized his entire anthropology against the enslavement and marginalization of people and social groups, as his stand in favor of the equal human, intellectual, and moral dignity of the so-called Negro incontrovertible demonstrates[22].

We may, however, hypothesize the existence of a further theoretical reason, even more general, at the heart of Blumenbach's decision to replace *Varietät* and *Spielart* with *Rasse*. Expressions such as *Varietät* and *Spielart* have the dual feature of not being specific enough and of underscoring especially the superficial, accidental, casual, uncertain, and arbitrary aspect of observed phenomena, almost as if nature played with its manifestations. These expressions somehow suggest that the object of study was inessential, secondary, and either completely or in part irreducible to a rational explanation. However, Kant's definition of the concept of race, based on the assumption of a constant and cohesive set of physical features, presumes an identifiable, objective content which can be subjected to verifiable knowledge. In this way, Kant's definition contributes to shifting the conversation on nature and its diversity into the camp of natural sciences, and to developing an adequate, corresponding categorical repertoire. Because of that definition, the terminology and conceptuality of anthropology reached a crossroads, and Blumenbach, who had been active in that research field for years, would eventually have to take one or the other. Since his work was clearly headed towards founding anthropology as an empirical science of nature, at some point the choice to adopt Kant's expression must have appeared to him entirely natural and understandable.

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of all organic beings as natural ends in terms of the Earth's production of organic beings. In that context Kant had declared his fundamental principle: to deny the validity of any such *corrupting influence of the power of imagnation* on [any valid account of] the reproductive work of Nature (A.A. VIII, 97) critizing on this basis both Herder's and Forster's idea of the generation of organic beings from the womb of one single, universal Mother. In a footnote to §80 of the third *Critique*, famous for its lasting influence upon Goethe, Kant regards the unifying hypothesis of the *Urmutter* as a risky, "daring adventure" (*gewagtes Abenteuer*) of reason. Indeed, conceptually speaking, to regard the Earth as *Urmutte*r is nothing but to forge, through imagination, an ideal object of cognition which *apparently* conforms to the rational standards of architectonic completeness and organic relation between whole and parts. For Kant, this ideal object executes reason's demand for completeness of principles to systematise and to unify empirical knowledge, but *only in terms of a subjective kind of judgment*. Moreover, this theory cannot unify teleology and the mechanical production of the multifarious species (as Blumenbach's principle does) and the archaeologist cannot pretend to have made the production of the animal and plant kingdoms independent of the condition of final causes. *Ed.'s note.*

[22]   See therefore BN 84-118.

A second tendency is a gradual shift from a simple, unorganized list of anatomical traits to a more regular and systematic one (skin color, hair color, typology of hair, facial and cranial traits). Parallel to this, the third tendency is toward increasing concentration on physical data, anatomical as well as geographical, to the exclusion of cultural and theological characteristics – such as the language of some populations or the identification of Adam as progenitor of humans – which had initially been accepted and included[23]. Notwithstanding, one statement is explicitly grounded on cultural values and remains constant in the *Handbuch*: "according to the European concepts of beauty", the Caucasian race has the most beautiful form of skull and face[24].

Why did Blumenbach not exclude this factor as well? If the scientific legitimacy and validity of his classification depends on a methodology as objective and as physically oriented as possible, then this datum weakens the entire theoretical foundation of his system of classification. In my view, the reason is that for him the Caucasian cranium was indeed the best proportioned physically, which means that the cultural statement concerning Caucasian beauty has in Blumenbach's eyes a physical, objective, that is, geometrical reference – a reference of decisive conceptual and systematic importance for Blumenbach's anthropology. Against the backdrop of the theory of climate and temperaments, on the one hand, and on the basis of considerations pertaining physiology, on the other, Blumenbach in fact tends to believe that populations living in temperate climates are more proportionately formed, that the change in skin tone from white to black is easier than vice versa, and that temperate climates are more welcoming to the primordial human species. Craniological researches based on the criterion of *norma verticalis* confirm this picture through the discovery of three ideal shapes corresponding to three of the main racial groups: the extremely symmetrical and nearly round or spherical shape (Caucasian); one that developed in width, flattened and roughly square, narrow and squeezed on the sides (Mongolian); and one that developed in length (Ethiopian).

To sum up, on the one hand, Blumenbach was aware that equating harmony of proportions with beauty is a cultural heritage of the European tradition, particularly of the Greek tradition. On the other, he was not totally aware of how culturally and theoretically conditioned were both his own assumptions that the Georgian cranium could be seen as a model of the Caucasian cranium in general, and that, due to the (presumed) objectivity and perfection of its proportions,

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[23]   Cf. HN 1788, 60-61, and HN 1791, 54-55.

[24]   HN 1797, 61 (as well as HN 1830, 56). In earlier editions of the *Handbuch*, Blumenbach affirms more in general that the conformation of the Caucasians is the "best" one according to the above mentioned parameters of beauty (cf. for instance HN 1788, 61).

the Georgian skull helped to classify the Caucasian race as the primordial and intermediate one among all races (*Stamm-Rasse, Mittel-Rasse*).

It is important to keep in mind that such a conceptual pair was not a point of departure, but a point of arrival for Blumenbach's anthropology. When in the first edition of the *Handbuch* he introduces the race which he would later call "Caucasian", which included all Europeans, he speaks of this race as the "largest" and the "original" one, with no assumptions, however, about any genealogical implications between this and all the other units of his classification (HN 1779, 63). When in the fourth edition of the *Handbuch*, the human race's ancestor is no longer Adam, but much more prosaically, a common and primal race, such a progenitor-race is not identified with any of the five units of the classification, and the initial attributes of "largest" and "original" disappear for good from any descriptions of the first unit (HN 1788, 60; 1791, 54). Only after 1795, that is, after the third edition of the dissertation, does the *Handbuch* offer the first, though temporary, definition of the Caucasian race as the "median" or "progenitor–like" race (HN 1797, 63). From 1799 on, the definition is basically final, although the formulation significantly remains somewhat uncertain and equivocal ("the so-called", "or"): "the Caucasian race has to be assumed as the so-called progenitor or intermediate race" (HN 1799, 64).

It is noteworthy that the concept of progenitor race defines the Caucasian race in terms of descent, namely in fundamentally genealogical terms, while the concept of *Mittel-Rasse* defines it in morphological and comparative terms. Blumenbach likely deemed these two approaches to converge and, therefore, to be equivalent; however, in the theoretical horizon laid down by his idea of nature (which was still rooted in eighteenth century thought), this equivalence cannot persist without generating contradictions or calling into question the general theoretical framework. If, indeed, nature is a continuum of shades, against which every distinction is arbitrary (BN 1790, 81), then every classification – even more so, that of the most plastic species, which is the most prone to degeneration – does not count as mirror of nature, but only as a modelling based on the perception and typification of some particularly significant instances. This is also what Blumenbach maintains in his own classification in the context of his own natural history. However, when a component of the classification is not only an intermediate model between two extremes, but is also, because of its intermediate position, the concrete, historical, and natural point of departure of the equally concrete, historical, and natural process of 'degeneration' of the human species, then one may well wonder whether the continuum of history has not been made to be discrete and the classification is still only typological – which is to ask whether or to what extent the relation between typology and genealogy is still solidly grounded theoretically and methodologically. This issue

signals not only a theoretical and methodological difficulty, but also an historical transition between two eras and between two different ways of understanding and practicing natural history.

5. Skulls, Natural-Cultural Environments and Exemplarities: on the Ways of Illustrating Human Variety

The illustrations of the preceding section indicate how Blumenbach and his scientific enterprise were seen and represented during his life and in the history of anthropology: references to his craniological studies are dominant. Now I would like to conclude with other images concerning anthropological data taken from Blumenbach's writings. Among those illustrations, the Table II of the *Dissertation* in the third edition of 1795 [Figure 6] is probably the most famous and most frequently cited: it is a strictly typological and purely physical representation, consisting of only osteological objects, extracted from the anatomical context. We clearly see the status of the Caucasian race as the intermediate race by virtue of the harmony of proportions. This table commonly stands for the whole classification and anthropology of Blumenbach, but actually it aimed to illustrate not the five human varieties as such, but the five varieties of skulls which are the most enlightening research objects in the study of human variety (GH 1795, 198).
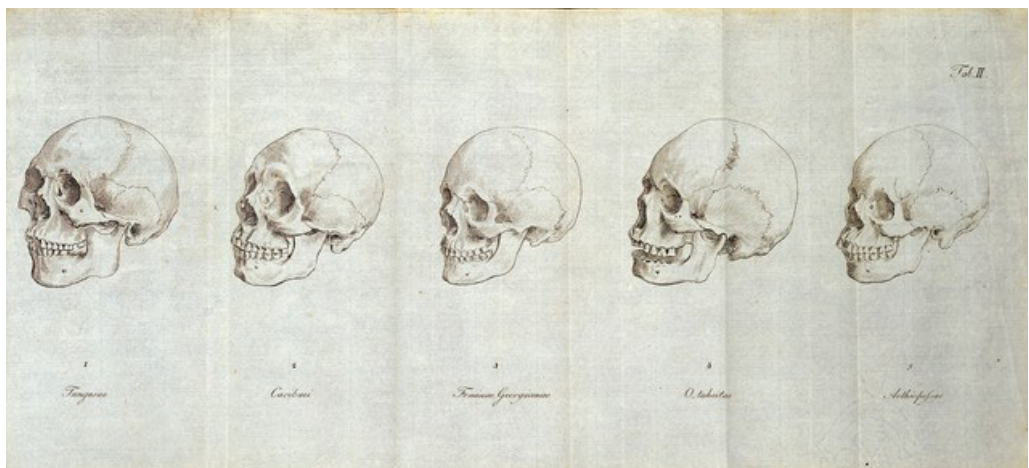
FIGURE 6 – J. F. Blumenbach: *De generis humani varietate nativa* (1795): Tab. II

Blumenbach's writings contain a further, far less known, yet more comprehensive image, in which craniological data are considered and included in the representation, though becoming altogether secondary: this image aims to illustrate the five principal varieties of mankind; it is the sequence of five vignettes in Part One of the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte* [Figs. 7.1-7.5][25]. Here the prototype of each single race is presented as a whole in its physical entirety as well as in its social dimension, defined essentially by its own natural and cultural context. Conditioned by today's predominant cultural paradigm of natural sciences, one might suppose that only the table has scientific value, while the vignettes are meant to be mere decorative illustrations. This assumption would be utterly false. Who commissioned these vignettes and why?

The epistolary of Blumenbach with his friend Dieterich, future editor of the *Beyträge,* and with Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki, the author of the vignettes, allows us to establish that Blumenbach conceived them as an essential part of his anthropological project, and that he took care of them in every detail, giving accurate instructions on the basis of this project. Indeed, on 17 December 1781, Blumenbach writes to Chodowiecki, showing a deference suggesting the prestige of the artist he approaches as well as attesting the esteem he wished to convey:

> Most illustrious, allow me to beg the help of your skillful hand, not for the mere beautification, but rather eminently for the explanation and clarification of a text that I publish with the publishing house of our Mr. Dietrich [*sic*] on the Natural History of the Human Race. I wish, in fact, to see drawn by you, most illustrious, in as many vignettes, the five main races or varieties into which I have divided the entire human race[26].

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[25]   Neither Schiebinger 2004[2] nor Bindman 2002, who are to my knowledge the only scholars aware of and commenting upon this sequence, could provide the reader with a correct interpretation of the vignettes.

[26]   BC 1, Nr. 176 (Blumenbach to Chodowiecki, Göttingen 17 December 1781), 289-290. Indeed, Blumenbach was not the only one at that time who believed that, in such circumstances – which is to say when the illustration was an eminent part of the intellectual project pursued by the author with his work – Chodowiecki was unique and irreplaceable. In a letter to Chodowiecki from Hamburg, dated September 18, 1779 (valuable also because it indicates the fame surrounding Chodowiecki as a "painter of the soul"), Joachim Heinrich Campe declares to be "about to get into print a *little psychology for children*, which would however still need his skillful hand to become what it must be. All that psychological knowledge, which children must already have before they can be taught religion and morals, I am in fact trying to make it so sensible and so intuitive that an eight-year-old child with normal abilities can grasp it. Images will be a means to their sensible rendering. But these images (if they really have to conform to the purpose) can be done, as far as I know, only by you, because what matters is that every feeling, every impulse, every passion that I describe, is expressed in the faces and positions of the figures so as to be recognizable to the point that, even if there were no text, they would be unmistakable" (Chodowiecki 1919, letter No. 359, pp. 260-263, here pp. 260-261).

FIGURE 7 (1.2.3.4.5)
J. F. Blumenbach:
Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte.
Erster Theil (1790):
Vignettes of the five human varieties
by D. Chodowiecki
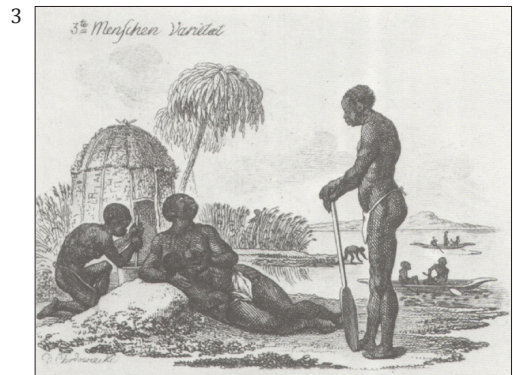
When sending to Dieterich the letter to forward to Chodowiecki, Blumenbach is even more adamant and categorical:

> The vignettes – he cuts short to avoid misunderstanding – are not a mere ornament to the book; rather, they are *essential* and *necessary* [*wesentlich notwendig*] and could not be satisfactorily drawn by either Ender or Meil, but only by Chodow[iecki][27].

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[27] BC 1, Nr. 177 (Blumenbach to Dieterich, Göttingen, 17 December 1781), 293.

The order in which these names are mentioned mirrors an ascendant order of esthetical values and professional prestige consistently confirmed by later critics, in this case perfectly in accord with the perception of those artists in their own time. Indeed, Johann August Roßmäsler (1752-1783), who died prematurely a year later, was a youngster already active on the market yet devoid of his own style, who took Chodowiecki as his model without having been his disciple[28]. In contrast, Georg Gustav Endtner (1754-1824) had a more solid professional profile, despite being a mediocre artist[29]. Endtner had already had ongoing collaborations with various publishing houses (among them Breitkopf), and had just been nominated teaching assistant to the Chair of Drawing at the Leipzig Academy where he had studied. For his commissioned works, academic standing, and cultural impact, Johann Wilhelm Meil (1733-1805) was a more highly regarded artist, and Blumenbach had already commissioned him for the frontispiece of *Über den Bildungstrieb*. At the time, he was well connected and well known in the Frederician political, academic, and cultural environment, as one can infer from his collaborations with the royal porcelain factory, the Prussian court theater, and the artists involved in decorating the new castle of Sans-souci on the one hand, and with several writers on the other. Meil, who today is considered the main codifier of Prussian Anacreontic and the "appropriate book illustrator of Frederician Enlightenment", made a contribution that was "crucial to the establishment of the drawing style inspired by the French tradition, without however arriving at the popular-bourgeois realism of a [...] Chodowiecki"[30]. Meil was nominated Rector of the drawing class at the Berlin Academy of Fine arts in 1783, and then became the Academy's director at Chodowiecki's death, in 1801. Compared with Chodowiecki, to whom he had taught the art of engraving, Meil was however less original and innovative: in addition to remaining tied to the stylistic conventions of French ornamentation, he worked with an allegorical "limited group of elements", selecting "according to the baroque principle of the emblem books, single elements full of symbolic significance", that he then, "put together" in continuous variations[31].

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[28]   See the entry "Roßmäsler" in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 1889, Vol. 29, *Rodde-v.Ruesch*, pp. 267-268.

[29]   To evaluate his distance from Chodowiecki, see Kirves 2012, 570. Comparing Chodowiecki's 1779 *Kunst Kenner* original with the copy made by Endtner, Kirves points out the latter's lack of creativity and the woodenness and inexpressiveness of his execution in light of the mastery and effectiveness exhibited by Chodowiecki, "painter of the soul" (*ibid.*) in his expressive rendering of the moods and psychological situations of the characters.

[30]   See Deuter 1990, 653, which also provides a synthetic formulation of Meil's aesthetic parable in the various phases of his artistic production.

[31]   Schumann 1999, 65-88, particularly 69-72.

At this point, outlining in detail the life and work of a much more complex and famous author such as Chodowiecki – who has been the subject of so many partial studies and monographies regarding his technique and aesthetics, as well as about the sociology and history of art and culture – would occupy too much space and would become somewhat superfluous[32]. The son of a Polish merchant of noble ancestry and a Swiss Huguenot, a man perfectly integrated into the French Protestant community and the French-derived Masonic community of Berlin, Chodowiecki had served an apprenticeship in commerce and had a non-academic artistic education, reaching success as an engraver in a sudden and sensational way at the end of the 1760s. From that moment, his fame and business steadily increased and consolidated, among other reasons due to the series on *Minna von Barnhelm*[33], with which he had renewed the calendar illustration of his times (he was also "principal illustrator" (Busch 1997, 77) of the *Göttinger Taschencalender* of Lichtenberg, published by Dietrich) through the representation of dramatic and contemporary subjects, and thanks to his collaboration to two cultural enterprises extremely representative of that historical moment: Lavater's physiognomy, for whom he illustrated the *Physiognomische Fragmente*[34], and Basedow's pedagogy, for whom he edited the *Elementarwerk*[35].

When Blumenbach approaches him, Chodowiecki is certainly the most sought after, acclaimed and lucrative engraver in Germany[36]. However, the reason Blumenbach wants him and no other is theoretical. Chodowiecki dedicated his art to the principle of imitation of nature, and was acclaimed for his ability to show the interaction between the individual, corporeal expressiveness and the natural or social context of action. Thus he could provide Blumenbach the greatest guarantee of intellectual and aesthetic affinity. The vignettes for the *Beyträge* were commissioned precisely to illustrate the doctrine of human varieties as products of the interaction between the natural and the cultural, between specific natural traits (as shown by physical anthropology and geography) and specific cultural and social traits as identified by the new emerging science, ethnology.

Unfortunately, the *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte* have not been much studied by the scholars of Blumenbach. Thus, no one has ever examined properly the

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[32]   As a first introduction, see Bernt 2013.

[33]   It is the focus of Kirves 2012.

[34]   See in this regard at least Kirchner 1997.

[35]   Schmitt 2007 and Schäfer 2013.

[36]   See Selwyn 1997, 15: "in his requests for a fee, Chodowiecki always had a real self-awareness; in particular, one could not overlook the economic value of his illustrations […]. That […] they were more than favorable to the sale of the books and calendars that they embellished is demonstrated by numerous letters from authors and publishers who were willing to pay almost any price for them, and were very eager to pay half of his requested fee as an advance."

relations between the sequence of the *Beyträge* and the Tables of the dissertation. Two answers are possible: either the Tables move beyond the vignettes and replace them, or the tables and vignettes are two faces of the same coin, two complementary ways to work on the same object. It seems to me for several reasons that the second answer is correct: first – from a philological point of view – when Blumenbach edits the first section of the *Beyträge* for the second edition, he corrects and updates his work in different ways (e.g., the origin of basalt, teleology, methodology, the classification itself), but feels no need to eliminate the vignettes. Second – and this is a theoretical remark – the tables and vignettes exemplify two essentially different types of approach to anthropology: one focuses on the causes of 'degeneration', the other is based on craniological investigation.

In Blumenbach these two types of approach coexist; a third sequence of images reinforces this assumption [Figs. 8-12]. The text from which it is taken, the *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände* of 1796, is undoubtedly a publication having a scientific character and purpose; this is corroborated by Blumenbach's mentions of it in his academic text *par excellence*, the *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte*, where the *Abbildungen* are referred to as an apparatus

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FIGURE 8 – J. F. Blumenbach: *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*, 1796-1810-1830. Feodor Iwanowitsch. Head representing the Mongolian race

FIGURE 9 – J. F. Blumenbach, *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*, 1796-1810-1830. Tayadaneega. Head representing the American race

FIGURE 10 – J. F. Blumenbach, *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*, 1810-1830[2]. Mahommed Jumla. Head representing the Caucasian race

FIGURE 11 – J. F. Blumenbach, *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*, 1796-1810-1830. Omai. Head representing the Malaysian race

FIGURE 12 – J. F. Blumenbach, *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*, 1796-1810-1830. Jaco[bus] Eliza [Elisa] Jo[hannes] Capitein. Head representing the Ethiopian race

Tayadaneega.

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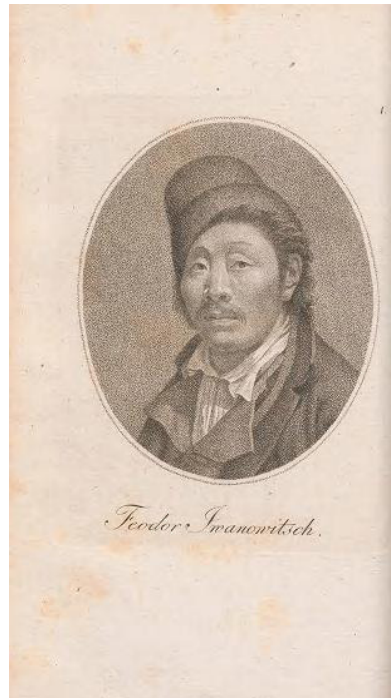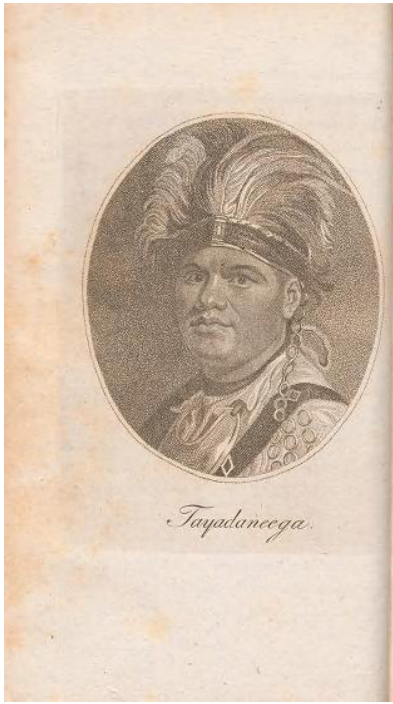
Mahommed Jumla.

10

11

12
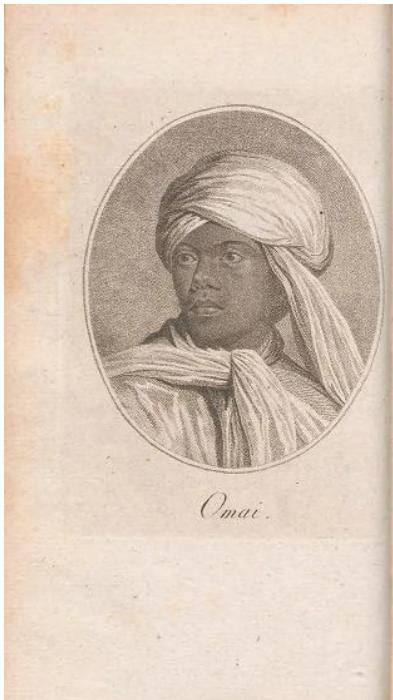
Omai.

Jac. Jo. Eliza Capitein.

of scientific sources[37]. What is more, the Preface to the *Abbildungen* itself directly attests to this, since the book is clearly presented here as a repertoire of epistemic objects set in continuity with the doctrine of the relation between direct and indirect knowledge[38], which we know from the image of the book of nature and the symbolic books. In this capacity, the *Abbildungen* serve both as a text complementing the natural history handbook, and supporting generally research activities within the naturalistic field. In particular, the epistemic objects of anthropological value in the *Abbildungen* – that is to say the so-called "model heads representative and characteristics of the five main races" – constitute a convergence of: 1) physical foundations of classification (the shape of the face and of the skull); 2) cultural variables of the so-called human degeneration or mutability (represented here, excepting only the so-called Negro, by the clothing and stylization of the face of the populations included within the racial types); and 3) humanistic principles of Blumenbach's physical anthropology (equal dignity and potential of all five human varieties, expressed through the choice of representing the five main races through models of virtues and talents, and figures of great men of art: painters, lifestyle: gentlemen, science: theologians, and politics: diplomats, army commanders). The correspondence between these real life models and the craniological models depicted in the tables of the dissertation is explicitly stated[39]. Failing to show the natural environmental variable of degeneration, which could not be divorced from the *Beyträge* vignettes, does not mean omitting climate as a cause of 'degeneration' – being rather a direct consequence of the will to faithfully reproduce the epistemic object, which is here a pre-existing portrait from the outset. Blumenbach's focus on combining physical and cultural data is however apparent and can lead to restrictive interpretations.

To conclude, it seems to me that Blumenbach didn't resolve all the ambivalent aspects of his doctrine – the inclusion of the category of beauty as a defining trait of the Caucasian race, the lack of a clear distinction between history as description and history as genealogy, or the opposition between nominal and genealogical classification. But '800 racism cleared all these contradictions by unilaterally developing only certain aspects of his doctrine. As paradigmatically attested by Lawrence's lectures on natural history – a classical text of nineteenth century British anthropology written by a translator and admirer of Blumenbach – Blumenbach's theoretical lacks and ambivalence in defining the status and properties of the Caucasian race favored a unilateral, radically racist interpretation

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[37]   See for instance HN 1807, xii, 67-69, 73-74.

[38]   AG (*Vorbericht*, unnumbered pages).

[39]   AG (*Characteristische Musterköpfe von Männern aus den 5 Hauptrassen im Menschengeschlecht*, unnumbered pages).

of his racial classification and anthropology (Lawrence 1822, 290-292). Lawrence integrally naturalizes the notion of Caucasian beauty and by analogical inferences he categorically deduces moral and spiritual properties from physical data. Physical beauty as physical perfection now is made into an objective – physical and indisputable – foundation for absolute moral and spiritual superiority. This grounds a racial hierarchy and justifies imperial and colonial forms of domination and exploitation. All races can now be consequently derived from the Caucasian one according to a principle of decadence.

References

ABBREVIATIONS

Works by Blumenbach:

AG
J.F. Blumenbach, *Abbildungen naturhistorischer Gegenstände*. Göttingen: Dieterich 1796 (1810, 1830).

BC 1
F.W.P. Dougherty, *The Correspondence of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*. Vol. 1: *1773-1782, Letters 1-230*. Revised, Augmented and Edited by N. Klatt. Göttingen: Norbert Klatt Verlag, 2006.

BN
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BN 1790
J.F. Blumenbach, *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte. Erster Theil*. Göttingen: Dieterich.

BN 1806
J.F. Blumenbach, *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte. Erster Theil* (zweite Auflage). Göttingen: Dieterich.

CSN
J.F. Blumenbach, *Contributi alla storia naturale*. A cura di M. Marino. Con una prefazione di G. Barsanti. Milano: Mimesis, 2014.

HN (publishing year depending on the different editions of the work)
J. F. Blumenbach, *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte*. Göttingen: Dieterich (first edition: 1779, twelfth edition: 1830).

GH 1795
J.F. Blumenbach, *De generis humani varietate nativa*. Third edition. Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht.

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— 1983b

"Das Menschenbild in der modernen Anthropologie". In: Id., *Philosophische Anthropologie und Handlungslehre* (*Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 4). Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 165-174;

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Schiebinger 2004[2]

   L. Schiebinger, *Nature's Body. Gender in the Making of Moderne Science*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press [first edition: Boston: Beacon Press, 1993].

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3

How the Evolutive Continuity of Cognition Challenges 'Us/Them' Dichotomies

CINZIA CHIANDETTI

1. 'Us/Them' – Mankind

One's social identity depends on an ensemble of group memberships, like nationality, religion, age, language, and gender, to make some examples. Such attributes are independent of one another, but often perceived as correlated by virtue of a cognitive bias that can give rise to stereotyping. Although stereotyping might be a good strategy when used to assimilate either new or a lot of information, it might slip into prejudice, thus paving the way to ingroup/outgroup distinctions, which in turn suffer from a negative orientation towards the outgroup, and a positive one toward the ingroup. This is a universal human tendency: humans distinguish and differentiate people depending on socioeconomic status or ethnicity, for example, in which the discriminanda is "compared to one own's" *vs.* "different from one own's". In other words, us *vs.* them, with "us" being a very heterogeneous set of elements with maximal good qualities, and "them" being a more homogeneous set of undifferentiated elements paired with negative features (Allport, 1954).

But how is it possible to study ingroup/outgroup issues? Psychological investigations face the obvious problem of open self-reports, because these are susceptible to social desirability effects. One test that has been devised to

overcome this problem is the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which has been repeatedly used as a measure of racism and other ingroup/outgroup biases (Greenwald *et al.*, 1998). In humans, the IAT detects the strength of an automatic association between mental representations (like White and good) by using an objective behavioural measure, namely the response time in pressing a button when we are asked to categorize words and names (like names used for White people with respect to names used for Black people) alongside with pressing a button in response to pleasant *vs.* unpleasant words. Research has shown that White people are usually faster to press the button (i.e., to take a decision in making a judgment) when the same button must be pressed to categorize a word like "Black" and an adjective like "unpleasant", thus demonstrating that cognitive associations are present although not available to awareness.

Of course, also the IAT shows intrinsic shortcomings, which are related mostly to what is exactly measured with this test (i.e., the cultural knowledge rather than the prejudices), and whether it reveals real behavioural discriminations rather than mental attitudes without a true effect on social conduct. However, it has been shown that affective and semantic implicit associations can be separated, and people may not be able to deliberately control their prejudices[1].

In addition, what we do know is that because ingroup/outgroup divisions are arbitrary, they are subject to continuous changes: quite easily an element can be shifted from one category to another, and post-hoc justifications are used to explain the fluid modification of the inclusion criteria or to accommodate exceptions within the ingroup members. Changes are related to previous experiences, and can be easily manipulated. It has been shown that we are fast and accurate in detecting own-race faces by early visual analysis (Huges *et al.*, 2019). This may have effects on other categorizations (and important impactful social implications) related to the fact that it is easier to extend negative experiences to entities that we perceive as interchangeable. However, much depends on the expertise (the extent to which we are exposed to other-race faces) and can be influenced by external cues (like the colour of a t-shirt) that are independent of race – if better predictors of racial social groups (Pietraszewski *et al.*, 2014).

Nevertheless, over the centuries the 'us/them' distinctions have repeatedly supported racist behaviours, so that, for example, Europeans advocated they supremacy as group, and exploited it to subjugate minority populations. Darwin argued that the cognitive difference is minimal between tribal and "civilized" populations, but his claims have been often misunderstood and misused in support of racist theories. Indeed, the concept of contingency, the fortuitousness of geographical and ecological pressures that are fundamental

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[1]   For a review on the issue, see Amodio, 2008.

in shaping populations' abilities, went overlooked. Not all world populations, for instance, had the urge or the possibility to start agriculture, either because animal abundance and flourishing wild plants would suffice, or because it was not possible to tame the animals available in the area. This, in turn, modeled a series of differences related to the practice of agriculture, as a reduced presence of wild animals due to intense hunting, but also an increased risk to get infectious diseases from domesticated species which, in a domino effect, implied a relative immunity to illnesses that resulted in lethal epidemics to populations of new territories. The technological development required to manage agriculture along with all necessary activities to manage early exchanges, entailed a corresponding better organized society which represented a greater advantage for Europeans when they reached new corners of the World (Diamond, 2001). These aspects alone are sufficient to explain the Europeans' success, without the need to invoke any intellectual superiority, as no innate biological factor would confer to White people any supremacy, whereas different continental environments promoted a different fate. Still, cultural racism persists, probably rooted in known cognitive biases. One of such biases is represented by the mental shortcut called *availability heuristic*, which relies on cases that come easily to the mind (Chapman, 1967). The fact that such cases can be easily recalled is assumed to be proof of their relevance, and thus weighed more in order to make decisions, evaluate situations or people. Moreover, human beings have the tendency to remember more supportive than opposing evidence, which is a *confirmation bias* that increases the strength of the 'us/them' dichotomy[2]. Such biases, along with the use of subjective categories, filter experiences, valuing some more than others and determining the kind of features that will be considered as relevant.

The tendency to treat individuals categorically is so inevitable that we may think that this process is hardwired in our cognitive system. In agreement with this possibility, our five-month-old infants prefer people talking in their parents' language, with native accents (Kinzler *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, three-month-old infants, with minimal prior experience with other-race individuals, prefer faces looking similar to their own ethnic group (Kelly *et al.*, 2005). If this tendency to categorize Us *vs.* Them is so pervasive and precocious, which seems to be a precursor for a race-based bias, one might ask which could be its evolutionary reasons. An explored possibility is that infants need to acquire information. This drive to learn would guide attention toward social partners that more frequently would convey relevant information, which *per se* would provide a survival advantage. By means of exposure and imprinting to specific caregivers, infants will preferentially attend to own-race adults (Begus *et al.*, 2016), an asymmetry

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[2]   For a review see Nickerson, 1998.

that would propel the development of intergroup bias. This fits well with the idea of a "natural pedagogy" proposed by Csibra and Gergely (2011), which assumes that for the hominine lineage an important adaptation has been the evolution of mechanisms favouring cultural transmission. Mechanisms of this kind would explain why no differences in child-rearing practices of different human cultures are detectable.

However, as a matter of fact all organisms pragmatically need to order an otherwise chaotic nature: making dichotomies to include entities in certain categories and not others, i.e., distinguishing members from nonmembers, preys from predators, is essential in learning, in making predictions, and in taking decision, in other words, is essential to survival. We can then trace back and ground the need for classifications in more basic ecological forces. This is not surprising considering that, during the evolutionary time, for adaptive reasons, the function becomes hardwired in the brain in response to specific and constant environmental features or pressures (Spencer, 1855; Lorenz, 1941). The comparative psychology perspective, focusing on data obtained by examining the behaviour of other animal species, helps to shed light on this matter. We know from ethological observations that antecedents of ingroup/outgroup divisions can be recognized in nonhuman primates, since they are capable of bloody retaliations against neighboring groups (Wilson *et al.*, 2014). Where does this processing ability come from? All living creatures are predisposed to classify experiences in discrete categories in order at least to divide stimuli between familiar and novel ones. When elements are limited in number, their categorization can depend on how each separate item has been memorized on the basis of its perceptual features. By contrast, for a larger set of elements, an economic strategy is that of memorizing a specific feature common to the exemplars of the same kind. This would be in part similar to creating a concept: we can recognize and then label a certain thing as a chair even when it displays very ample local variations. Hence, it does not matter if the exemplar has or not the armrests, has a short or tall backrest, is a single-form Verner Panton "Stacking Chair" or an evocative "Butterfly Chair", as in all cases it would still belong to the same category, "chair".

Experimental observations conducted in the laboratory demonstrated that pigeons, for instance, can be trained to discriminate two-dimensional images of trees, not by remembering every single image, but rather by learning to select as "trees" also instances never seen before. The pioneering study was presented by Herrnstein in 1985 and, since then, the finding has been replicated several times, using different categories, and including "exotic" categorizations like that between distinct art movements, asking pigeons to correctly attribute paintings to Cubism *vs.* Impressionism (Watanabe *et al.*, 1995). Pigeons master successfully the task, but although concept learning is made possible by perceptual similarity,

this is not the only way to achieve categorization. Concept learning is also based on the creation of arbitrary and associative functional equivalences on the basis of a common event or outcome, by the relationship between objects that requires a comparison – and its status will change accordingly –, and by relations between relations, a second order relational concept with an abstract connection between classes of stimuli. Nonhuman animals have proved to be able to discriminate objects and events on the basis of all levels of conceptual learning[3], and, most notably, even invertebrates like bees possess the same ability[4]. Such an organization of incoming information allows extreme flexibility in behaviours as, for instance, when it helps to decide whether an action has to be taken or not, thus saving energy and, sometimes, life.

Let us consider female monkeys, who can recognize their babies from the voice; they turn the head more frequently toward the acoustic source (a hidden loudspeaker) when they hear the cry of their own baby. This response has been exploited to investigate, in semi-natural conditions, whether monkeys can reason about social relations between components of different family groups. When females of vervet monkeys are presented with the cry of other baby-monkeys, they will look at the mother of the crying baby whenever the female is present but unaware of and/or un-responsive to the cries (Cheney & Seyfarth, 1980). In a similar fashion, long-tailed macaques tested in the laboratory proved to be able to associate the image of an offspring to the picture of the mother presented before, with respect to the image of a different baby of the same sex and age (Dasser, 1988), thus easily recomposing correctly each mother-infant dyad. In a similar vein, nonhuman primates discriminate kinship relationships also in cases of redirected aggressiveness and reconciliation. In both situations, the response, of either attack or grooming, is extended to the closest associates to the aggressor (Cheney & Seyfarth, 1990a). Moreover, if an individual has the possibility to eavesdrop on a member of its own family fighting against an individual of a different family, it increases the probability of attacking a different member of the same new family, suggesting that the choice is guided by a judgment of the family relations and the relative dominance rank that exists among others in their group (Cheney & Seyfarth, 1990b).

In a fashion comparable to what has been observed in human infants, it has been shown that naïve monkeys prefer to look at individuals of their own species, and also that their treatment of the observed images depends on exposure and expertise of the members of the other category (Humphrey, 1974). Indeed, monkeys first distinguish between specific individuals within the category

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[3]   For a review see Zentall *et al.*, 2008.

[4]   For a review see Avarguès-Weber & Giurfa, 2013.

"monkey", whereas making only raw distinctions between specific individuals of other categories (like domestic animals), and then after prolonged exposure to images of the new category, they end up making fine distinctions also between individuals belonging to the new category, becoming able to tell each of them apart. Their categorization depends on the improvement of discrimination made possible by mere exposure, and such process affects the way in which they remember and treat the objects.

Thus, comparative results lead to conclude that the ingroup/outgroup bias is independent of human language, and does not rely on human social categories like religion or race. Rather, it has more to do with phylogenetically ancient mechanisms allowing early humans to reason about coalitions and alliances by using simple core categories: a cognitive architecture tailored by natural selection to augment our survival chances.

2. 'Us/Them'– Animals

How much would the general public be willing to accept that comparative research, like that conducted on pigeons and monkeys discussed above, can explain our human nature?

A further dichotomy within the 'us/them' division, indeed, concerns the distinction between Us, the human beings, *vs.* Them, the animal species. Only rarely people think of themselves as an animal; rather, they consider the mankind a living creature which is distinct from, and preferably better than, all other animals[5]. In such representation, it is evident the *Umwelt*[6] in which we are stuck, as our mind mandatorily processes information within the inescapable boundaries of our mindset. It neluctably confines us in a specific cognitive and sensory framework. Part of what we can call the 'anthropocentric' view comes from the idea that animals act like automata. Animals would be machines that work on the basis of known mathematical principles and mechanical rules[7]. Despite this machine-like nature, it would still be possible for animals to cope well with the environmental challenges, even though rigid responses to stimuli do not allow any flexible behaviour. Hence, nonhuman animals would be apt to live in a predisposed way and without any 'ratio' – *logos* or *rational soul*. In this sense, the (im)possibility to choose how to respond and behave is an operational

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[5]   See *supra* Chapter 1: Wolfgang Proß's contribution to this volume. *Ed. note*.

[6]   Uexküll 1957 pp. 5-80.

[7]   See for example *Le Canard Digérateur*, the automation of digestion in the form of a duck by Jacques de Vaucanson in 1739, France.

criterion that helps to differente human beings from the rest of the animal realm. In Descartes' terms, the *res cogitans* represents the supremacy of the human being over beasts' limited range of instinctual responses to environmental challenges[8]. This Cartesian approach is echoed in Kant's 1784 definition of the human being as the only rational creature on earth: "Reason in a creature is a faculty of extending the rules and aims of the use of all its powers far beyond natural instinct, and it knows no boundaries to its projects" (Kant 2007, 109).

Part of the anthropocentric view stems from the *Great chain of beings*, or the Aristotelean *Scala Naturae*, which classifies inferior and superior animals, with only Angels and God placed above humans, the pinnacle of cognitive complexity. In the linear organization of the organisms on the ladder, each category can be divided even further, with animals subdivided on the basis of features like domestication, ability to move and sense, and so forth. This would show that, as for the ingroup/outgroup classification discussed above, the shaded borders of each category allow a continuous shift of the elements depending on situational factors. However, the ladder-like view of nonhuman animals on the part of nonspecialists has been repeatedly experimentally confirmed (Batt, 2009; Urquiza-Haas & Kotrschal, 2015). Organisms are commonly classified on the basis of increased complexity both in terms of zoological structure (a worm

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[8]   In his *Discourse on the Method* (1637) Descartes wrote: "I made special efforts to show that if any such machines had the organs and outward shape of a monkey or of some other animal that lacks reason, we should have no means of knowing that they did not possess entirely the same nature as these animals; whereas if any such machines bore a resemblance to our bodies and imitated our actions as closely as possible for all practical purposes, we should still have two very certain means of recognizing that they were not real men. The first is that they could never use words, or put together other signs, as we do in order to declare our thoughts to others. For we can certainly conceive of a machine so constructed that it utters words, and even utters words which correspond to bodily actions causing a change in its organs (e.g. if you touch it in one spot it asks what you want of it, if you touch it in another it cries out that you are hurting it, and so on). But it is not conceivable that such a machine should produce different arrangements of words so as to give an appropriately meaningful answer to whatever is said in its presence, as the dullest of men can do. Secondly, even though such machines might do some things as well as we do them, or perhaps even better, they would inevitably fail in others, which would reveal that they were acting not through understanding but only from the disposition of their organs. For whereas reason is a universal instrument which can be used in all kinds of situations, these organs need some particular disposition for each particular action; hence it is for all practical purposes impossible for a machine to have enough different organs to make it act in all the contingencies of life in the way in which our reason makes us act" (Descartes 1986: 139-140). Note that according to Descartes, *mens humana illorum* [scil. of the animal] *corda non pervadit* and we could conjecture about the existence of an animal's rational mind only from external signs and empirical evidence (Descartes' Letter to More, February 5, 1649; AT V, 276-277). Descartes' notion of *mens* is characterized by the spontaneous capacity to making use of general signs for universal ideas*.* To deny the spontaneity and abstraction of rational thinking to animals did not mean to consider animals as "bare machines" devoid of sensibility (Locke's charge to Descartes in *Essay*, Book II, Chap. XI, §11). Indeed Descartes ascribed *sensus* to them (AT V, 278). On the issue of language see Descartes' Letter to the Marquise of Newcastle of November 23, 1646 (AT IV, 573-576). *Ed. note*.

is simpler than a fish) and in terms of psychological complexity (a crayfish is not able to perform the same behaviours as our cat). There is no question that worms have a minimal number of neurons with respect to humans: the nematode *Caenorhabditis elegans* has exactly 302 neurons in its nervous system, whereas our brains contain nearly 86 billion. But how much do these numbers tell about a successful *cogitatio*? *C. elegans* is perfectly apt in its environment, showing all forms of individual learning, benefitting from experience and from contextual information, to the point that it can be argued that "instead of asking 'what can a worm learn?' it might be better to ask 'what cannot a worm learn?'" (Rankin, 2004, R617). The nematode has been of paramount importance as a model system for the study of genetics and developmental biology, but nowadays it is also used to study important issues within the fields of neurobiology and cognitive sciences. However, the general public would never suspect this, likely because it is extremely difficult to reckon worms' abilities: the worms are not even under our eyes (the entire *C. elegans* is about 1 mm in length) and their responses are too different in shape from the form of responses we display in comparable situations. Anthropomorphic lenses augment *anthropocentric* positions.

Note, however, that this should not imply any "anthropodenial" (de Waal, 1999, 258), i.e., any aprioristic negation of commonalities between human and nonhuman animals. Sometimes, when one applies too rigidly an objective description of nonhuman animals' overt behaviour this produces a descriptive artifact that misses the true nature of the observed response. The Morgan's canon (considered to be the psychological Ockham's razor), is a principle of parsimony formulated to avoid the fallacious temptation of describing nonhuman animals' behaviour with higher-order forms of cognition when more primitive ones satisfy what observed. However, it conceives a corollary to point out that "there is nothing really wrong with complex interpretations if an animal species has provided independent signs of high intelligence" (De Waal 2001, 62).

The beliefs that evolution implies linear progress and growth in complexity, and that higher mental capacities are linked to increased complexity persist even though no one today would believe that the computational power of a computer depends on its size (Chittka & Niven, 2009). Indeed, bees for instance, have proven capable of quite sophisticated processes[9] from observational learning to the mastering of relational concepts, as discussed above (Avarguès-Weber *et al.*, 2012), which is the prerequisite for classifying objects and events – and very likely the basis of 'us/them' divisions.

The problem with the naïve eye of ordinary people is that they 'reason' showing several fallacies. Let us take dogs. We admire those dogs' behaviours

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[9]   For a review see Chittka, 2017.

that we easily recognize: a dog that follows our ostensive signals (like the gesture of pointing or the gaze oriented in a certain direction) thus showing a basic mind-reading ability, something that for instance apes are not able to do, is easy to acknowledge because it is, anthropomorphically speaking, what we as humans usually do in the same circumstances. But we forget that dogs fail miserably in other simple tasks, like bringing back a stick if they have to pass through a fence. They are not able to orient correctly the stick hold with the muzzle and almost inevitably they quit very soon any further attempt to solve the task, whereas at the same time they are extremely good at looking you pleading for a help. Other species excel in the very same physical problem, as in the case of the squirrel, who can turn around the obstacle without hesitation. In addition, a squirrel can lessen the leash and retrieve some food placed out of reach, whereas dogs tested in the same condition insist to reach straightforward the reward without being able to momentarily go away from it to reach the food container via a different route in a second moment (Barash, 1977). Such a difference depends on the evolutionary pressures that shaped differently the two species (one escaping from predators, the other communicating with us) but these abilities have barely anything to do with a "general intelligence" that could authorize us to order them as one more or less intelligent than the other and more or less intelligent than other species. We also forget that dogs live in a world very different from ours, which is made of smells, and have a spatial mental representation that we cannot even imagine (again, we are in a different *Umwelt*).

There are many instances of nonhuman animals that are plainly superior to humans. For example, even after extended training human beings cannot compare to chimpanzees in eidetic memory (Inoue & Matsuzawa, 2007) or to pigeons in mental rotation (Hollard & Delius, 1982). Arguably, the neural tissue enrolled in eidetic memory or mental rotation in nonhuman animals is recruited for linguistic abilities in the human being. Chimpanzees, pigeons, and humans, each evolved unique abilities depending on the specific need of their evolutionary niche. For humans, the manipulation of symbols has been far more important than being able to remember visual details of a scene or mentally rotate the tridimensional shape of objects, but each of these abilities is an evolutionary adaptation, human language included. In this sense, Descartes missed an important aspect in his claim about the discontinuity between humans and animals (see more on language in Section 3)[10]. In Searle's words "It is a mistake to treat language as if it were not part of human biology" (Searle 2007, 8). Moreover, this also implies that an animal may appear less capable than others in a domain by virtue of an excellent capability in another domain.

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[10]   See *infra*, Chapter 12: Susana Onega's contribution to this volume. *Ed. note.*

Even most notably, the ladder-like representation falters in front of results showing that nonhuman animals understand the consequence of their behaviours, because when the value of the goal changes, the behaviour changes as well. A sort of "mental experiment" maintaining the presence of logic in nonhuman animals was used by Sextus Empiricus in his *Outlines of Phyrronism* by reporting that Chrysippus argued that, after having chased an animal and having missed which way the animal went in front of a trivium, the dog would decide which path to follow by sniffing at the first and the second road and then going directly to the third way without further smelling: "The animal went either by this road, or by that, or by the other: but it did not go by this or that, therefore he went the other way". The belief that the dog has "*incredibilis ad investigandum sagacitas* [...] *tanta alacritas in venando*"[11] is an ancient one, and very likely the special logical status of the dogs can be ascribed both to the similarity of behaviours with our responses, and shaped by the domestication (as the ability to interpret the ostensive signals discussed above), and to the need for the dog to understand us and to be understood, in other words to the social pressures that modeled it in our image and likeness[12].

However, the first experimental demonstration in support of rational animals emerged in the 1980s from studies with rats trained with the paradigm of reinforcer devaluation (Adams & Dickinson, 1981). The rats learned to press a lever in order to obtain a food reward and, after the devaluation of the reward (by chemically inducing a mild stomachache in the presence of the reward), they significantly reduced the number of lever pressures to obtain the reward in a later session, thus showing that they expected that the lever-press action had a certain outcome (and should be avoided). If the animals were automata and their pressure of the lever was a mere response automatically elicited by virtue of previous training, then the simple presence of the lever should elicit the pressure response, but this was not the case. Such an elegant and seminal experiment demonstrates that nonhuman animals can respond flexibly to a changing environment.

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[11]   Cicero 1972, 2.158.

[12]   See Sorabji 1993, 86-89: "Some Stoics [...] denied rationality to animals, but without ascribing their skills to unconscious instinct. There was a certain consciousness of their own persons, liabilities and powers which nature had implanted in them, but which none the less fell short of rationality [...] Why is Chrysippus' dog at the crossroads only virtually reasoning (*dunamei logizesthai*)? It cannot be urged that since the Stoics deny words and concepts to animals, an animal cannot have an 'if-then' appearance [...] Why then do animals not infer? The Stoics' best answer might be that they define reason (*logos*) as a collection of concepts, and they deny that animals have any". See on the point also Floridi 1997 and Ferrini 2002. *Ed. note.*

3. Core Cognitive Continuum

It is easy to list another series of ingenuous obstacles at play when we sort humans from nonhuman animals. The first stringent sign of irrationality attributed to nonhuman animals is that they cannot speak. This is something that animates the minds of both common people and thinkers, like Descartes and Wittgenstein, who based the idea of a rational life on the extensive use of symbols. No matter that most of the species have their own language, whereby they use differential signals to refer to food, or to alert their mates when a predator is approaching either via sky or via ground. The point about language is twofold. On the one side, it is true that nonhuman species did not evolve a communicative system with properties like those that very likely make human language unique (an example is the syntactic recursion (Hauser *et al.*, 2002)[13]. Still, antecedents of human language are recognizable in strategies used by other species (Fitch, 2014), and one should ask how much is language responsible for the representation of the world we reconstruct in our minds. To say it with Wittgenstein "If a lion could speak, we couldn't understand him" (Wittgenstein 2008, 190)[14], an idea that Nagel applied to bats when wondering "What is it like to be a bat" (1974) and again refers to the already mentioned *Umwelt*: what it feels like to be a dog, a spider, a cow? All creatures possess senses adapted to their own lifestyle, inaccessible to us, although we share the same environment.

Despite the heterogeneous and disparate perceptual experiences, none is capable of producing a better grasp of reality. All animals, humans included, can only live in a "perceived word" recreated by the brain on the basis of the information collected through the senses; however, although we all live in a representation of the world, such representation is sufficiently realistic to allow the organism to interact with the environment and to face survival challenges. We are all prisoners of the limitation of our cognitive system, and to the best of our knowledge humans are the only species that can share impressions about this world throughout the verbal language; whether the language *influences* our thoughts (a soft version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis) is a matter of debate[15]. Then, the possibility exists that, if Wittgenstein's lion could talk, we would

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[13]   For a different perspective on the issue see Pinker & Jackendoff, 2005.

[14]   By contrast, according to Descartes, we should be able to understand a speaking lion: "And we must not confuse speech with the natural movements which express passions and which can be imitated by machines as well as by animals. Nor should we think, like some of the ancients, that the beasts speak, although we do not understand their language. For if that were true, then since they have many organs that correspond to ours, they could make themselves understood by us as well as by their fellows (Descartes 1985, 140-141). *Ed. note*.

[15]   For a review see Kay & Regier, 2006.

certainly understand him, but his mind would no longer be that of the real lion (Budiansky, 1998).

On the other hand, language could be essential to report our internal mental states, and this would, in turn, make it impossible to study nonhuman animals' cognition. Note, however, that infants at the preverbal age present the identical problem of being unable to respond verbally to our questions, or to let us know how they came up with a task solution. To circumvent this problem, developmental psychologists devised some paradigms to test their ability before the linguistic development – even a few moments after birth – discovering that babies possess intuitions about the surrounding environment and act accordingly. In some cases, the tests used with infants inspired comparative psychologists who adapted the same testing situations to other animal species. In this regard, Wittgenstein claimed also that animals and children live in a kind of eternal present. If this would hold true, planning for a future motivational state would be a major discontinuity between human and nonhuman animals. Many times this principle, the so-called Bischof-Köhler hypothesis, has been proposed in the field of comparative psychology[16]. Nowadays, we know that nonhuman animals are not stuck in a world made of one temporal dimension, but they can "mental time travel" in order to select the most appropriate behaviour to succeed in front of the specific occurrent challenge. By way of example, scrub jays are able to provision a compartment otherwise empty the day after or to provision with diversified items two different compartments insuring all kind of food to be available the next morning (Raby *et al.*, 2007); bonobos and orangutans can select and keep in a safe place a tool that will be useful in the future to grasp an out-of-reach bottle of fruit juice (Mulcahy & Call, 2006).

There is also a broad consensus on the fact that organisms have no built-in mental content at birth. The influential empiricist notion, of Lockean legacy[17], *tabula rasa* or blank slate (Pinker, 2002) deeply affects people's perception of 'our/their' intelligence. Experience and training would fill in an otherwise empty container: from a purely behaviourist stance, it has been proposed that

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[16]   For a review see Roberts, 2002.

[17]   As is well known, in his *Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (London: 1700⁴) Locke argued that all ideas comes from sensation or reflection by starting to suppose "the Mind to be [...] white Paper, void of all Characters, without any Ideas. How comes it to be furnshed?" (*Essay*, Book II, Chap. I, §2). He also uses the metaphor of the (human) Understanding as a closet wholly shut from light with only some little openings left: "That external and internal Sensations, are the only passages that I can find, of Knowledge, to the Understanding. these alone [...] are the Windows by which light is let into this *dark room*" (*ivi*, Book II, Chap. II, §17). Note that according to Locke "we cannot deny" animals to "have some reason", but only as to particular ideas "just as they receiv'd them from their Senses" (*ivi*, Book II, Chap. XI, § 11), though "the power of *Abstraction* is not at all in them" and they cannot make use of general signs for universal ideas (*ivi*, §10). *Ed. note.*

the behaviour of *all* animals (i.e., including that of humans) can be controlled and shaped throughout the manipulation of environmental factors, as claimed by behaviourism (Skinner, 1938). By appropriately using shaping procedures, nonhuman animals can display complex responses that are modelled by the trainer and really resemble human-like activities; however, soon after such chain of responses has been displayed, the animals' behaviours drift to instinctual species-specific responses, much more adapt to the context, demonstrating that there are patterns of behaviours which are innate and that guide animals' performance and learning (Breland & Breland, 1961). This observation is not limited to instincts in the strict sense of basic reactions to specific external stimuli; rather, it applies to higher forms of cognition coping with a set of ecological challenges underlying nearly all ecological niches. Indeed, animals must interact with other organisms, irrespective of whether they are conspecifics or preys and predators; they must sort living from non-living objects and anticipate the behaviour also of inanimate entities; they must navigate and re-orient in order to find resources and return to biologically relevant places; they must also take quantity-related decisions to detect the largest possibilities for foraging and least risks for rivals' attacks. All these abilities belong to a set of core predispositions that can be ascribed to four domain-specific systems with the following features: they are phylogenetically shared, ontogenetically early, independent from language, culture, and formal training, and at the basis of higher forms of cognitive abilities to the point that deficits in the set of core abilities would affect the typical development with direct consequences on higher abilities.

Almost two decades have elapsed since the proposal of the "core knowledge hypothesis" (Spelke, 2000) which, evolutionary speaking, emphasizes that natural selection prompted not just morphological changes, as we are used to think, but also mental traits variations. When Kant, echoing Leibniz[18], claimed that all our knowledge begins with but not derives from experience,

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[18]   In his *New Essay* Leibniz had stated the view, *contra* Locke (see *supra* note 17), of the *a priori* principles of certain knowledge actualized by experience in the following way: "Our disagreements concern points of some importance. There is the question whether the soul in itself is completely blank like a writing tablet on which nothing has yet been written – a *tabula rasa* – as Aristotle and the author of the *Essay* maintains, and whether everything which is inscribed there comes solely from the sense or experience, or whether the soul inherently contains the sources of various notions and doctrines, which external objects merely rouse up on suitable occasions, as I believe and as do Plato and even the Schoolmen and all those who understand in this sense the passage in St. Paul where he says that God's law is written in our hearts (Romans, 2: IS). The Stoics call these sources *Prolepsis*, that is fundamental assumptions or things taken for granted in advance. Mathematicians call them common notions or *koinai ennoiai*. Modern philosophers give them other fine names and Julius Scaliger, in particular, used to call them 'seeds of eternity' and also 'zopyra' – meaning living fires or flashes of light hidden inside us but made visible by the stimulation of the senses, as sparks can be struck from a steel" (Leibniz 1996, 48-49). *Ed. note*.

psychology was not yet mature to be an independent scientific discipline and to deal successfully with the notion of *a priori* and innate grounds in the subject for representations related to objects which are not yet given in experience[19]. Nowadays, the "core knowledge hypothesis" has gained growing consensus based on evidence from a highly heterogeneous ensemble of scientific fields, including those belonging to the cognitive sciences, a modern label that encompasses also traditional psychology (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). For instance, it is now well-established that a series of innate competencies support the discrimination of agents from non-living objects (Gelman *et al.*, 1983); these include face recognition, dynamical indices of agency and biological motion detection (Spelke & Kinzler, 2007; for a review see Rosa Salva *et al.*, 2015). As claimed by the "core knowledge hypothesis", these abilities are essential to cope with the social problems of our environments, co-occurring with the degree of sociability of the single species considered (wasps that have multiple queens – and all compete to become queens – are capable of face recognition whereas species with single-queen colonies are not, provided that they show comparable learning abilities in other visual learning tasks (Sheehan & Tibbets, 2011). And indeed, preliminary evidence already exists that disfunctions in these *a priori* competencies affect developmental trajectories, as shown in this domain for the autistic spectrum disorder (Di Giorgio *et al.*, 2016).

The psychological forces subtending agent recognition are complemented by the physical forces ruling, instead, the motion and behaviour of inanimate entities when interacting. The *Gestalt* school of psychology labelled "naïve physics" those untrained common intuitions of the observed physical phenomena that we simply cannot avoid in our everyday reasoning (Bozzi, 1990; Smith & Casati, 1994). To exemplify the myriad of implicit and common sense assumptions accompanying our interactions with objects, we can think of the moment in which we lay our cup of tea over the table (*support*) – not on the edge, lest it falls off (*gravity*): it will move as a single object (*cohesion*), following a linear trajectory (*connectedness*), and we will then need to pull it far away (*force*) to create some space for our pencil since they cannot be in the very same place (*solidity*). The list does not end

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[19]   See Kant 2001, 312: "The Critique [*scil.* of pure Reason] admits absolutely no implanted or innate representations. One and all, whether they belong to intuition or to concepts of the understanding, it considers them as acquired. But there is also an original acquisition (as the teachers of natural right call it), and thus of that which previously did not yet exist at all, and so did not belong to anything prior to this act. According to the Critique, these are, in the first place, the form of things in space and time, second, the synthetic unity of the manifold in concepts; for neither of these does our cognitive faculty get from objects as given therein in-themselves, rather it brings them about, a priori, out of itself. There must indeed be a ground for it in the subject, however, which makes it possible that these representations can arise in this and no other manner, and be related to objects which are not yet given, and this ground at least is innate". *Ed. note*.

here, but these examples attest that although assumptions of this kind may be over-simplifications, nevertheless they predict the exact outcome of each single physical action; sometimes they could lead to erroneous predictions and are resilient to experience (e.g., Caramazza *et al.*, 1981), a reason for the difficulty we may experience with (true) physics understanding. However, these basic features, which are innate (Chiandetti & Vallortigara, 2011), prompt further learning as shown in preverbal infants and children, even while acquiring new words later on during ontogenetic development[20]. The presence of such beliefs in childhood would also explain why it is difficult for infants to understand scientific subjects. Indeed, there is evidence that infants as young as 2.5 months attribute specific physical properties to objects by reasoning in terms of naïve physics (Aguiar & Baillargeon, 1999).

In the domain of spatial and numerical cognition, the finding worth stressing here concerns the performance of Amazonian and Mayan indigenous populations. The Mundurukú, an Amazonian group lacking of formal instruction and specific lexicon to refer to space and numbers, made spontaneous use of concepts like parallelism, angle, and sense relations in geometrical maps when tested for core Euclidean geometry (Dehaene *et al.*, 2006); moreover, when tested for basic mathematics, Mundurukús' performance was good when they had to compare and estimate large quantities *via* approximation, whereas it dropped to chance only when they had to compute exact calculations using specific number labels that surpassed their naming range (Pica *et al.*, 2004). In a comparable vein, the preliterate and prenumerate Kaqchikel and K'iche' indigenous Mayan groups, when tested for probability estimations, were able to predict the correct outcome using information, proportions and raw combinatorial arithmetic, thus performing in a similar way to Mayan school children and Western controls (Fontanari *et al.*, 2014). These results taken together show that there are universal inherited intuitions to cope with spatial and quantitative problems; other studies have demonstrated that gross estimations of the same kind are available to several nonhuman species[21]. Furthermore, at least in the numerical domain, an association has been shown between developmental learning disabilities (like dyscalculia) and an impaired "number sense" supporting judgements of non-equality between sets of elements (Piazza *et al.*, 2010; but see Butterworth, 2010). Hence, all criteria posited by the Spelke's "core knowledge hypothesis" have been substantiated for all four domains.

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[20]   For a review see Stahl & Feigenson, 2019.

[21]   For a review see Vallortigara, 2012.

Man's anthropocentrism has been undermined by recent findings supporting the idea that a soft modularism *sensu* Fodor, like the one described by the "core knowledge hypothesis", defines our neural architecture, and now the time is ripe to increase people's awareness of the cognitive continuum that characterizes all living creatures. I have myself made an attempt in this direction, by devising with some colleagues a short questionnaire in which people were first asked to rate the perceived intelligence of a marine animal, and then they were shown a brief videoclip taken from experimental studies, and demonstrating that the same species possesses a sophisticated ability. Finally, people were asked to rate again the perceived intelligence of the same animal. The results on the first rating confirmed what the past literature has already shown: people believe that organisms are ordered from the simplest (in our survey, the hermit crab) to the most complex (the dolphin). By inspecting the ratings obtained after watching the videoclip, for the first time we have shown that people significantly increased the rate of perceived intelligence, and changed the organization of the species considered from a linear and distributed (ladder-like) to a more compact (tree-like) representation (Chiandetti *et al.*, 2018). After realizing what the animals are able to do, people changed dramatically their idea about of how smart these animals can be. We have applied the same strategy to domesticated animals with comparable results, and we are now investigating the role of previous experience by testing students with different backgrounds.

We are convinced that at least over the short term, people can benefit from experiences like those we explored, and future research will unveil whether watching a short videoclip may have longer lasting effects. For sure, our result shows that there is room to overcome dichotomies, along with the idea discussed above for monkeys (Humphrey, 1974) that stereotyping can be targeted by operations that expose adults and infants to the "other" category, being it represented by other animal species, or by other human populations. The possibility also exists that showing nonspecialists the core innate mechanisms, environmentally modulated and at the basis of our ordinary learning, we would exploit a complementary starting point for raising public awareness on animal intelligence.

Discussing natural advantages linked to and evolved for dichotomizing events in no way means to justify any ingroup/outgroup division. But the awareness of all the cognitive limits and the associated risks is a first step to defy stereotyping and slippery discriminations as recently shown in committees' promotion decisions when not openly acknowledging the potential of biased evaluations (Régner *et al.*, 2019). It is noteworthy that these implications extend to artificial intelligence, too. Indeed, the machine has to be trained to sort entities into categories; it learns by means of the large number of examples presented, but programmers face the

practical peril of instilling prejudices directly into their systems. Only conscious effort to select proper examples would limit the possibility of training machines with biases in order to create technology that will bring real progress and true equality instead of facilitating pervasive discriminations. Whether the strategy used in our survey may apply also to the racial biases discussed above is an intriguing possibility that scientists should explore. Studies where participants confronted human abilities to modify their perception of the 'us/them' dichotomy and overcome prejudices resulted controversial. However, we know that the manipulation of human-animal similarity affects speciesism-related concepts and prejudices (Everett *et al.*, 2019). This points to a fundamental collaboration among different disciplines, like comparative and social psychology, that should blend and commingle one another for a unified scope (see Dhont *et al.*, 2019 for the role of social psychology).

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PART II

Religious Diversity and Ethnic Identities: Social Groups and Cultural Interrelations

4

Constructing the Religious 'Other'

GEREON WOLTERS

Introductory Remarks

We humans are primates, at least from an evolutionary perspective[1]. With our nearest relatives, the bonobos and chimpanzees, we share more than 95% of our genome. It is, therefore, unsurprising that in anatomy, physiology and behaviour there are profound similarities to these two evolutionary cousin-genera and other primate genera. As to behaviour, for example, we share with the other primates our way of living in social groups. But there are also great differences. While non-human primate social groups reach about 800 members maximum, human social groups can be enormously larger[2]. Think, for example, of nations or religions; in 2015, there were around 2.3 billion Christians and 1.8 billion Muslims on our

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[2]   See Chapman & Teichroeb 2012.

planet[3]. Human social groups differ in more than size from other primate groups. Individual humans can simultaneously belong to multiple social systems or groups[4]. Being a member of a specific group gives an individual a sense of belonging that is constitutive of the identity of the self. Inversely, individuals with their group-based beliefs, preferences, modes of action, values, and norms determine group identity.

Constructing group identity has inevitably a negative complement: constructing the out-groups, i.e. excluding the 'others' (also called 'othering'). Excluding the 'other' or 'others' on the *group* level *in*cludes in most cases also *ex*clusion on the level of *individuals*. In the first section below, I present some general remarks on group identity. In the three sections that follow, I offer a brief account of the creation or construction of the 'other' in the Sacred Scriptures of the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In the last section, I advance some general considerations about the role of religion in constructing the religious 'other'. My cardinal thesis is that the creation of the religious 'other' in the three great monotheistic religions involves strong components of violence.

1. Social Groups and their Identity

Groups of social animals, and primate groups in particular, are typically built by kinship and/or such survival-related and cooperation-requiring factors as minimizing the risk of predation or enhancing the possibility of finding and defending food. *Homo sapiens*[5] is partially different, and the differences have grown considerably during the accelerated cultural evolution that began about 12,000 years ago.

This accelerated cultural evolution is associated with *Homo sapiens* slowly abandoning his existence as hunter-gatherer, becoming sedentary, and starting to produce food and to live in settlements. As a consequence of these changes, affiliation with a kinship group does not exclusively determine the social identity of human groups, particularly in the Western world. Modern western humans see themselves as simultaneous members of a variety of different groups undefined by kinship, for example, such vital groups as nations, cultures, religions, and language communities. Furthermore, there are groups constituted by a profession and/or socio-economic background. Academics like us, for example, form a global, though loose, social group. There are, in addition, life-style related social groups, groups

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[3]   See Hackett & McClendon 2017.

[4]   See van Schaik 2016, Chap. 19.

[5]   The most recent discoveries date *Homo Sapiens*'s first presence in Eurasia more than 210.000 years ago (Harvati *et al.* 2019).

based on common physical or mental conditions like handicapped or highly gifted people. Then we should not forget groups defined by sex or sexual orientation like heterosexual, gay, lesbian, transgender or whatever.

Religious or *Weltanschauungs* groups are central to the following question: What determines or creates the identity of groups? According to Tajfel, the Social Identity Theory (SIT) of intergroup relations characterizes social identity

> as that *part* of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. (Tajfel 1981, 255)

In Herriot's view, people

> see themselves, at least in part, as having a social identity. I am a pious and faithful Muslim, and God has chosen me to do his will. I am a Bible-believing Baptist, and God has reserved a place in heaven for me. I am a Haredi Jew, and God honours those like me who scrupulously obey the Torah. […] Social identities direct behavior which relates to groups. […] Such behavior may include conformity with the group and cohesion within it, the stereotyping of members of other groups, favoritism towards members of one's own group; and discrimination against members of other groups. (Herriot 2007, 26f.)

Social identities thus become part of the self, but they "are not fixed and static in nature". Additionally, an important aspect is that social identities "can be used to direct behaviour". As Harriot remarks:

> A social identity will be particularly salient if the similarities within one's own category, and the differences with an out-group, are both maximized. We as group X have to be as much alike as possible, and as different as possible from 'them'. (Harriot 2007, 30, 32)

Social psychologists speak of the *prototype* that expresses the self-image of group members, and the *stereotype* that describes members of *other groups*.[6] This holds especially for religious groups, which are distinguished by providing beliefs, values, and norms that promote the self-esteem of their members and reduce uncertainty (Herriot 2007, 8).

> Self-esteem may be gained, not by enhanced status, but simply by the very fact of belonging. These people [in the group] welcome me and accept me as one of them (provided I think, feel, speak, and act as they do). Now I am one of us. (Herriot 2007, 37)[7]

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[6]   Cf. e.g. Hogg 1996: 68ff.

[7]   At this point arises the problem of how to live together with religious 'others', i.e. the problem of religious tolerance. I cannot deal with this extremely timely topic in this paper.

Given the central role of the concept of recognition – *Anerkennung* – in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*[8]*,* Hegel scholars like the editor of this volume, Cinzia Ferrini, might rightly think that it was Hegel, and not Henri Tajfel, who invented SIT.

In the following, I will trace prototypes and stereotypes in the Sacred Scriptures of the three monotheistic religions. We have to be careful, though, about retrojecting our present European conception of religion as a private affair of the individual. This conception is a fruit of the Enlightenment and the process of secularization resulting from it. By contrast, as Schmitz rightly remarks:

> In the ancient world, however, religious performance was so deeply anchored in social communities (family, state, etc.) that it was impossible to see them as independent or to believe they could be taken out of this context. Every aspect of life was inextricably interwoven by religious practice. (Schmitz 2011, 162. GW trans.) [9]

In the Sacred Scriptures of Judaism and also in early Islam, social communities are defined by common religion *and* common ethnicity. The resulting collective social identity, therefore, is an amalgam of ethnicity and religion, the two being inseparable. As we shall see, Christianity differed (and still differs) in part from Judaism and early Islam in this respect.

I begin my analysis with Judaism, the oldest of the monotheistic religions, because in several respects Judaism became a model for the other two.

2. ANCIENT JUDAISM[10]

It would be a mistake to regard the Torah (the so-called five books of Moses) and other Sacred Scriptures as historical reports[11]. Most of the events they purport to talk about took place seven or eight centuries before the texts were written down in their present form. Recent scholarship – and archaeology above all – casts doubt on the historical reality of most biblical stories, e.g. the historicity of Moses as well as the Exodus story[12]. As far as details are concerned, there are

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[8]   Cf. Honneth 2018.

[9]   "In der Antike hingegen waren religiöse Vollzüge in den sozialen Gemeinschaften (Familie, Staat, etc.) so verankert, dass man sie nicht eigenständig denken oder aus diesen herauslösen konnte. Religiöse Praxis durchwirkte das Leben als Ganzes".

[10]   I am well aware that the label "Judaism" was coined by Christians at a rather late stage. For the conceptual history, cf. Boyarin 2018.

[11]   In the following, I rely on Schmitz 2011. – Note that the denomination "Old Testament" expresses the Christian view of texts of the Hebrew Bible. – It will be used, nonetheless, in what follows without Christian associations.

[12]   See e.g. Dever 1993, 33: "the overwhelming scholarly consensus today is that Moses is a mythical figure; that Jahwism was highly syncretistic from the very beginning; and that true monotheism

as many hypotheses about the origin of the Torah as scholars who deal with it. There is, however, virtual unanimity that the texts in their present form go back to the times of the Babylonian Exile and the subsequent Persian reign, i.e. to the period between the sixth and fourth centuries B.C.

In the terminology of social identity theory, the Torah can be regarded as a collection of texts that aim primarily at creating a self-identity, i.e. a positive prototype, for the people of Israel. The Torah contains no less than 613 'commandments', i.e. prescriptions and proscriptions that the Children of Israel were obliged to follow[13]. In their *Good Book of Human Nature,* the primatologist Carel van Schaik and the historian Kai Michel offer an evolutionary-anthropology reading of the Torah that supplements the social identity approach. From their functional perspective, the 613 commandments for the Children of Israel formed a "cultural protection system" designed to ward off the wrath of YHWH (Van Schaik & Michel 2016, 246). At the same time, these commandments bound society together. Language, religion, dress, male circumcision, and burial practices, along with "distinctive culinary practices and dietary customs", are "ways in which ethnic boundaries are formed" (Van Schaik & Michel 2016, 246).

The Torah does more than contain building blocks of the *religious* identity of the Children of Israel; it is at the same time the fundament of their *political* identity. This political identity, in turn, is closely tied to the land YHWH promised them. Abraham was the first to receive this promise, which was then extended to his descendants:

> On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi[a] of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates – the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites'. (*Genesis* 15, 18-21)[14]

From our point of view it is decisive that the social, political and religious identity of the ancient Hebrews were different sides of the same coin: social identity resulted from religious identity via the 'commandments' and vice versa, while religious identity via the Promised Land created national and political identity.

As to sedentariness, the conquering of the Promised Land is portrayed in the texts not simply as conquering land where other people already live. Rather, the

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developed only late in Israel's history, probably not until the Exile and Return." – For the fictional character of the Exodus, cf. Finkelstein & Silberman 2002: Chap. 2, and Assmann 2010.

[13] See Kraemer 2010. – There is a good entry ("613 commandments") in the English Wiki that even lists all the commandments (seen August 2018).

[14] Quoted from the web edition of the "International Bible Society": https://www.biblica.com/bibl e/?osis=niv:Genesis.15:18%E2%80%9321:18. Accessed August 2018.

texts depict the Israelites as fighting wars for land "on the command and/or with the aid of Yahweh, in pursuance of Yahweh's purpose"[15].

The Old Testament presents what was later called 'monotheism'[16]. It introduces at the same time a completely new element that Jan Assmann has identified. He calls it the "Mosaic Distinction", i.e. the distinction in religion between true and false, good and bad[17]. In this way, the Mosaic Distinction declared religious 'otherness' as wrong and morally condemnable. This attitude was unknown in so-called polytheistic contexts. There, the

> names, the shapes of the gods, and the forms of worship differed. But the functions were strikingly similar, especially in the case of cosmic deities: the sun god of one religion was readily equated to the sun god of another religion, and so forth. (Assmann 1996, 49)

It fits well with the Mosaic Distinction that in the Old Testament war is sometimes justified on the ground that the enemies of Israel were sinners and followers of false religions, i.e. religious 'others'[18]. In this context, YHWH allows and even commands genocide, rape, and slavery. Take, for example, Numbers 31, 1-18 about the revenge campaign against the Midianites:

> The Lord said to Moses, 'Before you die, make sure that the Midianites are punished for what they did to Israel.' Then Moses told the people, 'The Lord wants to punish the Midianites'. […] The Israelites fought against the Midianites, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. […] They killed all the men, […] (and) captured every woman and child […] Moses became angry with the army commanders and said, 'I can't believe you let the women live! They are the ones who followed Balaam's advice and invited our people to worship the god Baal Peor. That's why the Lord punished us by killing so many of our people. You must put to death every boy and all the women who have ever had sex. But do not kill the young women who have never had sex. You may keep them for yourselves'[19].

Violence was certainly nothing new in the history of *Homo sapiens*, and certainly not in the Middle East. What is new, however, is the fact that it is presented in

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[15]   Freeman 1994, 272.

[16]   Monotheism is, however, the result of a long development that shows that the Israelites worshiped also other gods besides YHWH. Particularly interesting is that YHWH also has a wife. In ancient Israel her name is Asherah (see Schmitz 2011, 99, 108). – Even Jewish refugees from the Babylonian conquest of Judah living at Elephantine near the Nubian border had built a temple where they worshipped Yahweh with a goddess called Anat-Yahu (Anat-Yahweh) (see Porten, 1968 and 2011). Anat-Yahu is described as the paredra (sacred consort) of YHWH (see Niehr 1996, 58).

[17]   Assmann 1996. For a more detailed presentation, see Assmann 2003.

[18]   See Freeman 1994, 272.

[19]   https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/numbers/31/

this and other texts as exercised *in the name and on the command of* the supreme deity against the religious 'other'.

Violence towards the religious 'other' is directed not only against people who are *at the same time* ethnic or national 'others' like the Midianites. Apostates *within* the Hebrew nation also suffered hard times. Recall the story of the Golden Calf in *Exodus* (Chap. 32). When Moses stayed too long talking to YHWH on Sinai, the people of Israel became impatient and gave up on YHWH. On Aaron`s advice they fabricated a Golden Calf and began to worship it. In His rage, YHWH initially intended to annihilate His chosen people. Fortunately for the Israelites, Moses was able to calm YHWH who – as compensation – permitted only 3,000 Hebrew men to be slaughtered by the faithful Levites. From this and other examples of punishing and killing apostates, we can draw an important distinction within religious 'otherness': religious otherness tied to ethnic otherness versus religious otherness resulting from apostasy. The latter is not simply 'otherness' but high treason, a crime that must be severely punished. In both cases, violence is not only allowed but even commanded by YHWH. It is not without regretful sorrow that Michael Freeman says of the Old Testament, "It is this text which forms a central part of western culture" (Freeman 1994, 274).

The Old Testament is, indeed, a text full of extreme God-commanded violence against religious 'others'. These days, sheltered American students get a trigger warning when it comes to reading Homer's *Iliad* [20]. Should they not also read the Old Testament in a version expurgated *ad usum delphini* ? [21] YHWH would appear in such a bowdlerized text mainly as a God of peace, love and reconciliation who helps his people cope with the uncertainties of life.

Although this paper exclusively deals with the violent side of the three monotheistic religions, I do not doubt that they have also peaceful components. It seems, however, that ambivalence between violence and peace is a hallmark of all religions. This holds even for Buddhism, which at the surface appears as particularly irenic.[22] – In any case, keep in mind that the texts of the Old Testament are not historical reports but identity narratives. There is no evidence

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[20]   See on the topic most recently Lukianoff & Haidt 2018, 6f.

[21]   "ad usum delphini" (for the use of the *dauphin*, i.e. the heir to the throne) is the name of a huge (64 volumes) bowdlerized collection of classical Greek and Latin texts used for the education of *Louis de France,* the son of the French king Louis XIV. – I would not be surprised if this ironic remark became reality soon. As Gerald Massey has informed me, trigger warnings in the meantime have reached theaters, as the online edition of the New York Times reports (2018-11-18): (https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/18/theater/trigger-warnings-plays-theater.html. Accessed March 2019).

[22]   For a contemporary example, one might look at the support of Buddhist authorities for the fight against their religious "other", the Muslim Rohingya people in Myanmar, previously known as Burma (cf. Coclanis 2013). This fight has in the meantime resulted in extremely violent displacement of these people. – Jerryson 2013 gives a general overview about Buddhism and violence.

that the ancient Hebrews were more violent than the neighbouring peoples were. Moreover, in times to come, beginning with the 'Great Revolt' against the Romans (65-73 C.E.), which resulted among other things in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, no religious and ethnic community had to suffer more persecution from *their* religious and ethnic 'others' than the Jews.

3. CHRISTIANITY

The Sacred Book of Christianity is the New Testament, even if the Old Testament is regarded as a sort of precursor and forms part of Christianity's Sacred Scriptures. Compared to the Old Testament, the New Testament is a pacifist text. Neither Jesus nor the apostles encourage or command wars or genocides. There is a simple explanation for this pacifism: Christianity quickly transcended the boundaries of a tribal religion. After a brief period of insecurity following the death of Jesus, early Christians coming from a Hellenistic background felt themselves no longer obligated to follow the rules of the Torah, circumcision included[23]. This does not mean, of course, that the separation of Judaism and Christianity occurred from one day to the next. Rather, it was a process in which Christianity developed from a Jewish sect to a religion in its own right and at the same time exerted considerable influence on Judaism[24].

In the Gospel of Mark written about 70 A.D., Jesus' missionary command is a patent indication of the separation of religion and ethnicity. This divide was to become essential for Christianity:

> And he [i.e. Jesus] said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned'. (Mark 15, 16)

Yet, as the end of the quote shows, the religious 'other' is by no means a friend. Instead of the earthly violence exercised, allowed or commanded by YHWH in the Old Testament, the punishment of the recalcitrant religious 'other' is at God's discretion and postponed to the Day of Judgment. No wonder, then, that in Christianity religion and ethnicity/nationality are separate issues, even if the Christian God remains the same for everyone. All human beings of all nations are called to become Christians. Consequently, the texts do not support Scripture-

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[23]   The issue was settled mostly at the so-called Apostolic Council of Jerusalem that took place sometime between 44 and 49 A.D. with St. Paul and the apostle St. James as antagonists. Jochum 2011 is a well-written and informative booklet for lay people about this council.

[24]   Moore 1966 shows both directions of this process.

based conflicts over land. Moreover, to be rewarded for obeying the Lord, Christians have to await paradise and to be punished they have to await hell.

Here we encounter an important difference between ancient Judaism on the one side and Christianity and Islam on the other. The older books of the Old Testament do not mention hell. They rather talk about a realm called *sheol*, but it was merely "a place of darkness where souls abided in silence and forgetfulness [...] generally reserved for wicked and impious individuals, but it was not a place of otherworldly torture" (Bruce 2018, 35)[25]. As such, hell appears in the Christian tradition and even more so in the Qur'an and in the Hadiths. Hell serves as a central instrument of making people follow the prescriptions of religion – with paradise as its complement. In Judaism, however, only in later books of the Old Testament and in the Talmud, i.e. in Hellenistic times and not least under Christian influence, the idea of punishment and reward in afterlife arises in various forms under the title of *olam ha-ba* ("the coming world"). Since in Judaism religion and ethnicity coincide (even if not the other way round), and since ethnicity is hardly changeable, it seems fair enough that originally reward and punishment for human actions does not specifically concern the religious 'other' because of being a religious 'other'[26]. The above quote from the Gospel of St. Marc, however, shows that Christianity sees things differently. Here the religious 'other' becomes a special target of divine punishment in the afterlife, exactly *because* she had insisted on remaining a religious 'other'. This approach has found with St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthago, already in the third century C.E. the classical formulation *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the Church there is no salvation). It has been repeated as a sort of Christian mantra on numerous occasions during Church history. Particularly clear is its Papal dogmatization in 1442 by the Council of Florence in the bull *Cantate Domino* of Pope Eugene IV:

> [The sacrosanct Roman Church] firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart 'into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels' [Matt. 25:41], unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgiving, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one,

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[25] See e.g. *Genesis* 32, 35 about Jacob, who mourns his son Joseph: 'All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus, his father wept for him.' – The Greek translation of *sheol* in the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint (mid-third century A.D.), is *hades*.

[26] There were, however, exceptions to this rule, e.g. Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (see Moore 1966, 385f.).

whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church[27].

In the meantime this rather harsh treatment of the religious 'other' in the Catholic Church (but similarly also in other Christian denominations) has been considerably softened. One might even talk of a theological egg-dance to overcome the highly counterintuitive *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* verdict on the religious 'other' and to somehow admit into salvation all people of good will. One variant of this egg-dance is to declare the religious 'other' "Anonymous Christians". This inventive step is usually attributed to the Catholic theologian Karl Rahner[28].

Although the New Testament is a comparatively pacifist text that does not order or even allow military actions against religious 'other', Christians waged many wars and campaigns, motivated at least in part by religion, as soon as Christianity had become the state religion of the Roman Empire (380). I mention only the crusades, which certainly had a central religious objective, viz., to liberate the Holy Land from the Muslim infidels. Crusaders, however, were unable to invoke the New Testament as justification for their campaigns[29]. On the other hand, the respective popes both called to the crusades and rewarded the fighters among other benefits with a plenary indulgence[30]. Also for the religious wars

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[27] http://catholicism.org/cantate-domino.html – Latin original: "Firmiter credit, profitetur et predicat nullos extra ecclesiam catholicam existentes, non solum paganos, sed nec iudeos aut hereticos atque scismaticos eterne vite fieri posse participes, sed in ignem eternum ituros, qui paratus est dyabolo et angelis eius (Mt 25, 41), nisi ante finem vite eidem fuerint aggregati, tantum que valere ecclesiastici corporis unitatem, ut solis in ea manentibus ad salutem ecclesiastica sacramenta proficiant et ieiunia, elemosine ac cetera pietatis officia et exercitia militie christiane premia eterna parturiant, neminem que quantascunque elemosinas fecerit, et si pro Christi nomine sanguinem effuderit, posse salvari, nisi in catholice ecclesie gremio et unitate permanserit". (https://w2.vatican.va/content/eugenius-iv/la/documents/bulla-cantate-domino-4-febr-1442.html. Both sites accessed March 2019).

[28] As to the widespread attribution of the expression to Rahner, see the dissenting vote of Bullivant 2010.

[29] This shows, for example, the famous speech launching the crusades at the Council of Clermont in 1095, where Pope Urban II invoked the Gospel three times. He could not find, however, an invitation to violence. The references are as follows: 1. "The Lord says in the Gospel: 'He that laveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me", "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life"; 2. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them"; 3. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Munro (Ed.) 1901, 5-8).

[30] Cf. Zinser 2015, 86ff. – William Robertson enumerates the extensive privileges and immunities granted to the persons who assumed the cross: 1. They were exempted from prosecutions on account of debt during the time of their holy service; 2. They were exempted from paying interest for the money borrowed for the equipment 3. They were exempted from the payment of taxes 4. They might alienate their lands without the consent of their superior lord; 5. Their persons and effects were taken under the protection of St. Peter and the anathemas of the church were denounced against

of the seventeenth century, particularly for the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) which destroyed enormous regions in Europe, one could not invoke the New Testament. Furthermore, Western colonialism had an important religious component: it offered institutional settings that supported the missionizing of the religious 'other' in remote regions of the world. And let us not forget the Christian pogroms against the Jewish religious "other" that began in the eleventh century and have continued over the centuries.

At the same time, Christianity did not leave the punishment of the *internal* 'other', the apostates ("heretics") to the afterlife, as suggested in the New Testament. Quite to the contrary, heretics had to suffer sometimes extreme mundane violence. This began with the Edict of Thessalonica (380) that declared Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. The so-called Albigensian Crusade in Southern France against the Cathars in the early thirteenth century is an instructive example. In various European countries there began in those times what was later (1542) concentrated in Rome as the "Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition" (*Sacra Congregatio Romanae et universalis Inquisitionis*), which formally existed until 1965 (2nd Vatican Council)[31]. From the perspective of the construction of the religious 'other', the Inquisition was a remarkable innovation. It organized the *institutionalized persecution* of the religious 'other', both on the individual and on the group level.

4. ISLAM

The prophet Mohammad (ca. 570– 632) founded Islam in what is now Saudi Arabia. Islam's Sacred Books are the Qur'an and the Hadiths. While the Hadiths purport to report words and deeds of the prophet and his companions, devout Muslims regard the Qur'an as the immediate, unaltered, and final revelation of God, literally transmitting what Allah had revealed to the prophet in Arabic. Unlike the Old or New Testament, the Qur'an is not an historical or biographical narrative. It contains 114 Chapters (Suras) that consist of verses. The Suras are not arranged thematically or in chronological order but according to length, beginning with the longest (most verses) and ending with the shortest. There is

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all who should molest them, or carry on any quarrel or hostility against them, during their absence, on account of the holy war; 6. They enjoyed all the privileges of ecclesiastics, and were not bound to plead in any civil court, but were declared subject to the spiritual jurisdiction alone 7. They obtained a plenary remission of all their sins, and the gates of heaven were set open to them, without requiring any other proof of their penitence, but their engaging in this expedition (Robertson 1840: "Proofs and Illustrations", Note XIII Sect. I, 23).

[31]   The German Wikipedia has a remarkably informative entry: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Inquisition

a long tradition in mainstream Islam about how to interpret the Qur'an[32]. Topics are context, elimination of inconsistencies, problems of the Arabic language and translations. What is missing, though, is an historico-critical approach of the sort we find in mainstream Christianity and liberal Judaism. Those very few Muslim scholars that in the West ("Euro-Islam") follow such an enlightened approach to their Holy Text usually receive death threats and have to live under police protection – at least in Germany[33].

One of the central characteristics of Islam is the unity of religion and politics:

> The Quran tells us that God is concerned with every aspect of humanity's life on Earth. What we do here determines our ultimate fate. This makes Islam a very social religion; it does not draw a distinction we often draw between religious and secular affairs. Every aspect of life is considered religious, and religion is politics. In his lifetime Muhammad was both a messenger of the One God and the ruler of a state. (Polk 2018, 13f.)

Despite its universal aspirations, Islam in its origins was a strictly tribal religion. Accordingly, the Persian tribes that in the seventh and eighth centuries were conquered and converted to Islam were soon assigned to one of the Arab tribes[34].

Like the Old Testament, the text of the Qur'an is ambivalent; it preaches both peace and violence. While Christian missionary activities in the first centuries of Christianity were non-violent right from the beginning, the expansion of Islam was achieved for centuries by the sword. The religious 'other' was for the early Muslim tribes at the same time a tribal and political 'other'. The Qur'an is full of verses that command the killing of "infidels"[35]. Particularly notorious is Sura 9, which is regarded the latest Sura of the Qur'an. It deals almost exclusively with how to treat infidels and all those that Muhammad did not regard trustworthy. The so-called sword verse (v. 15) is often cited in this context:

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[32]   Goldziher 1920 still seems to be the most comprehensive presentation. – The Hungarian scholar Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) was one of the founders of modern Islamic Studies.

[33]   One of various examples is Seyran Ates, who founded together with others in 2017 in Berlin the "Ibn-Rushd-Goethe Mosque", where men and women, Shiites, Sunnites and Alevites may pray together. She received more than 100 death threats. In addition, the Turkish president Erdogan asked the German government to close this mosque: https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article166155366/100-Morddrohungen-gegen-liberale-Moschee-Gruenderin.htm. Accessed March 2019. – Other people under police protection in Germany are the critic of Islam Hamed Abdel-Samad, and the professors for Islamic theology Mouhamad Khorchide (Münster) and Abdel-Hakim Ourghi. (Freiburg): https://www.zeit.de/2017/40/islamkritik-reformen-liberal-bedrohung. Accessed March 2019.

[34]   Gronke 2003, 15: "During the first century of Islam – under the rule of the first four caliphs until the end of the Umayyad dynasty (660-749) – [...] Muslims of non-Arabic descent – which meant almost all newly converted – had to join an Arab tribe or a prominent Arab as "clients" (Arabic *mawâlî*). They did not own all rights of Arab Muslims and lived on a lower social level, even if they were well off and educated".

[35]   Khoury 2003 gives an excellent compilation.

> And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful[36].

Qur'an interpretation has been very busy to "mitigate" this (and other verses) by contextualising them (defense against aggressors, punishment for traitors and so on)[37]. Among the conquered religious 'others', Muslims from the beginning distinguished between pagans (*Kafirs*, Infidels) and People of the Book (*dhimmis*). The people of the Book were Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians[38]. As we have already seen in the sword verse:

> for pagans that came under Islamic supremacy there was only the alternative conversion to Islam or death. Jews and Christians [and also Zoroastrians] had the possibility to secure the protection of the state by paying the so-called head tax (Arabic *jizya*). In return, the State guaranteed their life, property and the right to practice their own religion. At the same time they imposed a series of restrictions and prohibitions that should symbolize the submission and humiliation with respect to the Muslims[39].

Another important feature of constructing the religious other in the Qur'an is the claim that infidels are "unclean":

> O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are unclean, so let them not approach al-Masjid al-Haram [the Holy Mosque in Mecca, G.W.] after this, their [final] year. And if you fear privation, Allah will enrich you from His bounty if He wills. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Wise (Sura 9, 28).

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[36]   Quotes from the Qur'an are from the online Arabic-English edition at: https://quran.com. Accessed March 2019.

[37]   There are informative Wiki entries in German (Schwertvers) and English (sword verse). A sober analysis is given by Abdel-Samad 2016, Chap. 6.

[38]   For present day Muslim fundamentalists, all who do not share their convictions (Muslims included) are "infidels".

[39]   Gronke 2003, 13f.: "Gab es für Heiden, die unter islamische Oberhohheit kamen, nur die Alternative Übertritt zum Islam oder Tod, hatten Juden und Christen noch die Möglichkeit, sich dem Schutz des Staates zu unterstellen und die sogenannte Kopfsteuer (arabisch *dschizya*) zu entrichten. Im Gegenzug garantierte ihnen der Staat ihr Leben, ihr Eigentum und ihr Recht auf Ausübung der eigenen Religion, erlegte ihnen allerdings auch eine Reihe von Einschränkungen und Verboten auf, die die Unterwerfung und Erniedrigung der nicht-muslimischen Minderheiten gegenüber den Muslimen symbolisieren sollten". – The jizya worked also as a sort of business model in early Islam. Polk 2018, 35 even claims in this context: that "historically, Islam has been the most tolerant of the three religions". This view might be strongly contested given the situation in most Muslim countries.

This delusional purity serves as building block of their own prototype and is an important means of isolating true Muslim believers from their religious others[40]. Under Islamic rule, *apostates* have a very hard time. Since there is no separation of politics and religion in mainstream Islam, apostasy is at the same time high treason and has to be punished accordingly. The Qur'an does not explicitly require the death penalty; instead, it consigns the punishment for apostasy to hell, e.g. in Sura 2.217:

> And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever – for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire, they will abide therein eternally[41].

Some Hadiths, however, have the prophet saying that apostates should be killed. This is also the opinion of most Islamic law schools. As of 2016, apostasy is punishable in more than 20 Islamic states (in 13 of them by death)[42]. Furthermore, one has to keep in mind that standard Islam also regards a person that commits "blasphemy" or "insult of the prophet" as *kufr* (miscredent). You might recall that in 1989 Ayatollah Khomeini in a fatwa sentenced Salman Rushdie to death and offered a hefty bounty to those who would kill Rushdie. It has risen in the meantime to 4 million dollars[43]. Also think, for example, of the journalists of *Charlie Hebdo*, who were killed in Paris in 2015.

In the West, many people regard Islam as a coherent or unified religious group. This is not the case. The religious 'other' is often a different Muslim group. Compelling evidence of this is the fact that the victims of Islamic religious terrorism are for the most part themselves Muslims. They have the unfortunate fate to belong to the wrong variety of Islam and, therefore, are particularly hateful religious 'others'. Look also to the wars that shatter the Islamic world.

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[40]   Mohamed Atta, the "suspected ringleader" of the 9/11 terrorists insensitively cared before the attack about his cleanness. This is shown by a four-page document written in Arabic that was found in his baggage. English translation at https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/30/terrorism.september113. Accessed March 2019.

[41]   https://quran.com/2/217. Accessed September 2019.

[42]   Cf. Wikipedia "Apostasy in Islam" (accessed October 2018); furthermore https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/the-13-countries-where-being-an-atheist-is-punishable-by-death-a6960561.html (accessed September 2018). – According to Pew Research Center Study between 2008 and 2012 in several countries like Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Malaysia also large majorities of the population support death for apostasy: http://www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-beliefs-about-sharia/. Accessed September 2018.

[43]   https://www.nzz.ch/international/vier-millionen-fuer-einen-killer-1.18700188. Accessed September 2018.

For example, in Yemen and partly also in Syria, the leading nations of Shiism and Sunnism – Iran and Saudi Arabia – conduct among other things proxy wars against the respective religious 'other'.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the new idea of Man in the Renaissance, the Enlightenment marks a decisive turning point in the process of constructing the religious 'other'. The central innovation of the Enlightenment is the separation of religion and politics. According to a recent study, this development was made possible by a major psychological variation in populations that are Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD)[44]. The authors claim a correlation and partial causal connection of this psychological variation to what they call the Roman Church's Marriage and Family Program (MFP). Between ca. 500 to 1500 CE, the ecclesiastical prohibition of cousin marriages fostered "social norms that favoured *extensive* (my emphasis) kin ties", while cultural evolution in the process of sedentariness, of which the Old Testament is an important document, had supported *intensive* kin ties by favouring forms of cousin marriage. Kin-based institutions, as we know them from the Old Testament (and from Islam):

> reward greater conformity, obedience, holistic/relational awareness and in-group loyalty but discourage individualism, independence and analytical thinking. […] Kin-based institutions should also inhibit motivations toward prosociality, including trust, cooperation and fairness, towards strangers or impersonal organizations[45].

Whatever the fate of this remarkable study will be[46], in Europe Humanism and Enlightenment weakened, at least in principle, the religious prototype and the violence-related construction of the religious 'other' strongly tied to it. Social identity in Europe is less and less defined by religion. This is different, unfortunately, from mainstream Islam which by and large has been unaffected by the ideas of the Enlightenment. Quite to the contrary, in the Islamic world an alarming rise of religious fundamentalism has occurred during the past 50 years.

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[44] A group of researchers led by the Harvard anthropologist Joseph Henrich conducted the study. A preliminary version is Schulz *et al.* 2018. See also *infra* Stovell's contribution to this volume, Chap. 8.

[45] Schulz *et al.* 2018, 2, 4 (GW pagination).

[46] In my view, West European Jews to whom the Marriage and Family Program (MFP) did not apply, after their so-called emancipation, became most quickly in a couple generations exemplary WEIRDs. The emancipation began with the American Bill of Rights (1789/91) and as a result of the *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* (1789) during the French revolution.

Above all among Sunnis violence against the religious 'other' is growing, be the 'other', 'the West' or different Muslim denominations. Interestingly,

> religion is not a primary motivation for joining violent extremists like ISIS. In fact, research in the characteristics of violent extremists suggests that many are religious novices or converts. [...] Religion is sometimes used to legitimate personal and collective frustration and justify violent ideologies[47].

In Israel, sociologists have diagnosed a new wave of "religionization" (*ha-data*) of the society during the past two decades[48]. The "Nation-State Law" that was passed in July 2018 by the Knesset is an expression of institutionally constructing ethnic and religious "otherness" by promoting the corresponding Jewish self-identity[49]. With increasing frequency, the occupation of the West Bank by Israeli settlers is justified as the mere taking back what YHWH had promised to His people.

Let me conclude with a less than optimistic outlook. In the West, the Enlightenment has almost completely ended violent constructions of the *religious* 'other'. Unfortunately, this does not mean that the violent tendencies of human nature have been eradicated from the Western world. Rather, the stereotype of religious 'otherness' has been displaced by other, equally unenlightened stereotypes, above all ethnic and racial 'otherness'. The potential for violence and horror associated with these forms of 'otherness' are at least on a par with religious 'otherness', as the world witnessed in colonialism[50], the Stalinist Gulag, and the Shoah, and is witnessing in our days in terrorist attacks by so-called White Supremacists, sometimes globally connected by the 'social' media[51].

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[47]   See S. Lyons-Padilla *et al.* 2005, 2.

[48]   Cf. Peri Ed. 2012 and Peled & Peled 2018. Peled & Peled 2018, 225 ('Appendix') report an order of the day (9 July 2014) by the commander of the Givati Brigade, Colonel Ofer Vinter, during Israel's military operation in Gaza: There one can read among other things: "History has chosen us to be at the spearhead of combat against the 'Gazan' terrorist enemy which defames, defiles and insults the God of Israel".

[49]   https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israel-pasccessed ses-controversial-nation-state-bill-1.6291048. Accessed March 2019.

[50]   The horror of colonialism does not seem to occupy much space in the collective memory of leading colonial countries (as Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, or Italy). For example, the colonization of the Congo by Belgium and its king between 1880 and World War I cost the lives of between five and eight million Congolese people (cf. Hochschild 1998).

[51]   Recent examples are the "Charleston Church Massacre" in 2015, in which a white American killed nine African American churchgoers: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charleston_church_shooting) – the Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting in 2018, where eleven people were killed: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pittsburgh_synagogue_shooting) and the Christchurch Mosque Shooting in 2019, where 50 people were killed: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christchurch_mosque_shootings). All sites accessed March 2019.

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5

The "Language of God" in Muslim and Jewish Traditions: A Case Study

CARMELA BAFFIONI

Introductory Remarks

The first part of this paper deals with an addition to Epistle 50 of the encyclopaedia of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' entitled "On the Quantity and the Quality of the Species of Administration" (*Fī kammiyya anwā' al-siyāsāt wa-kayfiyyatihā*)[1]. The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' – the "Brethren of Purity" – are the authors of the first medieval encyclopaedia of sciences. The encyclopaedia is a collection of 52 Epistles, divided into four sections: i) propaedeutic sciences; ii) natural sciences; iii) sciences of the soul; and iv) theological sciences. The most recent researches consider that the various epistles were written at different times around the end of the ninth century and the first half of the tenth century. They are extremely heterogeneous, reflecting Babylonian, Indian, Persian, Jewish and gnostic influences, with a number of biblical quotations. The core source is, however, Greek thought. Foreign sciences are reworked to represent the whole religious education intended for an *élite*. Many scholars conjecture that the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' were committed to Ismāʿīlī thought, but the question is still open.

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[1]   My new edition and translation of this epistle appeared in Baffioni *et al.* 2019. For the title see *ivi*, 192.

Ep. 50 describes the "proper attitudes" – a possible translation of the Arabic *siyāsa* – towards body and soul: these are "moderation" and "correct behaviour". The proper attitudes towards family and fellows are considered subsequently: the rule is even-handed behaviour towards all. In the second part of the treatise, without preamble, the subject of "worship" is addressed. The Ikhwān say that there are two kinds of worship, the one prescribed by the Prophet Muḥammad and the one performed by Greek philosophers; they add to these kinds of worship and their festivals the worship proper to their Brotherhood, which is difficult to understand. What seems obvious, however, is that these forms of worship and their festivals are kinds of "proper attitudes" through which humanity can attain "angelic form". This purpose is, as we know, the basis of the knowledge and faith of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'.

The addition appears in the Istanbul MS Esad Efendi 3638 (1287 A.D.)[2]; it is attached at the end of the main text like a seal:

> In a copy different from the original (*aṣl*), from which it has been reported at the beginning of this ni<nth> Epistle named "On the Species of [Proper] Atti<tude>s", there is a chapter mentioned at its [= of the original] end [that] completes what is necessary to attach to the end of the "Epistle on [Proper] Attitudes", as its seal, [which] we have reported up to there, and it is this one. (fol. 280a3-4)

The term *aṣl* may indicate either the author's holograph or a text from which other scripts are derived. This manuscript is hence important for the transmission of the text of the *Rasā'il*, of which the copyist was also aware. At the end of the addition he says: "Copied *verbatim* from a not completely reliable copy. I have compared [it] critically with [another] copy, through which it could be emended, God willing, exalted be He" (fol. 282a4-5). The title is:

> Chapter on the knowledge of the universal Adam and his wife, and of the universal Iblīs, of the tree and of interdiction [not to eat] of it; of what happened of the issue with regard to this in the initial condition; of the disobedience that occurred in the world of the [Universal] Soul, of how the sequence of the issue was and how the effusion of the faculty of the [Universal] Soul was in the first of the human individuals and in the Adamic form – namely, [in] the particular Adam, the disobedient, on whom the interdiction of eating the vegetal tree fell; and [on] its explanation from its beginning in the initial state of the elements till the moment of his manifestation in the microcosm, as what appeared in the elements in potentiality appeared [later] in the world of composition in actuality. (fol. 280a4-8)

This is clearly one of the texts that might support the commitment of the Ikhwān to esoterism and even Ismā'īlism. The text is extremely difficult to understand,

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largely because many words in the MS lack diacritical marks; this might indicate the ignorance of the copyist, who might have been working on a corrupt model, or more probably his determination to maintain the secrecy of some basic points of the text.

1. The Figure of Adam in the MS Istanbul Esad Efendi 3638

Before studying the passage I wish to approach in detail, I shall outline the general content of the addition, which is divided into four chapters. At the outset the author(s) say the text contains a symbolic explanation of various kinds of worship, and hence the content of the addition is linked to that of Epistle 50. The aim of the text, in view of major controversies in various groups in contemporaneous Islam, is to disclose secret knowledge about the scriptural story of Adam.

The writer(s) rely on the principle that "roots" must be addressed before any "ramifications". All that exists in the human world already existed potentially in the "roots". This is the case with the story of Adam: in the cosmology described in the text, the universal Adam is said to be the same as the Active Intellect, and the universal Eve the same as the Universal Soul. The desire of the Universal Soul to join Matter is the first "fall" corresponding to the fall narrated in the Scriptures. Just as the human form appeared from the Universal Soul the particular Adam branched off from the universal Eve. The particular Eve appeared from the particular Adam; and as the Active Intellect is superior to the Universal Soul, so the male is nobler than the female. A proof of that is that a sexual relationship does not bring any pain to the man, whereas it results in painful childbirth for the woman.

The rational soul also proceeds from the Universal Soul, and like Matter receives her benefits – but because this comes from a degradation of the Universal Soul, so the rational soul is corrupted by the imaginative faculty that leads it to commixture with natural faculties. The rational soul is the particular Adam, the appetitive faculty is Iblīs and the forbidden tree is Nature.

Even in her abased condition the Universal Soul continues to look for similarity to her cause – the Active Intellect. So, by returning to her initial state she redeems the rational soul. This redemption occurs at the time of the "second beginning" – the restoration of a new Cycle of Unveiling[3]. During the Cycle of

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[3]   According to Shīʿism and Ismāʿīlism, the current human history has seen a succession of six *nuṭaqāʾ* (pl. of *nāṭiq*, "speaking"), "prophets who bring a religious law": Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad. This whole period is considered to be a "Cycle of Occultation" (*satr*), because the true knowledge is hidden behind the exoteric religious Law. Every *nāṭiq* has his own trustee who reveals – to the initiates only – the esoteric meaning of their own Law. Before the Cycle of Occultation,

Unveiling, particular souls return to the Universal Soul purified as a result of the appearance of a "perfect form" – the Shīʿī (or Ismāʿīlī) *imām*. In the Cycle of Occultation, however, this perfect form was absent because Iblīs has gained power. Through the Cycles of Unveiling and Occultation, therefore, we have returned to the story of the scriptural Adam – the particular Adam – with whom the story of the *imām* is now interwoven. The redemption of the particular souls and of the Universal Soul are symbolised by the resurrection of each single individual and the Great Resurrection – the Day of Judgement. The chapter of the addition we are interested in speaks of:

> [...] the meaning of the particular Adam – understanding by him the first of the human forms [...], [of] his Iblīs, of his wife and of the tree [...] according to the meaning of the interpretation [...] related to the first of the *qāʾim*s in the human cycles who existed at the end of the first Cycle of Unveiling [...] the Adam supported by the perfection of the male, his wife who obeyed him, the pure progeny spread from them, [and] Iblīs, absent [...] at its [= of the Cycle of Unveiling] beginning, [but] present at its end [...] [It is a Chapter concerning] the existence of the Adam who became manifest at the beginning of the Cycle of Occultation; the victory of Iblīs over him through seduction, ruse and treachery; his [= Adam's] association with his [= Iblīs'] children, and [Iblīs'] resistance to the Lord of the Imperative. (fol. 281b8-13)

The way in which he is defined indicates that "Adam" is either the universal Adam – the progenitor of humankind – or the perfect *imām* who lived in the first Cycle of Unveiling, when Iblīs was absent. The apparition of Iblīs is located at the beginning of our Cycle of Occultation. But the particular Adam is also hinted at, to whom the Lord of the Imperative – in Ismāʿīlī terms, God – "[...] had delivered [...] the legacy of what will come to pass [...] had given [*al-taslīm*] [...] the letters of the names by which the knowledge of things is extracted after [their] composition and aggregation" (fol. 281b13-14).

2. Letters, Names and Knowledge

The submission of letters and names is described in Chapter 4 of the addition, and I wish to deal with it in particular.

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there was a period in which the esoteric meaning of the Law was fully manifest (namely, a "Cycle of Unveiling", *kashf*). The seventh individual, the *qāʾim*, will abrogate Muḥammad's Law and restore the pure affirmation of divine unity and uniqueness of the times preceding Adam's fall; in doing so, he will open a new Cycle of Unveiling. According to some later Ismāʿīlī trends, there is an endless alternation between Cycles of Unveiling and Occultation.

According to Qur'an 2:30-34 God taught Adam the names of creatures when He decided to establish him as His vicar on earth – and in doing so He placed him above the angels:

> Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? – whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify thy holy (name)?' He said: 'I know what ye know not.' And He taught Adam the nature of all things [literally, the names, here and later, C.B.]; then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell Me the nature of these if ye are right.' They said: 'Glory to Thee, of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us: in truth it is Thou who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.' He said: 'O Adam! Tell them their natures.' When he had told them, Allah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heaven and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?' And behold, We said to the angels: 'Bow down to Adam,' and they bowed down: not so Iblīs: he refused and was haughty: he was of those who reject Faith. (trans. Yusuf Ali 2000)

Other Qur'anic passages tell about the refusal of Iblīs to prostrate himself before Adam, his urging Adam to disobedience and the expulsion from Paradise of Adam and Eve and Iblīs himself[4], but this is the only verse in which Adam and the "names" are mentioned.

In Islam, by dint of the divine teaching of the names, Adam becomes the first *nāṭiq*, the first speaker, that is the first "bringer of a Revelation" – the Revelation of the names as manifesting knowledge of the essence or true nature of the creatures.

Verses 31-37 of sura 2 have been interpreted by Henry Corbin in a way that could partially agree with our addition, because it refers to the scriptural Adam and to the Shī'ī *imām* as well. According to Corbin, the Great Cycle that includes the totality of the Cycles – the "first beginning" in our text – began with a Cycle of Unveiling inaugurated by the Manifestation of the universal Adam, the Πανάνθρωπος; each Cycle in turn is inaugurated by a particular Adam. Thus the "historical" Adam of our Cycle, spoken of in the Bible and the Qur'an, is far from having been the first man on earth. At the time of the grave symptoms which marked the end of the Cycle of Unveiling that preceded our Cycle, the last *imām* decided once more to impose the discipline of the Arcane, and to confer the imamate to the young Adam – the vicar on the earth spoken of in the Qur'an –, whose father had himself died in the flower of his youth. The transition to the Cycle of Occultation is marked by the entrance of an Antagonist, who is the personification of that Iblīs who, before the beginning of Time, caused the partial obfuscation of the Angel of Humanity. He is one of the surviving dignitaries of

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4   Qur'an 2: 33; 7: 12-13; 15: 26-36; 17: 64 and 66; 18: 49; 20: 116, and 15: 27.

the previous Cycle who, as such, is of "an essence of fire". This means that he possesses a direct knowledge of the Truths of the Gnosis, whereas Adam is made of clay, and this means that the sole knowledge that he transmits to those of his Cycle is a hermeneutic of Symbols. Hence the Antagonist refuses to acknowledge him as the *imām* – to "prostrate himself before him" – and decides to provoke a catastrophe. So, he induces the young *imām* to transgress the limits of Eden – where symbols burgeon and in which he is still allowed to dwell by the discipline of the Arcane. He incites Adam to aspire to the Knowledge reserved to the sublime Angels – namely, to the knowledge of hidden Realities that constitutes in its own right the state of Resurrection. So, Adam "breaks the fast", the vow of silence that is the main ritual prescription of the esoteric Order. "To break the fast" is to taste of the Tree of Knowledge reserved to angels in actuality, to strip oneself of the protective veil of symbol; and this is how Adam appears before his own appalled dignitaries, in that state of terrifying nakedness which leaves him defenceless. Everybody must then leave Paradise[5].

With regard to our text, however, Corbin's interpretation is defective because it does not consider the issue of the "names". This is not only a central issue in our text, it seems to "supplement" the Qur'an, which does not say that God is the "bestower of letters" as well as of names. Letters, in fact, form names when they are in state of "aggregation and composition" and, as taught in logical treatises, are meaningful only when they combine with each other to give origin to words[6].

But this state of aggregation and composition was "contrary" to the disposition of the letters during the Cycle of Unveiling:

> However, they combined with each other in a way contrary to the disposition at the time of the Cycle of Unveiling, when those letters were separated in the subtleties of speculations while lights were united to them as they [= speculations] were free from disobedience and deprived of error and the infamous faults – and the [letters] were not veiled from their reading and their dispositions.
> When [Eve] disobeyed and involved [Adam] in her disobedience, she looked to God's mercy but her disobedience had concealed it. He gave in to it and to what she had read out [= the letters in their primordial isolation] and considered what she had been looking at when she succumbed and evil overcame her. So, they were sent in

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5   Corbin 1986, 150-152 (= Corbin 1950, 202-206 *passim*; see 217-218).

6   With this regard, it is worth recalling that in his version of the *Sefer yeṣirah* (on which see *infra*) the great rabbi, philosopher and exegete Saʿadiah ben Yosef Gaon (Arabic: Saʿīd ibn Yūsuf al-Fayyūmī; Dilas 882 – Baghdad 942) understands the three *sepharim* mentioned at the beginning of the text as meaning that an idea can be expressed through three things: i) sound, to which words correspond; ii) words, which constitute language; and iii) phrases, which come from the mouth. Neither sounds nor words have intelligible meaning in themselves: sense is complete in phrases only. Saadya 1986, 46. *Ivi*, 47, we find a reference to Psalms 19,4. Saadiah's personal opinion is that things were made out of numbers and letters (*ivi*, 25).

the world of body and dropped <...>, and those forms turned into incomprehensible letters. When they were aggregated, the names of those luminous forms were drawn out from them – [as] the letters proper to the [Universal] Soul – and he [= Adam] was characterised by names without meaning. (fol. 281b14-19)

Our addition means that at the time of the Cycle of Unveiling, in a state of primordial innocence, letters were separated from each other and still their meaning could be understood thanks to the divine light. After Adam's fall, they became "incomprehensible", that is, conjoined in a way that no longer corresponded to the forms inscribed in the Active Intellect. At this moment, the Cycle of Occultation began:

> For that [reason] the Cycle of Occultation came after that Adam, with his progeny, was charged with the names: among them [= Adam's progeny] [there was] he who worshipped a name without meaning, he who worshipped a meaning and did not conceal it with a name, and he who knew the name and was sure of the meaning – for this one, worship was perfect. (fol. 281b19-21)

On the one hand, these words may be an allusion to the imperfection of the revelation of Adam, as of each revelation in human Cycles preceding that of the Prophet of Islam. On the other hand, they hint at the *imām*, who is the only person capable – in the Cycle of Occultation – of remembering the "original" names along with the meanings that match them, and hence to accomplish perfect worship – that is, to attain the degree of angels. The *imām*, in fact, knows all the forms inscribed in the Active Intellect – the letters that in primordial time were separated from each other and could be read in another kind of "disposition". This is confirmed by the following lines, where after having mentioned the disobedience of our progenitors, the text passes to the disobedience of Iblīs:

> When Iblīs, who was the last one to remain of the people of the Cycle of Unveiling, saw that [that] Adam did not give names composed of letters [in the correct disposition] – indeed, he was giving the people of his Cycle names without knowledge of meanings, abstracted from their matter –, he disdained His order to obey and said, *I am better than he: Thou didst create me from fire, and him from clay* [Qurʾan 7:12]. (fol. 281b21-23)

The refusal of Iblīs to prostrate himself is due to the fact that, he being "made out of fire", "[...] he had read those names without aggregation or composition, through a luminous investigation and a rational consideration, free of turbid faults" (fol. 281b23-24). Iblīs knows that an *imām* retains the memory of the original names; if he gives (like the scriptural Adam after the fall), the people of his Cycle names "without knowledge of meanings" (*dūna maʿrifat al-maʿānī*), he is no longer worthy of his title. Therefore, Iblīs – the only survivor of the

Cycle of Unveiling, who has read the names in their primordial isolation, in the state of innocence – refuses to prostrate himself before the *imām*. But saying that an *imām* gives names to the people of his Cycle "without knowledge of meanings" can only indicate for him the practice of *taqiyya* – dissimulation or denial of religious belief and practice in the face of persecution in the Cycle of Occultation, when people should not know their true meanings. *Dūna maʿrifat al-maʿānī* means not "without knowing", but "without making people know", "without they know" their meanings. Such a misunderstanding would be Iblīs' fault; for this reason, his refusal to comply with God's order causes his expulsion from Paradise.

> But when he resisted with this [kind of] resistance, he was veiled from that view, was turned upside down, became confused, ceased from that consideration and was veiled from it, and it was said to him, *get out, for thou art of the meanest (of creatures)* [Qurʾan 7: 13], for your resistance and your opposition [see Qurʾan 7: 12; 17: 66]. (fol. 281b24-25)

Though Iblīs is said to be the one who "expected the pure worship […] [in reality], by opposing to his Lord, [he] desired to be associated [with Him]" (fol. 281b12). Therefore, not only is this Iblīs charged with the sin of *hybris* – as is the case for his disobedience to prostrate himself before the scriptural Adam: he is now charged with polytheism, because he wanted to appropriate for himself functions proper to God (here, the function of judgment). The text ends as follows:

> This is an indication of what is found in the human circle and [in] the descendants of Adam when chiefs come and those who follow them in the Cycle of Unveiling: through their essential, luminous lights they investigate knowledge as if it were a reflection without composition or aggregation, and the intermediaries that pass that knowledge to them [= the descendants of Adam] are [of the same nature as the Universal] Soul, holy [for the] faculty of the [Active] Intellect. [Instead,] in the Cycle of Occultation the meanings of the intelligible and the sensible objects are notified to them, but their investigation [is associated] with composition and aggregation, and with the conjunction of the subtle with the dense. (fol. 281b33-282a1)[7]

To sum up: In the state of primordial innocence, the letters are isolated, but perfectly comprehensible in themselves. In the Cycle of Unveiling, God submits them to Adam in the correct composition and aggregation, transmitting to

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[7]   I limit myself to remark that this paragraph might contain another resemblance with the above-mentioned interpretation by Corbin, but saving the *imām*'s impeccability and infallibility. If "chiefs and those who follow them in the Cycle of Unveiling" hint at the highest degrees of the Ismāʿīlī hierarchy, the text might mean that in the Cycle of Occultation they have investigated isolated letters and pure forms and transmitted such a knowledge, which should have been kept secret.

him the knowledge of the entire creation. But after the fall, the understanding of the meanings of sensible and intelligible things is endangered by changed composition and aggregation. The "letters" in the lower world are only a pale image of the letters of the heavenly world, characterised by direct origination from God. From the ontological standpoint, the junction of the rarefied with the dense corresponds with this feature.

3. The *Sefer Yeṣirah* as Ground of Abulafia's Kabbalistic Doctrine

In this section I first compare the addition with the views of the Spaniard mystic and thinker Abraham Abulafia, one of the most important representatives of the ecstatic and prophetical Kabbalah. He was born in Zaragoza in 1240 and died some time after 1291[8].

Divine language is the core of Abulafia's kabbalistic views[9]. As we know he developed his theories on the basis of the first Judaic script on the topic, the ancient *Sefer Yeṣirah* "The Book of Formation". Here the term "formation" indicates a work or "creation" from something pre-existing and hence excludes *creatio ex nihilo*[10]. A part of tradition ascribes the book to the patriarch Abraham, mentioned at the end of the text, who is considered to be the inventor of the alphabet. Another tradition points to the "Chief of the Sages" Rabbi Akiva ben Joseph (ca. 50-135 A.D.), a leading contributor to the *Mishnah* and to *Midrash*

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[8]   Some time ago, I participated in the conference *Centri e periferie nella storia del pensiero filosofico* (Lecce, 26-28 marzo 2017), where I read a paper (Baffioni Forthcoming) in which I considered the issue of the language taught to Adam in the addition, in light of the article "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man" by Walter Benjamin (1892-1940). This essay was brought to my attention by Tara Woolnough, editor in chief of the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. I quote from Benjamin 1986. The text remained unpublished during Benjamin's life, and was first published in Edmund Jephcott's English translation in 1978 (Benjamin 1986, 74). German version titled "Über die Sprache überhaupt und über die Sprache des Menschen", in *Angelus Novus*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag 1966. Despite the wide debate around the time of its composition, the article is supposed to have been inspired by Gershom Scholem, who initiated Benjamin to Jewish mystics. For the suggestion to consider Abulafia I thank in particular Fabrizio Lelli, Antonino Rubino and Diana Di Segni. I am also deeply indebted to my colleague and friend Giancarlo Lacerenza, who attentively read a first draft of this paper offering illuminating suggestions, and kindly provided me with some materials related to my research. Of course, all deficiencies are my own responsibility.

[9]   As remarked by Lacerenza, one should not speak of Kabbalah before the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. Therefore, referring to the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', I simply speak of "Jewish influences". We could suggest a kabbalistic influence for the text of the MS Istanbul Efendi 3638, but there is no certainty about when it has been actually written.

[10]   "The verb *br'* used in the very first sentence of the creation story does not imply [...] *creatio ex nihilo*, a concept that first appears in II Maccabees 7 :28, but denotes, as it does throughout the Bible, a divine activity that is effortlessly effected" (Paul 1971, 1059). On the reason of Castelli's translation "creazione" and not "formazione" see [Donnolo] 1880, 38.

Halakha (Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph 1970, 10): obviously, both attributions are without foundations and the real authorship of the book remains a matter of debate[11].

Accordingly, the hypotheses concerning the dating of the *Sefer Yeṣirah* are numerous. Some authors – such as for instance Lazarus Goldsmith – placed the *Sefer Yeṣirah* at 100 A.D., others – such as Leopold Zunz – between 800 and 900 A.D. Gershom Scholem proposes a range between the third and the sixth century, in Palestine[12]. According to Piergabriele Mancuso, the work was likely composed between the sixth and the seventh century in Palestinian area (Mancuso 2001, 7).

We can read the *Sefer Yeṣirah* in a short version of 1,300 words and a long one of 2,500 words[13], to which the abovementioned version of Saʿadiah ben Yosef Gaon and that of Rabbi Eliyahu Gaon of Vilna (1720-1797) are to be added (Mancuso 2001, 8). The *Sefer Yeṣirah* was introduced to Christian scholarship *via* a Latin translation of William Postel in 1552 (Klein 1994), ten years prior to the first issue of the printed Hebrew text, which took place in Mantua in 1562 (Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph 1970, 3).

The book is divided into two parts. The first consists of a cosmology, and the second establishes a correspondence between the work of God in the universe and in the human body – with no mention of a human soul.

The *Sefer Yeṣirah* says that God engraved His name in thirty-two mysterious Paths of Wisdom, through three *Sepharim* (*sprym*)[14]. That is to say that the universe was created through the three divisions of creation called *sefer*, *sefar* and *sippur* (I, 1)[15]. These terms are variously understood and translated by scholars[16], but they can be generally deemed to refer to numbers, letters and the ways in which they are combined in words or speech.

The thirty-two Paths are the ten *Sephiroth* and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The *Sephiroth* are said to be the same as numbers (I, 3)[17] and are to be understood as the degrees of creation. From the Spirit God "produced

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[11]   On this see e.g. [Donnolo] 1880, 13. According to Scholem, the attribution to rabbi Akiva "only makes its appearance in the Kabbalah literature from the 13th century onward" (Scholem 1971b, 786).

[12]   Various hypotheses are discussed: see Scholem 1971b, 785-786.

[13]   Both the versions are edited in Hayman 2004.

[14]   *Sprym* is only a plural hinting at three different objects with a common root *spr*. Therefore, Lacerenza proposes to leave it untranslated. The term, however, is sometimes translated as "books". So the English translator, William Wynn Westcott: "SPRIM, the plural masculine of SPR, commonly translated *book* or *letter:* the meaning here is plainly 'forms of expression'". Sepher Yetzirah 1893, 34: note 7. No translation provided in Shadmi's Italian version. *Sepher Yetzira'* 1981, 8.

[15]   See Sepher Yetzirah 1893, 34: note 8.

[16]   [Donnolo] 1880, 32-33; Mancuso 2001, 106; Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph 1970, 5; Saadya 1986, 30.

[17]   On this see [Donnolo] 1880, 23.

Air, and formed in it twenty-two sounds––the letters" (I, 10)[18], that "are the Foundation of all things" (II, 1)[19]. One might say that the *Sephiroth* are like form and the letters like matter. With these twenty-two letters God composed every created thing (II, 1-2).

With regard to our topic, a basic work of Abraham Abulafia is *The Epistle on the seven paths (Sheva Netivot ha-Torah)*, in which he repeatedly mentions the *Sefer Yeṣirah*. The "paths" are the ways that lead to the comprehension of the Torah. In the sixth path, which describes how one may attain knowledge of the Name of God – which amounts to knowledge of God Himself – Abulafia uses the techniques of *gematria*[20] and *notarikon*[21] which also imply permutations and substitutions of letters. The process could continue infinitely: it comes to an end only because of the weakness of human intellect[22]. The sixth path fits only those whose activity is joined to the Active Intellect[23]. After the description of the sixth path, Abulafia refers to *Sefer Yeṣirah*[24]. The seventh path – the seat of the Sacred – encompasses all the others: those who enter it become aware of the divine *Logos* – the Word par excellence[25]. The *Logos* is represented as an overabundance of the Name – a divine emanation or *šefaʿ*[26] – that reaches rational faculty through the mediation of the Active Intellect; in other words it becomes the prophetical faculty[27].

Similar ideas are also expounded in his *Book of the Sign*, written during Abulafia's exile on the island of Comino near Malta between 1285 and 1288. In this visionary and autobiographical treatise the author, who bears the oneiric and biblical name Zechariah, is charged by God with the composition of a book whose ideas would distance him from the sages of Israel. Abulafia believes that the

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[18] I quote from Wm. Wynn Westcott's translation. *Sepher Yetzirah* 1893, 16.

[19] *Ivi*, 18.

[20] Putting into relationship the words and their numerical value, *gematria* explains language by itself and not by the mediation of concepts. See Trigano 2008, 22. Through *gematria*, the 70 languages may be known. [Abulafia] 2008, 46.

[21] *Notarikon* is an exegetical technique that understands words as sigla (each letter of a word as the initial letter of another word), or breaks the words down into two or more elements, each of them endowed with a proper meaning: [Abulafia] 2008, 47.

[22] [Abulafia] 2008, 47.

[23] *Ivi*, 45-46.

[24] *Ivi*, 49. Another reference to the *Sefer Yetzirah* is found *ivi*, 68.

[25] *Ivi*, 49-50 and notes 88-89.

[26] *Ivi*, 50: note 90.

[27] "Cette voie mène à l'essence même de la prophétie authentique ; elle donne les moyens d'une approche de la quiddité du Nom unique, à cet être unique qu'est le prophète parmi les hommes." (*ivi*, 50) Here Abulafia refers to Maimonides, for whom, however, divine speech is a metaphor only. *Ivi*, 50: note 92.

Tetragrammaton – the four-letter biblical name of the God of Israel – is sealed in the human soul and assumes that the mysteries of divine names will be revealed through the combinations – *ṣeruphim* – of its letters, which have the power to illuminate all things. By invoking special mystical practices Abulafia aimed at the highest spiritual experiences and even prophecy, which would eventually enable him to apprehend intuitively the true nature of God (Aboulafia 2007, 5-6).

Abulafia himself wrote a commentary on the *Sefer Yeṣirah*, which is still unpublished[28] and contains important autobiographical material. It was composed in Sicily in 1289[29] and is entitled *Treasury of the Hidden Eden* (*Oṣar Eden HaGanuz*). A part of it, from the Bodleian Ms. Or. 606, has been translated by Aryeh Kaplan. In it Abulafia claims that because the letters are the very essence of creation, their force can be channelled into his spiritual being through writing them and composing permutations of them[30]. In Kaplan's words, "The way of Permutation is the closest way to truly know God"[31].

4. Walter Benjamin's Interpretation of Divine and Human Language

Before I offer a brief comparison between our texts, I must make one important observation. The relationship between Adam and language in the Bible and Qur'an commonly leads to the recognition of two different conceptions of language. Adam appears in the second tale of creation[32] provided by the Book

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[28]   Lacerenza calls attention to the following amateur edition and translation: Alexandru Munteanu (Ed.), Abraham Abulafia, *Oṣar Eden Ganuz*, David Smith USA 2016. Extracts of the work in A. Neubauer, "Oṣar Eden ganuz", *Revue des études juives* 9 (1884).

[29]   Kaplan 1982, 74. According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, the work was written in 1285-86.

[30]   *Ivi*, 83.

[31]   *Ivi*, 84. The word *ṣeruf*, permutation, usually means "to purify', as clarified *ivi*, 323: note 99. Abulafia describes his mystical experience as follows: "Write each expression down immediately. Manipulate the letters and seek out other words having the same numerical value [...] this will be your key to open the fifty gates of wisdom [...] You must be alone when you do this. Meditate (*hitboded*) in a state of rapture so as to receive the divine influx [...] Permute the letters [...] and you will reach the first level [...] The hairs on your head will stand on end and tremble [...] This blood within you will begin to vibrate because of the living permutations that loosen it. Your entire body will then begin to tremble, and all your limbs will be seized with shuddering. You will experience the terror of God [...] You will then feel as if an additional spirit is within you, [...] passing through your entire body and giving you pleasure. It will seem as you have been anointed with perfumed oil [...] You will rejoice and have great pleasure. You will experience ecstasy and trembling [...] This is like a rider who races a horse, the rider rejoices and is ecstatic, while the horse trembles under him [...] through this wondrous method, you will have reached one of the Fifty Gates of Understanding. This is the lowest gate [...]" (*ivi*, 85).

[32]   "Another story of creation, *Genesis* 2: 4b-24 [...] describes a much more anthropocentric version" (Paul 1971, 1060).

of *Genesis*[33]: according to Walter Benjamin's article *On Language as Such and on the Language of Man* – probably inspired by Gershom Scholem's ideas on Jewish mystics –, Adam "is […] invested with the *gift* of language and is elevated above nature"(Benjamin 1986, 322)[34]. According to Benjamin, in the name man enters in communion with the creative divine word – God's linguistic being – that is, God made things knowable in their names. But far from wishing to subject humankind to language – the instrument of His creation – God disposes that language in humankind is a free choice: "God rested when he had left his creative power to itself in man" (Benjamin 1986, 323). Scholars have consequently recognised the conception of language by convention in the biblical tale[35].

On the other hand the conception of language by nature can be detected in Qur'an 2:31. As explained by the Muslim philosophers who substitute the divine attributes of Will and Power with the divine attribute of Knowledge, divine creation is represented as embedding in matter the forms that are found in the mind of God, to which names correspond – and there can be only one name for any individual created being[36].

Despite the radical diversity between language by convention and language by nature, Benjamin's analysis shows the contrast to be more apparent than real. If humanity names things according to divine Knowledge then "Man is the knower in the same language in which God is creator"(Benjamin 1986, 323). When God created him in his image, he established an identity between the mental being of man and the language in which creation took place, between the mental being of man and the word that is the linguistic being of God. In this perspective, man is not so free to name things. Hence, according to Benjamin, Adam limits himself

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[33] The Book of *Genesis* provides two different tales of creation. In the first one, in the recurrent formula, "Let there be […] He named", Walter Benjamin recognised both creative language and finished creation, both word and name. The divine word "is cognizant because it is name" (Benjamin 1986, 323), as is demonstrated by the second recurring formula, "God saw that it was good".

[34] *Genesis* 2.19-20 says, "Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast in the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him." English standard version (ESV) consulted on line on June 28th 2019, https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2&version=ESV. On this passage see Pope 1971, 234.

[35] On this issue see [Abulafia] 2008, 91.

[36] This theory is surprisingly similar to Scholem's description of the kabbalistic process: "At the head of the world of divine qualities he puts the 'thought' (*maḥashavah*), from which emerged the divine utterances, the 'words' (λόγοι) by means of which the world was created. Above the 'thought' is the Hidden God, who is called for the first time by the name *Ein-Sof* ('the Infinite' […]). Man's thought ascends through mystic meditation until it reaches, and is subsumed into, Divine 'Thought' […] The speech of men is connected with divine speech, and all language, whether heavenly or human, derives from one source – the Divine Name." Scholem 1971a, 523. This statement is made with regard to the commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah* of Isaac the Blind (d. ca. 1235), Abraham b. David's son.

to expressing the knowledge God transmitted to him – moving from a mental language to another mental language. And the language of the biblical God are exactly the names that, in the Qur'an, God teaches to man.

In our text, the aggregation of letters in names – letters that mirror the substance of the forms that God had passed onto the heavenly hypostases so to eventually give origin to the world recalls the abovementioned philosophical Islamic representations of creation, and corresponds to the "sounds" produced by the biblical Adam to translate divine knowledge into things[37].

On the other hand, the letter-forms of our addition in their original isolation exactly mirror the Paradisiac language of perfect knowledge described by Benjamin; and the aggregation "contrary" to that of the letters of the names taught by God seems – after the fall – to reproduce the biblical Babel of languages, in which humankind shifted between names devoid of meanings and meanings devoid of names because they no longer had a secure basis for understanding. In this context we should remember how the beginning of the Cycle of Occultation was described in our addition: "[there was] he who worshipped a name without meaning, he who worshipped a meaning and did not conceal it with a name, and he who knew the name and was sure of the meaning" (fol. 281b19-21).

5. The Addition in MS Istanbul Esad Efendi 3638 and Abulafia: A Comparison

I focus now on some of the numerous similarities recognizable in the conceptions of language gleaned from the Arabic addition – and, more generally, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' – and Abulafia.

The concept of God as the Maker of the Universe, which is clear in the *Sefer Yeṣirah* that is at the basis of Abulafia's doctrines, is widespread in the Ikhwānian encyclopaedia and in Islamic thought in general, where it is usually related to Plato's *Timaeus*. Other features proper to the *Sefer Yeṣirah* can be detected in Muslim philosophy and in our addition and/or the encyclopaedia of the Brethren of Purity.

The existence of the twenty-two Hebrew letters set there at the beginning of the process of creation, where the letters symbolise the various elements of creation, corresponds to the primordial isolation of the letters in the Arabic text. The idea that God composed every created thing and the form of everything which shall hereafter be (VI, 9)[38] from the twenty-two letters recalls the names

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[37]   Vajda 2002, 72, who remarks that "tout cela est écarté de Dieu."

[38]   See VI, 9 in Shadmi's translation: "Queste sono le 22 lettere, con cui incise EHYE 1,YA 2, 3

that in paragraph 7 of our addition God later gave to creatures – "the names of what was to come and appear from them" (fol. 280b10). Numbers are not explicitly mentioned in the Arabic text, but numerology is a constant element in Islamic cosmologies and in the Ikhwānian cosmology in particular[39]. In our addition, number finds its role in the opposition between one and two and between the absolute uniqueness of God and the duality of creation, starting from the Active Intellect. The names of the whole of reality are derived from the primordial "couples" of which the passage speaks.

Another possible comparison is with the end of the *Sefer Yeṣirah* (VI, 4) where Abraham and God's covenant with him are mentioned:

> And after that our father Abraham had perceived, and understood, and had taken down and engraved all these things, the Lord most high revealed Himself, and called him His beloved, and made a Covenant with him and his seed; and Abraham believed on Him and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. And He made this Covenant as between the ten toes of the feet – this is like that of circumcision; and as between the ten fingers of the hands and this is that of the tongue. And He bound the twenty-two letters unto his speech and shewed him all the mysteries of them[40].

Almost at the end of the Arabic addition, the author establishes a connection between "the world of the spheres and the dwellers of heavens" and "the true natures of things and attributes as viewed by Abraham". To do so, he compares the Sun, perfect in its lights by itself, and the Moon that acquires its light from the Sun but is destined to give it back to the Sun. When the Moon is full, "it shines at the time when the bestower of light sets, with the perfection of its lights, in imitation of [the Sun]". But at that moment, the Sun turns and begins to withdraw its light from the Moon – with no decrease or increase in it during the process (fol. 281b27-33). This passage can be seen as an allusion to the letters (i) in their primordial state and (ii) as the seminal reasons of creation. My hypothesis is confirmed by the terminology used. In paragraph 23, the author(s) refer to the Sun as having "a perfect encompassment [*iḥāṭat al-tamām*]" of everything under

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יהוה degli eserciti, Dio Onnipotente, Iddio ELOHIM 4, e fece di loro tre Sefarim, e creò da loro tutto il Suo Mondo e formò con esse tutto il Creato e tutto ciò che sarà formato nel futuro." *Sepher Yetzira'* 1981, 27; missing in Wynn Westcott's translation.

[39]   Let us think, e.g., to the four elements, the four primordial qualities, the four temperaments; the five geometrical solids symbolizing the elements; the seven planets; the eighth mixtures; the nine kinds of the three natural kingdoms (minerals, plants and animals); the twelve constellations, etc.

[40]   *Sepher Yetzirah* 1893, 26-27. So Shadmi's translation of VI, 10: "E quando capì Abramo nostro padre, e guardò e vide e incise e plasmò e riuscì a comprendere, allora apparve su di lui il Signore di tutto e lo chiamò Mio Amore, e fece con lui il patto tra le dieci dita delle sue mani ed è questo il patto della lingua, e tra le dieci dita dei piedi ed è questo il patto della «MILA'», e così disse su di lui: Prima di formarti nel grembo già ti conoscevo." *Sepher Yetzira'* 1981, 27.

it, and to the full Moon in front of the Sun as having an "embracement [proper to] consideration [*iḥāṭat al-taʾammul*]", probably as an allusion to the fact that the Moon "reflects" the light of the Sun. In paragraph 24, the higher degrees of the Ismāʿīlī hierarchy investigate knowledge "as if it were a reflection [*istqrāʾ taʾammul*] without composition or aggregation".

For Abulafia, Hebrew language is the symbol of the election of Israel (Trigano 2008, 18). God's choice in favour of Israel, its language and writing, makes Hebrew a sacred language that – through combination of letters – encompasses the whole of 70 languages of people[41]. In the Islamic tradition, Arabic is the language of God, in which He revealed the Holy Qurʾan, the final revelation. In his commentary on the *Epistle on the Seven Paths* Shmuel Trigano remarks that Hebrew language is the most immediate reality for the Jewish consciousness: it is the matter of the world and nature, the "book of Nature" that can be directly read by humans. To study the holy Book is the same as studying the laws of Nature. In the creation the Word is immediately the same as the real; the same Hebrew term *davar* indicates the thing and the word, *res* and *verba* (Trigano 2008, 21). The text continues in a different perspective[42]; but also in Islamic thought – Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ included – there are two languages of God, both expressed in terms of *āyāt*: the spoken language – the Qurʾan, where *āyāt* means "verses" – and the written language – Nature, where *āyāt* means "signs'. Studying the two offers the possibility of apprehending something of the divine Nature. Commenting upon an untitled fragment of the MS Florence Laurentiana-Medicea Plut. II, 48:

> [...] the truth of the attainment of reality is the comprehension of the divine name, and [...] within the 22 letters the comprehension of the name is found, [...] and [...] out of the combination of letters, the known, the knower, and knowledge [are one] ... [dots in the text] and whoever comprehends the Agent Intellect gains the life of the world to come and belongs to the secret of the angels of the living God (Idel 2011b, 60).

Moshe Idel identifies its author in Abulafia and remarks that "The affinity between letters and the knowledge of the Agent Intellect means that the cosmic intellect is attained by means of the combination of letters" (Idel 2011b, 367: note 45). Despite the role played by logic in the Arabic addition, our text introduces "aggregation and composition" in the knowledge and teaching of the *imām* and hints at a symbolic language and a secret knowledge. When it is stated that the

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[41]   *Book of the Seven Ways*, Book II, 8 (*ibid.*, 92). In Book II, 9 alphabet is described. The ink is like seminal fluid. In Book II, 10 letters are said to be composed of matter and form; words of letters; things of words; hence, the letters inform us about the whole reality. Everything can be perceived in three different ways: the written book, the spoken speech, and the spiritual book compound of thought letters.

[42]   Trigano 2008, 21: "Mais au commencement n'était pas le verbe [...]".

imām knows all the forms inscribed in the Active Intellect – the isolated letters that in primordial time could be read in another kind of "disposition" – a further parallel arises with the prophetic knowledge as described by Abulafia.

Abulafia's conception of the divine *Logos* that somehow selects a prophet from among humankind recalls ideas that were widespread in Islamic thought from the tenth century onward. Generally speaking, it states that God emanates onto the Active Intellect the forms of the things kept in His mind, which through the Universal Soul pass to human rational souls. According to the philosopher al-Fārābī (d. 950), when a sage comes to know all the forms possessed by the Active Intellect in his "acquired Intellect" he becomes the same as a prophet. The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' maintain ideas very similar to this, even from the lexical standpoint. In the cosmology described in our addition, God set the form of the things in the Active Intellect (fol. 280b13); later, it is said that the rational soul proceeded from the Universal Soul in the same way as the Universal Soul proceeded from the Active Intellect, and that the rational soul receives the benefits joined to the Universal Soul without any intermediary (fol. 280b35-281a2).

The main issue in the Jewish works we have considered is the language of God, and even the Name of God. The Arabic text does not explicitly refer to the Name of God, but it is certainly God's language that was taught to Adam. According to Shī'ī esoterism, on the other hand, the *imām* knows the "Supreme Name of God"; and the *imām* is one of the protagonists of our addition.

6. The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', Dunash ibn Tamīm and Shabbetay Donnolo

My comparison is grounded on the synchrony between the Arabic MS and the texts by Abulafia. If the Arabic addition were approximately contemporary with the Jewish thinker we would have further evidence – this time drawn from esoteric sources – of the circulation of similar ideas in Muslim and Jewish contexts and between the Muslim East and al-Andalus[43], despite the differences in their approaches to the issue of the primordial letters[44]. Biblical influence on the Arabic text is also demonstrated by some scriptural references in it, such as

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[43] Abulafia is also indicated as "a preacher of a new Kabbalah to both Jews and Christians [...] producing [...] writings, which would contribute substantially to both the Jewish and the Christian cultures." (Idel 2011a, 31).

[44] Two more elements are introduced *ex novo* in the Arabic text: the allusion to the practice of *taqiyya*, and the sin of the *imām* when he breaks the silence and reveals what should have not been revealed. Note, however, that in the *Epistle on the seven ways*, Book II, 2 the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (that is in truth the Tree of Death) are mentioned. [Abulafia] 2008, 62. They are, I assume, proper to the Ismā'īlī milieu in which the addition was probably added to the text of the epistle; therefore, their presence do not affect the legitimacy of my comparison.

the emphasis given to Eve's role in the story of the fall of Adam and the allusion to her derivation from one of Adam's ribs, which are not found in the Qur'an[45].

The influence of the Bible and of Jewish religious culture and thought would not be disproved if the Arabic addition were older than the thirteenth century. Its anonymous author(s) may well have known the *Sefer Yeṣirah*.

There is another issue with regard to this point, about which I can here offer only a brief remark. Besides the one by the abovementioned Saʿadiah Gaon, among the most renowned commentaries on the *Sefer Yeṣirah* in Arabic or Judaeo-Arabic there are those by Dunash ibn Tamīm (the Arabic Abū Sahl, b. ca. 885, d. after 955, according to other sources 900-960)[46] and Shabbatai Donnolo (b. Oria ca. 913, d. not before 982)[47].

Clear resemblances with the encyclopaedia of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' are evident in these commentaries. Both of them develop comparisons between the stars and other parts of creation, and between the stars and parts or organs of the human body. Donnolo develops in his commentary a parallel between macrocosm and microcosm (Mancuso 2001, 18 and 80 ff.), stating that man was created not in the image of God but in the image of creation (Mancuso 2001, 67 ff.): the human being has very few characteristics that could be compared with those of the Lord (Mancuso 2001, 78).

Ibn Tamīm's medical practice at the Fāṭimid court of Qayrawān may have made possible his acquaintance with the Ikhwānian epistles[48]. The case of Donnolo is more problematic, though the Fāṭimids played a role in his life as well. When on 4 July 925 Oria was conquered by amir Jaʿfar ibn ʿUbayd in the name of the caliph ʿUbayd Allāh al-Mahdī, Donnolo was made prisoner and many of his teachers were executed. Later, he was redeemed by his parents in Taranto. His parents were deported to Palermo and later to Africa. From his works (that contain the most part of the data available on his biography) we know that he never moved from southern Italy, where Apulia and Calabria were territories of the Byzantine empire. Here he studied medicine and astronomy with numerous scholars. Besides Hebrew, Donnolo was educated in Greek and Latin, but he did

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[45]   "The two versions of the creation story have often been compared to Mesopotamian prototypes." (Paul 1971, 1061); "The second creation story, too, has Near Eastern prototypes [...] e.g., the Gilgamesh Epic [...] and the creation of woman from a rib may reflect a Sumerian motif (see Kramer)." (*ivi*, 1062).

[46]   Mancuso 2001, 9-10.

[47]   Fiaccadori 1992. The commentaries of Saʿadiah Gaon and Ibn Tamīm are counted among the non-less than seven Arabic commentaries; Jospe 1990.

[48]   Vajda remarks that Ibn Tamīm develops his parallels grounding himself on the *De usu partium* of Galen, a work widely known in the Arabic milieu (Vajda 2002: 13 and 148). See *ivi*: 154 on the legendary identification of Galen with the patriarch Gamliel (more probable the identification with Gamliel VI).

not know Arabic that was spoken nearby in Sicily. Scholars also remark that no traces of Arabic medicine or pharmacopoeia are found in his works; and it is not even sure whether he knew the works of his contemporary Sa'adiah Gaon (Fiaccadori 1992). Whence, then, could he become acquainted with the doctrines of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'?

Were these doctrines counted among the Platonic and Neoplatonic issues thoroughly studied by the tenth century Jewish communities in Byzantine or Latin areas? Or might Donnolo have been taught about them by the Eastern scholars with whom he was studying? In Donnolo's autobiography we read:

> Perciò, *io mi sono sforzato di conoscere, indagare e investigare la scienza* (Qo 7,25) dei Greci, la scienza degli Ismaeliti, la scienza dei Babilonesi e degli Indiani: e non mi diedi pace finché non ebbi (tra)scritto i libri dei sapienti di Grecia. (Lacerenza 2004, 50)[49]

Lacerenza, however, remarks how

> nonostante l'iniziale riferimento anche alla 'scienza degli Ismaeliti' ossia arabo-islamica, Donnolo poi non dichiari [...] di aver adoperato opere di autori musulmani. Il dato non è del tutto inatteso, essendo ancora a venire [...] la stagione delle prime traduzioni in Occidente della letteratura scientifica in lingua araba [...] E nondimeno, il fatto che egli non si sia servito direttamente di testi arabo-islamici, non significa che nell'opera di Donnolo siano assenti [...] riferimenti a concetti o a terminologie mutuate dal mondo musulmano: il cui probabile snodo è [...] ricercabile nell'ultima fonte della sua Sapienza [...] i suoi compagni di studio, le sue guide e i suoi maestri. (Lacerenza 2004, 59-60)

It is probable that cultural exchanges accompanied the struggles between Byzantines and Fāṭimids in Southern Italy[50]. So far, I have been unable to find a source common to the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', Ibn Tamīm and Donnolo apart from the *Sefer Yeṣirah* itself. With regard to the reciprocal similarities, a thorough study is necessary to establish who influenced whom[51]. But if the encyclopaedia can be in some way related to Ibn Tamīm and Donnolo, the most recent hypothesis that it was completed no later than the first decades of the tenth century and the relationship of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' with the Fāṭimids can be confirmed.

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[49] An older survey on Donnolo's biography in [Donnolo] 1880, 5-6.

[50] See Daftary 2007, 143-145.

[51] On the possible relationships between Donnolo and the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' see Lacerenza 2004, 62, to which he adds that: "un raffronto puntuale fra le *Rasā'il*, in particolare i libri II-III, e gli scritti di Donnolo, resta interamente da compiersi". (*ivi*, 63: note 71).

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6
Mirror Images in *al-Andalus*:
The Quest for Self-Identity
in Two Arabic Travelogues*

CRISTIANA BALDAZZI

Introductory Remarks

The two texts under consideration here are *Riḥla ilà l-Muʿtamar* (1893)[1] by the Egyptian writer Aḥmad Zakī[2] and *Riḥla ilà bilād al-majd al-mafqūd* (1933) by the Lebanese artist Muṣṭāfà Farrūkh[3]. Defined by the authors themselves as

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[1] I used Zakī 2013 edition.

[2] A. Zakī was born in Alexandria in 1867. When his family moved to Cairo, he frequented the *madrasat al-idāra* (administrative school) where he studied French. He collaborated with the newspaper *al-Waqāʾiʿ al-miṣriyya*, worked as a translator and taught in the school of the Khedive and in the French Archeological Institute of Cairo. General Secretary of the *Majlis al-uzarāʾ*, Zakī represented Egypt in the International Congresses of the Orientalists (London 1892; Geneva 1894; Hamburg 1902; Athens 1912) and he collaborated with important cultural institutions (Institut d'Egypt, Royal Geographical Society). He was among the promoters of *al-Rābiṭa al-Sharqiyya*. An eclectic scholar, translator and bibliophile, he built up a personal library (*khazāna zakiyya*) with 18,700 books and manuscripts which today forms part of the National Library of Cairo. His passion for Arabic culture earned him the title of *shaykh al-ʿurūba* ("dean of Arabism"). He died in Cairo in 1934 and his tomb in Jiza is a funerary mosque which he himself had built after having visited many mausoleums on his travels in Europe.

[3] M. Farrūkh was born in 1901 in Beirut of a modest family. As he himself recalls, he discovered

travelogues (*Riḥlāt*), these texts are modern works belonging to the category of *adab al-riḥla* ("travel writings"), a firmly established genre in Arabic literature that goes back to the ninth century. For all their modernity, they preserve some of the characteristics of that genre, such as the *ṭalab al-ʿilm* ("the pursuit of knowledge"), but reconsidered, according to the new requirements of society, in both cases the construction of a new nation. The destination chosen by both authors in question is Europe. Although not very frequently, journeys outside the territory of the Islam (*dār al-islām*) were undertaken even before the nineteenth century[4], but they became increasingly frequent during the *Nahḍa* ("Renaissance"). It was in this phase of intellectual modernisation and reform that Europe became the example to follow in order to attain modernity and progress. The travelogues that from *Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī l-talkhīṣ Bārīz* (1834) by Rifāʿa Rafiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī onwards, while not constituting an actual body of writings, can be considered, to quote Newman, an "alterist literature" or, in other words, works "which deal with one or more aspects of the new continent, and the perceptions and responses to it by the traveler-author" (Newman 2002, 36).

In this essay, I intend to focus on Spain and, in particular on *al-Andalus* (as the Arabs called the Iberian Peninsula during the period of Muslim domination 711-1492)[5], or Moorish Spain. From the end of the fourteenth century, *al-Andalus* played a mythical role in Arabic literature as can be gauged by the vast production of the nostalgic and elegiac writings[6]. At the beginning of the nineteenth century *al-Andalus* also constituted a cultural reference point for the Europeans, inspiring various writers of the Romantic movement (Washington Irving, Chateaubriand, etc.). From the end of the nineteenth century to the present, *al-Andalus* and its heritage has attracted the attention of many Arab

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his artistic gift by chance and took drawing lessons from a young German. He immediately obtained good results and became a fine portrait painter. With the money he earned, he went to study in Rome from 1924 to 1927 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts under the guidance of Antonio Calcagnadoro and Umberto Coromaldi. He moved to Paris in 1929 to complete his studies and in 1932 he returned to Beirut where he combined painting with teaching. Considered to be one of the pioneers of modern art, Farrūkh was very productive; some 5,000 pictures, including portraits, landscapes and scenes from everyday life, have been attributed to him. He died of leukemia in 1957. In 2003, a retrospective exhibition at the Sursock Museum of Beirut showed numerous works by him and a catalogue of the works was published.

[4]   See Matar 2003; Kilpatrick 2008.

[5]   The term however assumes different meanings, not only from the geographical point of view. For Stearn today the image of *al-Andalus* "is a pastiche of competing views" (Stearn 2009, 357). See also Wien who highlights *al-Andalus* both as a Golden Age and as a Paradise lost and the different a-historical interpretations that can be attributed to that term, comparing for example the loss of *al-Andalus* to that of Palestine (Wien 2017, 49-79).

[6]   See Elinson 2009; Menocal *et al.* 2012; or also Balda-Tillier 2014, who deals above all with the idealised image of Granada.

artists, intellectuals and writers[7], who have made of it the object of a veritable Golden Age myth, addressing it from different perspectives and standpoints that have led to the production of a large number of works centered round Spain under the Moors: poems, short stories, novels, travel diaries, scholarly articles and music.

The texts under consideration are of particular interest because, although different in scope and period of publication, they both contribute to the historical-artistic construction of a modern nation that, in itself, reveals the pliability of travel writing. Moreover, both travelogues are written in an elegant style and with descriptions in a highly poetic vein that manages to transmit to their countrymen, whether Egyptian or Lebanese, the magnificence and beauty of the art of *al-Andalus*. Although they adopt the by now consolidated modes of travel writing, these works go far beyond mere descriptions limited to the mathematical dimensions of a painting, or a place; rather they create an innovative critical-artistic way of writing that involves the reader emotively.

In the two texts under consideration the relationship with otherness takes on different tonalities compared to the way it is experienced in other European countries. The reasons for this are obvious: in the confrontation with Spain and the Spanish the sharp division between 'us' and 'them' becomes so blurred as almost to disappear altogether. Both authors find themselves and their ancient greatness in the Other because this Other has inherited their "Arab characteristics", in particular, their generosity and sense of hospitality. In the authors examined here, this 'play of mirrors' was intended to restore to the Arabs a spirit of national pride. It did so by demonstrating that in the past Arabic culture was more advanced than European culture. This, however, inevitably contributed to a kind of mythicizing of that period, which came to be seen as an epoch of indisputable greatness and tolerance. Today, the myth of *al-Andalus* together with that of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn[8] and the crusades, has become an instrument for nullifying all critical sense and creating instead a clear distinction, or rather counter-position, between East and West, between 'us' and 'them'.

1. TRAVELS IN SPAIN AND TRAVELOGUES

At the beginning of his *Riḥla*, Zakī affirms with pride that he was the first of the Muslims and Egyptians of his generation to visit Spain (Zakī 2013, 225),

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[7]   There are numerous first-generation authors, including Aḥmad Shawqī, Jurjī Zaydān, Shakīb Arslān. Among the writers belonging to the succeeding generation, M. Darwīsh, Adonis, Raḍwà 'Ashūr, just to mention a few.

[8]   See Wien 2017, 35-47.

where he went in 1892. This claim is not totally accurate because some Muslims preceded him by a few years. In 1885 the Moroccan Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Kardūdī was chosen by the Sultan of Morocco to act as guide on an ambassadorial visit to Madrid and, on his return, he wrote an account (*al-Tuḥfat al-Siniyya li l-ḥaḍra al-sharīfa al-ḥasaniyya bi l-Mamlaka al-Isbāniyya*), in which he seemed more interested in providing details of the fortresses, arms and cannons than in describing the Mosque of Cordova, the Alcázar of Seville or the Alhambra of Granada (Pérès 1937, 42-51). In 1887, the Mauritian al-Shinqīṭī and the Tunisian al-Wardānī were both engaged by the Ottoman Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd to undertake a mission to Spain to study the Arabic manuscripts preserved there. Al-Shinqīṭī did not leave a travel account as such, but he wrote notes regarding the various manuscripts in Madrid, the Escorial, in Seville and Granada, and a poem from which transpires his feelings towards Spain. Al-Wardānī, on the other hand, wrote *al-Riḥla al-andalusiyya* which he published in the Tunisian newspaper *al-Ḥāḍira* between 1888-1890[9].

Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only a few Muslims had visited Spain. For the most part, they were Moroccans on diplomatic missions such as al-Wazīr al-Ghassānī, who was himself of Andalusian origin. He was sent to Spain between 1690 and 1691 to negotiate the release of some Moroccan prisoners, to recover Arabic manuscripts and probably also to initiate peace treaties, as Pérès affirms (Pérès 1937, 7). He wrote *Riḥla al-Wazīr fī iftikāk al-asīr*, an account in a highly nostalgic vein, upon his return home. According to Hermes, this is "one of the foundational Post-Reconquista Arabic *Andalusiyyāt*" (Hermes 2015, 2).

Several decades later a similar mission saw the arrival in Spain of Aḥmad al-Ghazzāl who in 1766 went to the Spanish court to define the terms of a peace treaty and bring home some Arab texts. On his return to Marrakesh he also wrote an account, *Natījat al-ijtihād fī l-muhādana wa l-jihād*. Some years later, Muḥammad Ibn ʿUthmān al-Miknāsī, considered the "last" traveller before the Nahḍa (Matar 2006, 200), carried out a dual mission: the first, in 1779, to the court of Charles III (about which he wrote an accurate account *al-Iksīr fī iftikāk al-asīr*)[10]; and the second, in 1791, to the court of Charles IV, which turned out to be less fortunate than the previous one[11].

These travel accounts came about as the result of official journeys and contain for the most part information about the political, social and economic conditions of the country. Nevertheless, the authors also show an interest in the way of life and

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[9]   Pérès 1937, 55-72; see also Paradela 2005.

[10] See Matar 2006.

[11] See Kilpatrick 2008; Matar 2006; Pérès 1937.

customs of the Spaniards as well as in the monuments of the Muslim period and they dwell on the Arab features of the architecture. Both al-Ghazzāl and al-Miknāsī express their disappointment in seeing a country that was once Muslim and is now in the hands of Christians, and they repeat as a mantra "may God restore it to Islam" (Lewis 2001[2], 182). This exhortation betrays a sense of nostalgia for a lost country, that we shall find again not so much in Zakī's text as in that of Farrūkh, almost by way of establishing a line of continuity within the genre of travel writing.

2. Travel, Motivation and Itineraries

Zakī was the Egyptian delegate at the IX international Congress of Oriental Scholars that was held in London in 1892. The visit was an official one, sponsored by the Khedive of Egypt, ʿAbbās Ḥilmī II. Besides London, the journey included many other stop-offs, among which was Spain. Muṣṭāfà Farrūkh's journey, on the other hand, had a single goal: *al-Andalus*. This was a journey that Farrūkh had dreamed of from his childhood: "I was a child when I fell in love with that lovely country rooted in glory and splendid art" (Farrūkh 1982, 24). This was a passion that continued for the rest of his life.

Zakī's journey, therefore, was much longer, lasting six months, while Farrūkh's took around a month. Consequently, Zakī's travelogue extends over 300 pages compared to the barely 150 pages of Farrūkh's. The latter, however, is enriched by 13 photographs and 15 sketches carried out on the spot.

On 13th August 1892, Zakī left Cairo, arriving at the port of Brindisi. From there he travelled across Italy stopping off in the most important cities. Then, after spending just a few days in Paris, he crossed the English Channel, and reached London, his official destination. During the week of the Congress, *Garden Parties* (called such in the text) were organized in the afternoon and evening, after the various talks. Zakī considered these social events beneficial for body and mind, especially the last one, which was organized by Lord Amherst[12] in his stately home, at a distance of four hours from London. Zakī compared it enthusiastically to "the palace of Alhambra at Granada during the Arab epoch of *al-Andalus*" (Zakī 2013, 82). His journey did not end there, however, as he made the most of it by visiting other English cities, and even the region of Wales. Then, he returned to Paris, where he spent a month and was utterly fascinated by the beauties of *Ville Lumière*. Finally, he travelled through the South of France before reaching Spain. This was the longest part of the journey. Zakī spent three months in Spain, travelling far and wide: from Irún to San Sebastian, Pamplona and Saragossa

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[12]   Zakī specifies that this Lord Amherst was not the one who had governed India (Zakī 2013, 82).

where, on the invitation of the Academia Juridico-Literaria, he spent ten days. He then passed through Castejón, Miranda del Ebro, Burgos and Ávila before reaching Madrid, where he spent a few days also visiting the nearby town of Toledo, then back to Madrid from whence he set off for Portugal. He spent the New Year in Lisbon and from there he visited Sintra, Coimbra and Porto before returning to Spain, visiting Salamanca and Madrid. After getting over a bout of influenza, he set off for *al-Andalus*: Seville, Granada and finally Cordova. After his return to Madrid, he visited Barcelona, the last stage in his journey through Spain, before reaching the South of France. He then went back to Italy, where he boarded a ship for Egypt. He returned home on February 14th, 1893.

Muṣṭāfà Farrūkh was a talented young artist who, after an initial stay in Rome, went to Paris in 1930 and, between July and August, had the opportunity of realizing his dream of visiting *al-Andalus* "a land full of inspiration, art and beauty" (Farrūkh 1982, 23). It was, in fact, the refined art of *al-Andalus* that inspired him to write the text dedicated to neglected Andalusian artists and, more generally, to lovers of art and beauty, as he wrote in the dedication of his *Riḥla*.

Farrūkh left Paris on July 17th, 1930[13]. Like Zakī, he describes the changing landscape in the course of his journey through France. He arrived at Irún, passed Medina del Campo and Ávila and arrived in Madrid, where he stayed for a couple of days, also visiting Toledo, which is not very far from the capital, in the course of a day. He reached the heart of *al-Andalus* by train: he spent five days in Cordova, stayed for a week in Seville and finally got to Granada, where he was so impressed by its beauty that he stayed there for as many as 19 days. This was the last stage in his journey and in August 1931 he returned to Paris, where he wrote his *Riḥla.* However, it was not published until two years later, in 1933, in Lebanon, where the artist was to live for the remainder of his short life.

3. Arrival as a Return

Tired out after a twenty-four-hour train journey, Zakī recounts how he regained his strength as soon as he smelled the perfume of *al-Andalus*[14]: "I inhaled its breeze and admired its clear sky dotted with pearls like that of my own country" (Zakī 2013, 222). His thoughts went back to the epoch in which Spain was Muslim and he evoked the famous *rithā' al-Andalus* by Abū l-Baqā' al-Rundī (1204-1285), the elegy the Andalusian poet wrote after the fall of some important cities at

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[13]   He drew a sketch of his departure from the station of Quai d'Orsay (Farrūkh 1982, 41).

[14]   He uses the term *al-Andalus*, while a few lines before, when the discourse is general, he uses Spain (*Isbānya*). He also provided other variations, such as *Isfānya,* in a note.

FIGURE 1 – Spanish village amidst olive groves (Farrūkh 1982, 45)

the hands of Ferdinand III of Castile and James I of Aragon: in his poem al-Rundī weeps for the passing of Islam in cities like Valencia[15], Murcia[16], and also Cordova[17] and Seville[18], where the mosques have become churches and all that can be seen are bells and crosses that foreshadow the disappearance of Islam from the Iberian peninsula[19].

It was already midnight when Zakī reached Irún, the first city in Northern Spain. Feeling exhausted, he took a room in a hotel where slept soundly until morning when he was awakened by the cries of children. He confesses that he felt as though he were back in Cairo since everything reminds him of his native city: the buildings, the shape of the windows and the narrow streets.

Farrūkh has the same sensation while he is immersed in the reading of a book on *al-Andalus* and the train approaches Madrid. He was so struck by the Spanish villages that he sketched them. [Fig. 1].

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[15]   Valencia fell in 1238.

[16]   Murcia fell in 1243.

[17]   Cordova fell in 1236.

[18]   Seville fell in 1248.

[19]   See the translation, El Gharbi 2009.

Indeed, he goes as far as to affirm that he was seized by the doubt that the train had deviated towards the Orient (Farrūkh 1982, 44). The resemblance was so strong that he felt as though he were between Homs and Baalbek, in the region of Syria and the Lebanon. The colour of the earth, the fields, the sky, the wind and the sun made him feel as though he was going back home. He adds that he has understood the reason that had led the Arabs on a military expedition to Spain and why they had stayed there for so long. It was, in fact, as though they had never left Syria (Farrūkh 1982, 45). When he arrives in Ávila he immediately compares it to the Syrian township of al-Suwayda for the colour of its black granite stone, the rough-hewn structure of its houses and the fact that it is surrounded by ancient olive trees (Farrūkh 1982, 45).

The resemblance between Spain, which both Zakī and Farrūkh call *al-Andalus,* and the Arab world is evident to both of them. For Zakī, the Egyptian, it recalls Cairo and for Farrūkh, the Lebanese, some townships in Syria and the Lebanon. The arrival in Spain where the analogies are, perhaps, not even so evident as compared to the ancient Muslim capitals (Cordova, Seville and Granada) is, in fact, made much of, precisely to give the idea of arrival as a return home. From their words there transpires a strong sense of finding themselves in a familiar place, they talk about feeling as though they were in their own land, as having returned to what was *dār al-islām*.

Although they both use the terms "Arab period" and "Arab art", meaning Muslim art and the Muslim epoch, their references are, in fact, to Spain under the Moors. In an article in honour of the Orientalist Francesco Codera, Zakī underlines the fact that Spain and Egypt are bound by a profound, and almost instinctively innate, feeling that goes back to the Moorish period[20].

4. Spaniards or Arabs…?

For the two authors retracing signs of Islam in Spain is not limited to architecture or art. In fact, they find these signs in every aspect of daily life, even in the physiognomy and behaviour of the people. Everything that they find positive they trace back to an Arabic source.

Zakī, who, as we have seen, stayed in Spain for three months, was worried on his arrival by the fact that he did not speak Spanish. He comments that, although he had studied the grammar while he was in Paris, he was well aware that there was a huge difference between knowing the grammar of a language and speaking it. Indeed, among the goals that he had set himself for the journey and which he

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[20]   Zeki 1904, 458.

achieved, he includes that of having learned the language of *al-Andalus*. When he was invited in Saragossa by the Academia Jurídico-Literaria to a sitting in his honour, he writes, with regret, that he had to address the assembly in French and in Italian. When, however, he was invited again by the President of the Academy, Pablo Gil y Gil[21], to another sitting during which he was nominated as an honorary member, he decided to thank the audience in Spanish and he recounts that when he could not think of the correct terms in Spanish, he resorted to Italian or French. He adds that it was at Saragossa that he began to study Spanish and he never passed up a chance to practice it.

Zakī's interest was not only in the spoken language. He comments at length on numerous linguistic and philological considerations in connection with the language called "aljamiado"[22] and, more generally, combines reflections on Spanish terms derived from Arabic with long digressions on onomastics. In Portugal too, he dwells on various aspects of the Portuguese language and on differences between it and Spanish. Zakī exploited his propensity for languages in order to establish a direct contact with the Spaniards. He frequented the theatres and went to a bullfight on three occasions. He perfectly understood the spirit of the latter: no Spaniard, man or woman, would have ever renounce such a spectacle, he writes, adding that the toreadors, especially if they perish during a bullfight, are the most beloved men in the country. Early one morning in Lisbon, he was pleasantly struck by the sight of some women selling vegetables: their faces and forms were not dried up like those of European women, and they wore on their heads a roll of cloth like that used by Arab women (*ḥawāyya*), which allowed them to balance low-brimmed copper recipients on their head. Zakī saw in them broad beans, one of the typical Egyptian foodstuffs! (Zakī 2013, 231).

Knowledge acquired through direct acquaintance modified Zakī's prejudices. Before coming to Spain, he had a negative outlook on the Spaniards. He considered them as fanatics, ill-disposed towards foreigners and, in particular, towards Arabs, probably an opinion based on the Spaniards of the Reconquista. Once he got to know them, his attitude was so positive that, at the end of his journey, he goes so far as to say that he prefers them to all the other people he met in the various European countries visited.

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[21]   Zakī on this occasion gets to know the Orientalists Pablo Gil y Gil and Juliano Ribeira, with whom he maintained a long friendship. See Marín *et al.* 2009, 37.

[22]   This is a neo-Latin language (with Castilian, Aragonese and Valencian words) written in Arabic characters, called "aljamiado". Zakī affirms that the term derives from *al-aʼjamiyya* (the language of the Barbarians, that is, of non-Arabs), and explains from a philological point of view how it became *aljamiado.* He adds that in Madrid and Saragossa he visited many libraries where he found numerous books written in this language (Zakī 2013, 227-228).

Farrūkh is of the same opinion. He finds similarities between the Spaniards and the Arabs not only in behaviour but also in appearance: Spaniards have the bronze skin and black eyes of the Arabs; they have an attractive smile and are friendly and hospitable even to people they do not know and he adds: "I feel this is a throwback to their Arab inheritance" (Farrūkh 1982, 47). He also finds evident traces of this Arab legacy in the abundance of the dishes served in Spanish restaurants as compared to those in Italy and above all in France, where they are far less abundant (Farrūkh 1982, 60). But he also finds that Islam has left its mark in less material ways: he has heard that Muslim customs have been preserved even in the way of praying of a community the faithful of which sit on the ground in the church raising their arms to heaven as the Muslims do. These devout people are called "Mozarabs" (*mūzārāb*) (Farrūkh 1982, 57). The Spanish, moreover, have a jovial disposition and love their country and, in this connection, he relates how, on asking a Spanish youth directions for the National Museum in Madrid, the latter not only accompanied him there, but, after visiting the museum, took him round the city, pointing out to him statues and monuments. At the end of the long day, a Sunday, the youth made his farewells saying: "I hope, Sir, that when you have occasion to speak of Spain, you will have the best possible memories of it". Farrūkh stresses that these words were for him a veritable lesson in patriotism (Farrūkh 1982, 48). In the course of his journey, as he gets closer to Granada, "the Acropolis of the Arabs" (Farrūkh 1982: 100), he finds so many similarities that he feels the need to state: "When I look at the face of a man I see [a man of the tribe] of the Qays and when he addresses me courteously I find in him the noble Arab characteristics of the Qaḥṭānī [...]. By Allah, I am in my country among my people and my brothers" (Farrūkh 1982, 129).

5. Towards the Heart of *al-Andalus*

Zakī affirms that the city of Toledo, not far from Madrid, has preserved its Arab character intact over the course of time and the unfolding of the epochs as no Egyptian city has: the streets and the narrow, tortuous lanes ascend and descend so that "a person feels like that insect called a centipede [!]". And, as far as the Arab monuments are concerned, "they leave one without the words to describe them" (Zakī 2013, 230).

Farrūkh arrived at Toledo by train and on seeing the city, which enjoys a unique position – "it rises up on a hill embraced by the arms of the river Tago" – he seems to him that he can see again in his imagination the atrocities and bloodshed that took place there in the past. But the beauty of the place distracts

him from historical events and once he has crossed the Alcántara bridge – an Arabian construction like the rest of the bridges – he walks through the winding streets of Toledo where the Oriental-style houses seem to close in on him, Farrūkh exclaims that he is in the Orient or, rather, in a street in Sidon or Damascus! (Farrūkh 1982, 56). After having visited the house of El Greco, who Farrūkh calls erroneously a Spanish artist, he leaves the city which he declares it to be more beautiful than it is generally described to be and he sets off for the South from a small station on a very slow train that seems to prefigure the condition of degradation prevailing in *al-Andalus*: "I am going to the land of forgotten glory, perhaps visiting the dead is a warning to the living […] I am going on a pilgrimage to *al-Andalus* the land of lost glory" (Farrūkh 1982, 62). Farrūkh does not use the term pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) casually: it is one of the 5 pillars of Islam, and to go on a pilgrimage leads to a revitalization of the spirit. Furthermore, in classical Arabic literature, Granada is considered to be a land blessed by God and is often compared to Mecca, the goal par excellence for pilgrimage[23]. In Farrūkh's vision, compared to Zakī's, there is the further consideration of counter-posing the present and the past and he sees *al-Andalus* as having been great in the past but now neglected and abandoned to itself.

It was sunset when Farrūkh reached Cordova: "We are in the capital of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, in the centre of the Umayyad Caliphate of *al-Andalus* where the most elevated civilization of Europe flourished" (Farrūkh 1982, 66). He then asks rhetorically: "But what do we find?" A small city that resembles a village, he affirms, full of cafés with people drinking, playing cards or dozing. The inhabitants today, he observes, do not exceed 4,000 while in the Muslim period there were a million people and the city was an important centre for study (medicine, astronomy, philosophy, translations), with hospitals, libraries etc. everything was to be found there except laziness and ignorance (Farrūkh 1982, 67-68). Penetrating further into the streets of Cordova he noticed the Arabic style in the structure of the city and of those houses that had a courtyard with an orange tree, a plant of jasmine and, in the centre, a fountain with flowing water that provided a sense of freshness against the heat.

Everything seems to recall the Arab world, even the women whose appearance is as beautiful as that of the Arab women. They have amber skin and black eyes and hair and use jasmine (a widely used plant both in the Maghrib and the Mashriq) as embellishment. Here women also cover their heads, putting a comb in their hair from which descends to their shoulders a white mantilla and they carry in one hand a fan which they wave lazily. Farrūkh was so pleasantly struck by these women that he drew a sketch of them [Fig. 2].

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[23]   See Balda-Tillier 2014, 213-218.

FIGURE 2 – Andalusian women in the courtyard of an Arabic house (Farrūkh 1982, 70)

In the streets, ice-cream and lemonade vendors called out their wares so that they seemed to be Arabs, exclaims Farrūkh and, on reaching the street of the spices, he is reminded of "one of the streets of the Umayyad capital, Damascus" (Farrūkh 1982, 71). Further on he hears sounds and he can hardly believe his ears when he realises that an Arab song is being played on a phonograph and people are clapping their hands in time to the music. Once again, Farrūkh stresses the fact that he seems to be at home. Even the wide trousers worn by the Spaniards remind him of the *sirwāl* and he reiterates that the further South he goes, the stronger is the Arab imprint.

    In his description of the mosque – the largest in the world – Farrūkh reaches elevated poetic tones, transmitting to readers the grandeur and the beauty of the building: on entering it, he finds himself faced with a forest of marble columns in different styles and colours. On the walls there are designs, incisions and engravings that he describes as wonders of art and creation, in emerald, vermillion and blue colours as bright as the light and the sky of the Orient. The

Arabs had reproduced these masterpieces on the walls of their own buildings, creating an artistic effect of lines and colours the harmony of which is poetry in itself. From whatever angle the numerous lines of columns are observed one sees the wonderful *miḥrāb*, the supreme masterpiece (Farrūkh 1982, 76).

Zakī too was enthralled by the Cordova mosque and its *miḥrāb*. For him, this monument, clothed in a mantle of excellence, inspires a feeling of awe in the soul of the visitor making him feel as tangible the presence of a Creator worthy of adoration. The grandeur and artistic mastery of this mosque makes it a sacred place for a believer of any faith, affirms Zakī, who nevertheless cannot resist, as is his wont, from making a mathematical count of the marble columns which, he writes, are 1293, each with a different capital and base while the cupola is supported by 395 columns. The *miḥrāb*, he observes,

> is made up of precious stones of various colours which change according to the angle they are viewed at: to the right can be seen colours with lights and forms and different combinations from those that can be seen to the left or if you stand in front of them and advance or step back. (Zakī 2013, 260)

Zakī employs an elevated style to describe the beauties of the Mosque of Cordova in order to underline his full appreciation of it, while Farrūkh, by contrast, after having praised the exalted artistic level and observed the play of light and shade of the columns, criticizes the wanton destruction perpetrated by the Christians after the Reconquista. Whoever enters today finds himself in total shadow, he writes regretfully, but not for lack of sunshine which is, on the contrary, plentiful in this country, but because those who dominated this place loved the darkness: they bricked up all the windows and closed hundreds of doors, blocking out the light (Farrūkh 1982, 79).

Another obligatory stop was Seville, situated on the great river Guadalquivir. Zakī praises its excellent climate, which benefitted his own state of health. He visited Alcázar and its imposing minaret, used by the Arabs as an astronomic observatory but which is now a bell-tower. He notes that the houses, with a beautiful central courtyard and splendid trees, have an Arabic structure. Zakī celebrated the city in the words of some Andalusian poets who had exalted its merits (Zakī 2013, 235).

Farrūkh reached Seville at night and got up early in the morning to explore it. He explains that the city is one of the largest in *al-Andalus* and that some of the houses are in the Arabic-Christian style while others are in the pure Arab style with beautiful gardens but, more generally, he stresses that the Arab imprint is present throughout the city and not only in the monuments but in the street names and in the in the appearance of the women who are pure Arabs. He also visited the minaret of the large Seville mosque, known as la Giralda, and

the Alcázar which, he explains, is in a different style from the monuments of Cordova and may be described as belonging to the artistic phase that Farrūkh refers to as transitional (*intiqāl*). Zakī distinguishes three distinct phases in the art of *al-Andalus* corresponding to three historical periods: the beginning or the *nahḍa* (rebirth); the transition; and the fall: the Mosque of Cordova belongs to the first period, the Alcázar of Seville to the second, and the art of Granada, where Arab civilization first flourished only to be buried in 1492, to the third. Farrūkh explains in detail that in that epoch the centre of civilization shifted from Cordova to Seville and, since art is the shadow of a country and follows it in its evolution and political, social and literary transformation, it mirrors the changes. He states that, compared to the Mosque of Cordova, the arch in the Alcázar of Seville has more movement and that the columns are different. The art of Cordova, with its great arches and placid decorations, denotes firmness and a god-fearing caution, while, by contrast, the art of Seville, with its sinuous curves, transmits lightness, poetry and luxury. The external aspect of the Alcázar is simple and, like all Arab buildings, gives no sign of the wonders contained within it and, in particular, the garden. Farrūkh compared this building to an Eden and regretted not having lived in that period (Farrūkh 1982, 92).

Granada was the last stop in *al-Andalus*. Along the way there, Zakī found the landscape very similar to that of the Syrian-Palestinian area and, as he did in the case of Seville, he extols the wonders of Granada through the lines of Andalusian poets contained in the *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* by al-Maqqarī as well as recalling anecdotes and talented and ingenious people such as Abū 'l-Qāsim ['Abbās] Ibn Firnās (d. 887), who was the first in *al-Andalus* to make glass and counted among his "inventions" the discovery of the rudiments of flight (Zakī 2013, 241). Granada was a unique centre for the progress of knowledge in every field and Zakī stresses how even the *al-ifranj* kings consulted the Arab and Jewish doctors of *al-Andalus*. He finds in every stone and in every wall clear traces of the grandeur and glory of this nation (*umma*) which, he suggests, the Egyptians would do well to take as a model (Zakī 2013, 239-241). Zakī also extols the tolerance of the Muslims towards the Spaniards, as "they left the defeated people their goods, their laws and their religions" without ever forcing them to convert to Islam, in striking contrast to what happened after the fall of Granada, when the papacy set up Inquisition tribunals, which perpetrated all kinds of violence and atrocities. King Phillip II expelled the remaining 600-700,000 Muslims, although they were engaged in agriculture, business and industry and had no familiarity with arms. Zakī, in fact, goes on to affirm that during the Arab occupation they had rendered a great service to a country where the people were notorious for their laziness and lack of initiative, so that the expulsion of the Arabs represented a serious loss both for the country

and its inhabitants, who went from 40 to just 17,000.000 (Zakī 2013, 245). This position echoes that of Claude Farrère, who is quoted by Farrūkh. According to the French writer, *al-Andalus* had prospered during the Muslim period while its decline began with the arrival of the kings of Spain[24].

Zakī, however, makes a distinction between the Spaniards of the period of the Reconquista and the Spaniards of the nineteenth century. His sense of Arab pride emerges in his interpretation of historical events where he emphasizes the respect and tolerance of the Muslims towards conquered peoples and their civilizing effect on the country, something that runs directly counter to the atrocities perpetrated by the Spaniards who, he specifies, burnt books and tortured innocent people. If the Spaniards of the fifteenth century were characterized by their intolerance and laziness, the Spaniards with whom he has came in contact in the course of his journey, on the contrary, are the result of the glorious presence of the Arabs:

> The Arabs have left in Spain numerous traces that are still visible today. They have created ordinances, laws, political and administrative systems that are still present today and they have influenced the character and customs of the Spaniards to the extent that I have seen in this people the character of the Arabs, their courtesy and generosity. (Zakī 2013, 247)

For this reason, Zakī has no hesitation in declaring that, of all the peoples he has met in Europe, the Spaniards are his favourite. In contrast to Farrūkh, for Zakī the passing of time and the various periods of domination have not encroached on the beauty and greatness of the country and he quotes the lines of an Andalusian poet: "[the] peninsula has not forgotten its beauty / with the passing epochs and changing situations" (Zakī 2013, 247).

If, for Zakī, the culmination of beauty was reached in the Mosque of Cordova, for Farrūkh it was the Alhambra that bore the crown for the perfection of its beauty that was due, in part, to its position that dominated Granada and made it unique in its kind. Farrūkh was not the first author to extol the position and natural beauties of Granada as we can find similar descriptions in *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* by al-Maqqarī and even earlier in *Iḥāṭa fī akhbār Gharnāṭa* by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (m. 1374)[25]. Farrūkh arrived at the Alhambra at dusk and his thoughts turned to the past when Granada was the capital and he re-evoked the deeds of the last Nasrid Sultans, including the anecdote of "the Moor's Sigh". Early next morning he returned to the Alhambra and decided to enter by the Gate of Justice. In passing through the garden, he saw a building in late Romanic, Baroque [*sic*]

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24   See Naef 2004, 255.

25   See Balda-Tillier 2014.

style, horrible to behold and he wondered who had had the bright idea to put such a hideous construction in the midst of such a paradise? It was Charles V and in stating this Farrūkh, in the course of his description, persists in his attitude that hovers between unqualified admiration and deep regret not only for the subsequent interventions that have disfigured the original structure, making of it a kind of "Russian salad" (Farrūkh 1982, 107), but also for the air of neglect that hangs over the Alhambra in particular and *al-Andalus* in general. He has nothing but praise, however, for the beauties of the courtyard and garden and above all for their simplicity, which "is the secret of sublime art as the ancient Greeks knew it. As the latter said: 'We love art in its natural, simple form'" (Farrūkh 1982, 108). The Ambassadors' Hall, the one in which the decision was made to support Christopher Columbus's expedition, charmed him: "I am swimming in the vast sea of the wonders of *al-Andalus*"; and he goes on to say that, confronted with such beauty, he is unable to write because the pen falls from his hand; and neither can he paint since his arrival at Granada, he adds, because his brush is unable to reproduce such a wonder[26].

His admiration grows when he glimpses between two columns a beautiful Andalusian with the face and complexion of an Arab woman, wearing a white mantilla and looking at him with languid eyes that hold a hint of sadness that makes her even more alluring. He sees in her a beauty among beauties and compares her to a Greek statue by Praxiteles or a painting by Leonardo da Vinci. This is the image of a woman that the architect had in mind when he designed all this, Farrūkh affirms confidently. He feels as though he is in a kind of Garden of Eden and, on leaving the Alhambra, he compares himself to Adam when he was driven from Paradise (Farrūkh 1982, 111). He is even more explicit when, appropriating a stereotype of the marvellous, he states: "Anyone who wants to see something from *A Thousand and One Nights* must visit the Alhambra" (Farrūkh 1982, 121). Again, taking an example from classical prose[27], he defines the Alhambra as a real paradise and adds that those who constructed it were thinking of paradise as it is described in the Quran and that profane words cannot reproduce (Farrūkh 1982, 121).

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[26]   In effect the *Riḥla*, as mentioned above, contains sketches done by Farrūkh in the course of his journey while there are only photographs of the Alhambra. But in the retrospective catalogue of an exhibition of his (2003), there are included four watercolors dated 1930: the *Gate of Justice*, the *Entrance to the Abencèrages Hall*, the *Lindaraja balcony and the gardens of the Generalife*, see Naef 2014, 259.

[27]   The comparison with paradise is very frequent both in the *Iḥāṭa* of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and in the *Nafḥ* by al-Maqqarī. Thanks to its beauty and the good government operating in the city, Granada was an earthly paradise, see Balda-Tillier 2014.

As these examples make clear, both authors share an ambivalent attitude towards *al-Andalus* and the Spaniards. As mentioned above, Zakī finds similar traits between the Arabs and the Spaniards but he makes a distinction between contemporary Spaniards who have given him a warm welcome and those who, on the contrary, expelled the Arabs between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At the beginning, Farrūkh extols the Spaniards, their hospitality and love of their homeland to the extent that he exhorts his fellow countrymen to take them as an example, but at the same time he is struck by the degradation into which the region – which he considers from a naturalistic point of view as a Paradise – has sunk. On observing the countryside, he writes that a Lebanese peasant would make this land the richest on earth. Farrūkh also regrets the degraded condition of the Arab monuments, not only as a result of successive interventions, but also because of the general neglect, dirty rooms and scripts rendered almost illegible because some of their characters have been erased precisely as a result of that neglect. With reference to the Alhambra, he recalls how the whole structure was abandoned and sacked for 150 years and then used as a prison and therefore prey to all kinds of depredation before becoming a refuge for the poor who lived in this increasingly degraded space. It was only in recent years that the Spaniards began to take an interest in it because they realized that it was a source of wealth. In fact, many tourists come to visit it (more than 300,000 Farrūkh specifies); so this renewed interest was a question of economic gain and certainly not one of artistic integrity. For Farrūkh, this factor could also be attributed to the influence of such writers as the American Washington Irving who published a text on Granada[28], the French writers Chateaubriand[29], Théophile Gautier[30], Claude Farrère[31], Gustave Le Bon[32] and the artist Henry Regnault[33] (Farrūkh 1982, 125).

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[28]   In 1829, Irving published *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* and, in 1832, *Tales of the Alhambra.*

[29]   F.-R. de Chateaubriand, *Les aventures du dernier des Abencérages,* 1826*.*

[30]   Th. Gautier*, Voyage en Espagne*, 1843.

[31]   An officer in the Navy and a successful writer, Farrère supported the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Wars and subsequently in the Kemalist movement. As a member of the Académie Française, he presented *Les secrets de l'Espagne, l'Alhambra*, published in 1930.

[32]   *La Civilisation des arabes* (1884), which has an extensive section devoted to *al-Andalus* and the Alhambra.

[33]   After staying in Rome at the Villa Medici, Regnault (1843-1871) went to Spain and was struck by the Alhambra. In 1869, he left for Tangiers, where he painted *Exécution sans jugement sous les rois maures de Grenade* (1870, Musée d'Orsay).

6. ART AND THE NATION

Art, both for Zakī and for Farrūkh, constituted one of the cornerstones of every nation in that it is the tangible result of its history and, moreover, as Farrūkh repeatedly reminds his fellow countrymen (*abnā' qawmī*), it is its monuments that make a nation (*umma*) immortal (Farrūkh 1982, 26). He quotes the examples of the Acropolis of Athens and the Pantheon of Rome as cases in point. It was for this reason that he felt impelled to publish the notes he wrote on his journey to *al-Andalus*, where Arab art had reached the apex of its grandeur. It was, therefore, a feeling of national pride that inspired the two authors to describe *al-Andalus*, the cradle of Arab civilization, as Farrūkh affirms. They both wanted to show their fellow countrymen, whether Egyptians or Lebanese, how great Arab civilization had been in the past, reaching a higher level than European civilization and showing that it was from Muslim Spain that certain ideas and knowledge spread throughout the rest of Europe. By making their countrymen aware of the grandeur of the art of *al-Andalus* represented for both the authors a way of instilling in the Arabs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries confidence in themselves and their ability to recoup the Arab genius.

Farrūkh's interest in art was undoubtedly linked to his own training and the fact that he was considered a pioneer of contemporary Arab art. Zakī and Farrūkh had different backgrounds – the first was an intellectual, the second an artist – and they belonged to different generations. But for both it was clear that all the Arabs had to reassess their ancient heritage if they were to rediscover their strength and creativity.

When, during their travels, the two authors visited other important European capitals, they always appreciated their art and monuments, conscious as they were of how strong a link exists between history and art. Both Zakī and Farrūkh make analogous considerations regarding the vision of history in the Arab world and, above all, of the great men who fought and died for the nation. In Italy, after visiting Rome with its numerous squares, monuments and statues, Zakī comments how important such monuments and statues of illustrious men are for the inhabitants of the whole nation, from the aristocracy to the populace, because it is through them that the people get to know the deeds of the great men who have contributed to the greatness of the country and he adds, with regret, that this does not happen in Egypt, where no consideration is given to those responsible for great enterprises: it is right and fitting that the Egyptians should understand that by honouring with monuments those who have served the nation and so making their memory immortal, is one of the principal motivations for a rekindling of the spirit and a renewed courage to carry out great undertakings for the benefit of the nation (Zakī 2013, 37).

When Farrūkh was in Madrid and visited the Prado museum he appreciated those artists who used their brushes to make immortal the glorious history of their country; while wandering through the streets of the city he affirmed that he preferred the squares with the largest number of statues because "I felt immortal thanks to these heroes and great men" (Farrūkh 1982, 52), who urged the nation ahead towards progress. Echoing Zakī, he adds that "this sense of immortality is completely ignored in the Orient where once a man dies he is forgotten no matter what his greatness and his qualities might have been" (Farrūkh 1982, 53). As he goes on to argue, this provides a further reason why we should pay more attention to our historical heritage, using the same concepts as those countries where the idea is maintained, because it is a window from which one can see the light and the glory of the past.

The consideration of ancient history and the great figures who contributed to the glory of the nation began to become diffuse towards the end of the nineteenth century and probably a notable influence on it were the theories of Gustave Le Bon. Unlike many of his contemporary intellectuals, Le Bon, in his *Civilisation des Arabes*, gives a positive judgment of the Arab civilization and tries to understand the reasons for its present decline, which he traces back to the absence of a strong leader capable of guiding "the masses". In his *Riḥla*, Farrūkh explicitly endorses Le Bon's idea that Arab art is the highest expression of Arabic civilization. Therefore, according to Farrūkh (and also Zakī), the palm among the peoples who have embraced Islam: Persians, Turks, etc., goes to the Arabs. Both travellers see art, therefore, as *l'esprit de son époque*, to use Le Bon's terminology.

But, there is still one more point in common in the vision of the two authors, linked to their conception of art and history in relation to the West in the nineteenth century. Zakī stresses that, although foreign ideas are certainly important on the road towards rebirth, they should not be considered the only point of reference for each Arab country, which must develop according to its own possibilities and unite with the other Arab countries on the road towards progress (Zakī 2013, 37). Zakī presented a paper on art to the *Societé khédiviale d'économie politique* on 18th January 1913, in which, after analysing the greatness of ancient Muslim art and its influence on Europe, he examined the reasons for its present state of decline and suggested solutions for a *régénération artistique*. In short, for Zaki, any attempt to slavishly follow the progress of the West would lead to a hybridization devoid of value and far removed from the original spirit of the Orient (Zéki 1913, 20).

Farrūkh is of the same opinion when he affirms: "the Arabs didn't copy [the arts of other civilizations] in a mechanical, sterile way but, on the contrary, they appreciated them and gave them back to the world in a beautiful Oriental garb wherein can be found the Arab spirit" (Farrūkh 1982, 29-30). However, this

creative process seems to have been interrupted and Farrūkh's fear is that the originality and characteristics of the Arab civilization have also been lost with it. He is even more explicit in another text of his in which he affirms:

> We do not contribute to the development of civilization nor do we make it bear fruits. We use the radio, the television and the telephone all of which have been invented by minds in the West without any contribution or effort on our part. Our position in life is like that of someone who sits down at a table and eats that which others have made the effort to prepare. (Naef 2014, 261)

Modern times, which for Zakī were the end of the nineteenth century and for Farrūkh the thirties of the twentieth century, were, in any case, periods of decadence from which it was necessary to emerge. They both believed that a rebirth of Arab civilization could not come about by slavishly accepting Western progress but by reinterpreting it in the Arab spirit. To this end, art was the foundation stone of any attempt to bring about such a rebirth and the form whereby they envisaged this was to instill in all Arabs the sense of an Arab Nation.

There is, however, a difference in the approach of the two authors. Unlike Farrūkh, Zakī is not nostalgic but didactic. He recalls the events of the past, he extols the tolerance of the Arabs as opposed to the intolerance of the Christians of the Reconquista with the intention of conveying to his fellow Egyptians the ancient grandeur of Moorish Andalucía so that they might use it as a model based on the importance of science ('*ilm*) and knowledge ('*irfān*). In that period in *al-Andalus*, in fact, Zakī emphasizes, everyone studied and even an ignorant person (*jāhil*) strove to distinguish himself in his work. In the mosques all kinds of science were read with the objective of illuminating minds as European scientists do today (Zakī 2013, 241). Once again, the comparison is with Europe, but Zakī shows that the way forward is not the exclusive prerogative of the West but rather a path that had already been followed by the Arabs, who were pioneers in promoting the expansion of knowledge.

In Farrūkh's *Riḥla* the continual recall to past glory, which is implicit in the very title of his *Riḥla*, transmits a nostalgic sentiment towards ancient grandeur[34], and his attitude towards the Spaniards is more related to the past than the present. While he sees in them the ancient tribes of the Qays, Zakī has an actual connection with them in reality. He learns Spanish, a feat that not only allows him the possibility of having a direct connection with the Spaniards but makes him feel proud, when he manages to make a speech in Spanish, because he feels he is keeping high the name of his own country, Egypt.

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[34]   It was, precisely in those years (between the two World Wars), that this nostalgic sentiment became preponderant in the work of many Arab writers, see Wien 2017, 48-79.

Farrūkh's travelogue, written a generation after Zakī's, demonstrates a greater sense of the international forces at work in which colonialism was, by then, a reality. The Lebanon and the whole region of Bilād al-Shām were under French mandate and it was only after the Second World War that Lebanon and Syria became independent. The nostalgia transmitted by Farrūkh, although justified by the historical context, seems to open the way to an atemporal and acritical interpretation of history. That nostalgic vision of a land that one felt as one's own is nowadays being exploited by various fundamentalist groups to affirm themselves although they do not have any link to the history of a Caliphate that stretched from *al-Andalus* to Asia.

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PART III

The 'I' and the 'We' in Context

III.1 – The Individual and Communal Perspectives: A Philosophical Approach

Freedom through Otherness: Hegel's Lesson on Human Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity[*]

CINZIA FERRINI

Introductory Remarks

As is well known, Kant distinguishes between the realm of mere rational thoughts, which can plausibly extend beyond experience, and the realm of true, necessary and universal, i.e. "scientific" knowledge, philosophically justified within the boundaries of empirical phenomena. As regards human beings, Kant holds, according to our proper and distinctive rational nature, we must *think* of ourselves as capable of acting in response to our awareness of being inwardly and essentially able to act on rational aims and by free self-determination *contra* our phenomenal appearance of being determined by mechanical responses to stimuli and innate animal instincts. Nevertheless, we cannot necessarily and universally *know* ourselves as we truly are in ourselves, as moral agents with

free will. By contrast, in the introductory §377 to his *Philosophy of Spirit*, Hegel introduces the "scientific" knowledge of spirit through the "absolute" injunction "know thyself", remarking that this commandment has not only the significance of an individual's self-knowledge according to exclusive peculiarities and inclinations, but means knowing what is true of mankind in and for itself, that is, its essence as spirit[1].

In the Addition (*Zusatz*, hereafter Z) to §381, Hegel regards the 'I', the universal ego that any real individual being is and is aware of being, as the primary and simplest determination of human spirit[2]. The 'I' here at stake is the pure sense of our self or identity, that is, an abstract notion as simple self-referring universality (I am I), common to all human agents. Interpreters have remarked how Hegel ties together this abstract universality of the 'I' and abstract freedom: a human being is "essentially something universal", or possesses an "inner universality"[3]; "I is [...] the existence of wholly abstract universality, that which is abstractly free"[4]. At the level of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel recapitules the becoming of the self in the ethical, cultural and moral worlds of Spirit. In the first (legal) instance of personhood, the self is devoid of substance and its existence counts as an abstract actuality: "the universal is in it with no distinction (*ohne Unterscheidung*), and is neither the content of the self, nor is the self filled through itself"[5].

How can we, existing singularities, primarily conceive the truth of a common spiritual essence of our humanity in terms of an abstract notion of the self as simple self-referring universality? A pure 'I' satisfies a universality criterion but it does not capture the singularization of any distinctive individuality and the real existential manifold of any consciousness, that is, its concrete content or

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[1]   "Knowledge of spirit is knowledge of the most concrete and consequently of the sublimest and most difficult kind. Know thyself, this absolute commandment, is not concerned with a mere self-knowledge, with the particular abilities, character, inclinations and foibles of the individual, but in its intrinsic import, as in the historical contexts in which it has been formulated, *it is concerned with cognition of human truth, with that which is true in and for itself, – with essence itself as spirit*" (*Enz*. III, §377: 9, my emphasis. All the English translations of Hegel's texts are mine unless otherwise stated). Note that §377 does not exclude finite individual beings from philosophical consideration, because it leaves out only personal hydiosincrasies: indeed, here Hegel regards as contingent, insignificant and untrue all these features of individual human existence which fall under the heading of peculiar capacities, tempers, needs, weaknesses.

[2]   In *Enz*. III, §381 Hegel also says that spirit turns out as the idea in its being-for-itself.

[3]   See the Remark (*Anmerkung*, hereafter A) to §132 in GW 14,1: 116.29-30 and *ivi*, §153: 142.17-18; see also §5, 32.16-17, where universality as pure thought as such is defined as the limitless infinity of the absolute abstraction.

[4]   See *Enz*. I §20A: 75: "Ich ist insofern die Existenz der ganz *abstrakten* Allgemeinheit, das abstrakt *Freie*".

[5]   *W*3, 465; Miller trans. ¶633: 384 modified.

material given by intuition and representation. Moreover, an abstract self or "person", whose existence consists in its being acknowledged by others, conveys a universality that appears formal and empty (this atomistic conception of the self is the condition of alienation) and also a content as something externally given which fills it; if *this* notion of the 'I' and *this* conception of the human self as purely universal entity must be taken as the primary and simplest determination of spirit, how does it become a concrete object and content that fulfills our individual consciousness? Recently, interpreters have provide answers to this question by showing how Hegel argues that overcoming alienation requires articulating a conception of the self that can be affirmed equally of everyone, but, most importantly, which also includes the individual's particularity (and so satisfies a criterion of what Hegel calls "fulfillment"). However, this analysis is based on Hegel's view that an individual is a person in virtue of being an 'I', taking for granted that this generic feature individuals always already share is the capacity for self-conscious thought, and individuates Hegel's problem of "fulfillment" in terms of relating the self's generic and particular characteristics[6]. One key interpretive point in this essay is that Hegel shows that the simple unity of any actual 'I' must be thoroughly integrated with that person's multifarious properties, including differentia (necessary particularities), memberships, relation to others, both of its own and of other groups, beginning to prove his thesis by demonstrating that even the most immediate, simplest cases of socially shared knowledge of spatio-temporal particulars also reveal that the truth of the sensible singular (either subject or object) is its intrinsic abstract, though also individualized, universality. In the next sections (§§1, 2) I shall cast light on the distinction beween immediately accidental (essentially untrue) and necessary individual particularities (specific external determinations of an inward essence) focussing on Hegel's notion of subjective "constitution".

1. EXCLUSIVE SINGULARITY AND COMMON SUBJECTIVITY OF THE 'I'

In the Addition to §385 of his 1830 *Encyclopaedia*, speaking of spirit, Hegel clarifies that to come to *know what it is* makes its realization. Hegel says that spirit is already spirit since its abstract beginning, but *er weiss noch nicht, dass er dies ist*; therefore, spirit essentially "is" only what it knows of itself (*wesentlich nur* [...] *was er von sich selber weiss*). Hence, human spirit's own nature is to comprehend its concept in philosophical knowing[7]. Hegel distinguishes between

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[6]   See Brownlee 2015.

[7]   As a concise recent entry puts it, the first section of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, subjective or finite

Wissen (knowing), as a general name, and *Erkennen* (cognition). When I know something, I am self-conscious (i.e. I am aware of myself) in so far as I am aware of an external object: I can know of myself only in knowing an external object, in objectifying *my* thought *of that* object. More technically, cognition as *Erkenntnis* is the intelligent activity of spirit positing the real, concrete sensory content within ourselves, in the inwardness and universality of one's thinking 'I': in appropriating that externally given content, I simplify it and make it something ideal, that is, something thought. In this way, in §381Z Hegel defines the basic element of spirit's conscious activity as "pure self-knowledge (*Selbsterkennen*) in absolute being-other (*Anderssein*)", or as the movement of leading back or negating that which is (merely) external into a simple self-relation. On the one hand, the I, the universal ego that any individual being is and is aware to be, is thus regarded as the primary and simplest determination of spirit[8], on the other hand, spirit, as Hegel defines it in the *Phenomenology*, is "the knowledge [*wissen*] of oneself in one's externalization"[9].

How then can our knowledge reconcile the notion of an universal 'I' with the real existential manifold of any singular 'I', which makes each of us different from other humans to whom we relate? In this regard, it is worth noting that Hegel distinguishes between *Besonderheit* as *Partikularität* and *Besonderheit* as individual determination: our contingent particular features or aims or idiosyncrasies (*Enz.* III, §406Z:148), are not to be confused with our specific determination as human being among other human beings which individualizes our universal content *qua* human beings (*Enz.* III, §406Z:143-

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spirit: "analyses the fundamental nature of the biological/human individual along with the cognitive and the practical prerequisites of human social interaction" (deVries 2013, 133). The Section on 'subjective or finite spirit' precedes the Section on 'objective spirit', which deals with the various forms of relation among human agents within an institutionalized community, according to Hegel's famous definition of spirit in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as: "*I* that is *We* and *We* that is *I*" (*W* 3, 145; Miller trans. ¶177: 110; see also *GW* 14,1, §264: 210-211).

8   "All the activities of spirit are nothing but the various modes in which that which is external is led back into the internality, to what spirit is itself, and it is only by means of this leading back, this idealizing or assimilation of that which is external, that spirit becomes and is spirit. On closer examination of spirit, we find that the ego is its primary and simplest determination. Ego is a completely simple, universal being. When we speak of it we are certainly referring to an individual being, but since every individual being is ego, we are merely referring to something extremely universal. It is on account of its universality that the ego is able to abstract from everything, even its life " (*Enz.* III, §381Z: 37-39).

9   "Denn der Geist ist das Wissen seiner selbst in seiner Entäußerung" (*W*3, 552). According to Hegel, there is something hidden from consciousness in its object if the object is for consciousness something other or alien; only when the absolute being *qua* spirit is the object of consciousness then consciousness knows the object as its own self, for then the object has the form of self in its relation to consciousness, or "consciousness is revealed to itself in the object" (*Gegenstand*): "es ist sich in ihm offenbar" (*W*3, 552; Miller trans. ¶759: 459).

144). Consider Hegel's point in a Remark to his *Anthropology* about the soul which is wholly universal and yet is *this* individual, specifically determined soul with its own various determinations which considered for themselves are merely general. Here the goal of Hegel's reappraisal of the *prima facie* natural characteristics differentiating human being among themselves – difference of temperament, character, inclination, gender, race, or habits – is to conceive of them in terms of different degrees and ways to signify spirit, as qualities showing the existence of spirituality within the individual subject as affecting external existence, being part of the individual's active, actual being (*Enz*. III, §406A: 133-138). Accordingly, Hegel claims that our actuality consists of all the universal determinations of the soul lived and individualized within us. Hence, each transitory, arbitrary, elective or accidental circumstance, becomes embraced within the totality of our feeling of ourselves, as the member of a chain of determinations (*als Glied einer Kette von Bestimmungen*; *Enz*. III, §406Z: 144)[10]. This is to say, to consider the contingent aspects of my being as *untrue* aspects of myself, merely means being aware that they play no central or essential role in my self-knowledge *when taken in their immediacy.*

The difference between something's own character and something else to which it is always related is at the core of the dialectic of qualitative determinateness; this difference allows for contingency affecting something's specific, determinate being. In the 1830 *Science of Logic*, in the chapter on Quality, Hegel distinguishes between a determination that remains external to the inwardness of something and, although characterizing its appearance, is only "for others", and a determination that necessary belongs to something, and though characterizing its appearance by depending upon externality, carries the different qualitative significance of expressing the determinate filling of that something's inwardness, its "constitution":

> The filling of the being-in-itself (*Ansichseins*) with determinateness (*Bestimmtheit*) is also distinct from the determinateness which is only being-for-other and remains outside the determination [...] That which the something has *in it* thus separates itself (*theilt sich*) and is from this side the external existence (*Dasein*) of the something which is also its (sein) existence, *but not as belonging to its being-in-itself.* Determinateness is thus constitution (*Beschaffenheit*). Constituted in this or that way, the something is caught up in external influences and external relationships. This external connection on which the constitution depends, and the being determined through an other, appear as something accidental. But it is the quality of the something to be given over to this externality and to have a *constitution* (*Beschaffenheit*). (*W*5, 133; *SL* 2010, 96)

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[10]   Note that '*Kette von Bestimmungen*' here means: linked series of *specifications*; this is not an issue of free will vs. determinism – a too common Anglophone misreading of *Bestimmung* and its cognates in philosophical German. I wish to thank an anonymous referee for drawing my attention to this point.

In §410 of the *Anthropology*, Hegel underscores how habit (*Gewohnheit*) is a difficult point in the organization of spirit, as the mechanism of self-feeling, and since according to habit a human being is in the mode of natural existence, is not free. However, despite its mechanical aspect, according to which it is often regarded as lifeless, contingent and particular, at the same time habit:

> is what is most essential to the existence of all spirituality within the individual subject. It enables the subject to be as *concrete* immediacy, as an ideality *of soul* (*als* seelische *Idealität*), so that the religious or moral etc. content belongs to him as *this* self, *this* soul, and is in him neither merely *in itself* (*an sich*), as an endowment (*Anlage*), nor as a transient sensation or representation, nor as an abstract inwardness cut off from action and actuality, but is in his being (*sondern in seinem Sein sei*). (*Enz.* III, §410: 187; cfr. Petry trans., II, 397)[11]

In the Addition to §112 of the *Encyclopedia Logic* Hegel introduces the *Logic of Essence* by remarking:

> we often say specifically that the main thing about people is their essence, and not what they do or how they behave. What is quite right in this claim is that what someone does must be considered not just in its immediacy, but only as mediated through his inwardness and as a manifestation of his inwardness. (*Enz.* I, §112Z: 234)

Note that distinctive of Hegel's spirit is that it truly actualizes itself by constituting the essence or substantial basis of any existing singularity (*this* self, *this* soul) *as* universal human individuality. In §145 of the *Logic of Essence* on "Actuality" (*Wirklichkeit*)*,* Hegel makes contingency and possibility respectively the outward and inward moments of the exterior manner in which whatever has an essential, actual being initially appears to consciousness (*Enz.* I, §145: 284; *EL*, 217), for "Actuality is not just an immediate being (*ein unmittelbar Seiendes*); but, as the essential being (*das wesentliche Sein*), it is the sublation of its own immediacy, and thereby mediates itself with itself" (*Enz.* I, §146Z: 288; *EL*, 220). Therefore, contingent features are not nullified by reducing the otherness of both natural and spiritual processes to any reflex of logical necessity. Rather, Hegel claims that the contingent aspects of one's own being must be considered

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[11]   As Guido Seddone highlights: "habit occupies a very important position for it is placed after the sentient faculty of the body and introduces the actual soul, i.e. the condition in which the soul conceives of its body as its own *other* and distinguishes itself from the outside environment, becoming an individual subject" (Seddone 2018, 75). It is worth noting that Lumsden addresses the critical role of the Hegelian habit in embodying normativity as a material instantiation of self-producing spirit vs. Kant's disembodied space of reasons: "I think it is clear that the importance of habit for Hegel and the way he conceives it as 'spiritual nature' is positioned against the rigid division between biological life and spirit that seems to be assumed in Kant's thought"(Lumsden 2016, 89).

as expressions of one's own specific individuality (*Besonderheit*). Accordingly, what individuals are essentially is only what they know of themselves, starting with their awareness that their contingent peculiarities, in their immediacy, are precious only for the individual person's self-complacency.

In this way, the value for individuals, discounting knowledge of these peculiarities, becomes to consider the duties which constitute the true content of the will, that is, to know the universal intellectual and moral nature of mankind, for which education and discipline are essential[12]. Moreover, as Hegel remarks introducing the Logic of Essence, "it should not be overlooked that essence, and inwardness as well, only prove themselves to be what they are by coming forth into appearance" (*in die Erscheinung heraustreten*: *Enz*. I, §112Z: 234).

Within this context, Hegel distinguishes humans from non-human animals. The death of an animal signifies the indifferent universality of the genus which is present in the concept of the singular animal, but which remains confined and closed within its inwardness, without passing into existence: death appears (*erscheint*) in the form of immediate singularity (*unmittelbaren Einzelnheit*) as its empty, annihilating negation. As something singular, the animal has its concept in its *kind*; the kind frees itself from singularity through death (*Enz*. I, §24A^2: 86; *EL,* 60). By contrast, in humanity, death brings forth the "universal individuality which is in-and-for-itself" (*die an-und-für-sich allgemeine Einzelnheit*)", proving to be the conserving sublation (*erhaltende Aufhebung)* of individuality (*Enz*. III, §381A: 21; Petry trans., I, 35).

In the 1822–23 Lectures on *Philosophie der allgemeinen Weltgeschichte* Hegel adds to this topic some anthropological remarks. He says that humans can inhibit instincts and representations, and that thoughts interrupt from within the cycle of driving instinct plus satisfaction which supports the continuity of the self. In contrast, non-human animals can be interrupted only from without, by pain, hunger or fear. According to Hegel, non-human animals actually 'sense' or 'intuit' the concept of things and attain substantial subjectivity, experiencing a thorough sense of unity in their members, autonomously behaving within their environment, driven by internal excitement and satisfaction to maintain and develop their life. Sensibility and irritability distinguish animal from plants: animal subjectivity's inwardness involves its being determined from within itself, from within outwards, rather than simply and mechanically from without. To be aware of its own environment does not subject the animal to determination by its habitat, for the animal responds to whatever it senses according to its own

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[12] This is why the embodiement of God in the Son and the presence of the Holy Spirit in a community of believers function as common Christian representations of Hegel's philosophical concept of the knowledge of spirit "in its absolute infinity", grasped as a faithful image of the eternal Idea (*ein Abbild der ewigen Idee*: *Enz.* III, §377: 9).

capacities, needs, aims. Moreover, the animal has freedom of self-movement, spontaneously determining its own place.

    Recent interpretations have re-evaluated this introduction of notions as 'freedom' and 'subjectivity' within the animal kingdom, speaking of a "naturalization of the subject"[13], thus countering contemporary readings "assuming that Hegel's Spirit would leave nature behind and that freedom and subjectivity would be merely normative phenomena that would appear only after nature within attributive social practices" (Testa 2016, 24)[14]. In my view however even if it is certainly true that Hegel regards the animal as the *truly subjective unity* of an infinite form embedded in a plurality of organs, held together in the outwardness of a body connected with an external world, it is equally true that for Hegel this kind of animal subjectivity is not yet for-itself as pure *universal* subjectivity: it is able to feel, sense, intuit itself but not to think of itself[15]. As Renault nicely puts it:

> The transition from nature into spirit is characterized by continuity as well as by discontinuity. Nature is already a series of levels of increasing complexity and a process of internalization or integration, of the interrelated moments [...] The animal has already a 'soul', and it is at exactly this level of animal subjectivity that the Philosophy of Spirit has to start. Hence, the Anthropology is a theory of the continuity of spirit with nature. Indeed, it is also a theory of what specifies the human soul: it is characterized by a higher degree of unification of drives and feelings through habits in a second nature [...] At a certain degree, these quantitative changes in degrees of integration reverse in a qualitative change named freedom. Conversely, the qualitative change that defines spirit shouldn't be conceived of independently of this series of quantitative changes. (Renault 2016, 204)[16]

Elsewhere I have remarked how the animal exhibits merely the transition from one sensation, which occupies the *whole of its soul*, to another which dominates it equally, showing to have the sense of itself but not self-consciousness, that is, the animal is endowed with a psyche without possessing *categorial* mental process of which to be aware (Ferrini 2012, 147). The key point examined here is that Hegel claims that animals cannot say 'I', and that only the human, in calling himself 'I', means oneself, as this single person, the unity of one's own self-consciousness,

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[13]   See e.g. Testa 2012, 19-35; Pinkard 2012; Illetterati 2016, 183-201.

[14]   The reference is mainly to Pippin's polemic against McDowell and Devries, see Pippin 2002, 58-75.

[15]   "Diese Subjektivität ist aber noch nicht für sich selbst, als reine, allgemeine Subjektivität; sie denkt sich nicht, sie fühlt sich, schaut sich nur an" (*Enz*. II, §350Z: 431).

[16]   On the increasing degrees of subjectivity (self-determination) and decreasing degrees of separation and isolation of the forms of the natural things in the three divisions of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* ('Mechanics', 'Physics', 'Organics') see Ferrini 2009b, 45-58; on animal subjectivity and its environmental relations see *ivi*, 74-78 and Ferrini 2010, 129-135.

and *also* something completely universal, undetermined, in which everything particular is negated: the human being is the *only* "singularity that is in itself and for itself the universal". This is the sense of human subjectivity: "It is man who first raises himself above the singleness of sensation (*die Einzelnheit der Empfindung*) to the universality of thought, to self-knowledge (*zum Wissen von sich selbst*), to the grasping of his subjectivity, of his 'I'"(*Enz.* III, §381A: 25; Petry trans. I, 49, rev.). In fact to be self-aware is to be implicitly aware of oneself as universal and *at the same time* as singular in both the internal and the external senses. On the one hand, self-conscious rationality is not "glued onto" our natural lives; on the other hand, the distinctive self-relation that identify the humans differentiating them from other animals does not raise ourselves out of the natural kingdom[17].

2. The Logical Determinations of the Human 'I' between Otherness and Self-Identity

As remarked above, in §381Z Hegel speaks of man's knowledge of oneself, grasping one's subjectivity, one's 'I', in terms of "self-elevation" above the singleness of sensation to the universality of thought: as is well known, this has been charged to subordinate difference and alterity to self-identity[18]. It goes without saying that if we regard Hegel's "know thyself" injunction as meaning that a self-conscious 'I' must become another for itself, only in order to be able to identify with itself, then our self-knowledge would rest upon a sort of hypertrophy of the subject's sense of identity, which will be unable to offer any kind of knowledge where different members of a social community actually grasp the complexity of their intersubjective interactions. If this were Hegel's lesson about the primary form of subjectivity, what can follow from such an abstract beginning? Wouldn't any further dialectical development inevitably make the content no more than a subjective product closed within the inwardness of a self-consciousness, as Hegel himself rejoins to Kant' and Fichte's idealisms? How does Hegel's philosophy justify its claim about existing exclusive singularities as universal individualities?

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[17]   See on the point Pinkard 2017, 6-12.

[18]   According to Stephen Houlgate, this reading of Hegel is very common, especially among commentators inspired by Nietzsche, Heidegger or Derrida; their picture is essentially the same: "everything in Hegel's world endeavors to absorb what is other *into* its own self-identity" (Houlgate 2006, 350).

A popular line of interpretation[19] has argued that the intersubjective dimension, though highlighted in Hegel's earlier writings of the Jena period and the 1807 *Phenomenology*, "is repressed by subjectivity, leaving no presence in the presentation of the absolute idea" (Habermas 1999, 149). As Espen Hammer summarizes, for Habermas there is the 'bad' Hegel of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and beyond, which replaced the situated and finite subject of the earlier writings "with a theory of absolute subjectivity, involving a single macrosubject allegedly capable of overcoming the opposition between subjective certainty and objective sociality by reference to some form of totalizing, otherness-absorbing self-conscious 'whole'" (Hammer 2007, 116). The reading *à la* Habermas claims that actual intersubjectivity becomes lost in Hegel's later system as the exposition of the unfolding of the Idea's logical sustained structure, which Honneth views as a "monologically self-developing spirit" (Honneth 1995, 61)[20]. Also Derrida charged Hegel with logocentrism arguing that his speculative logic established the true infinity of being exempted from the negativity of the finite[21].

This is why it matters to reconsider Hegel's logical basis for the subjective finitude of spirit and the restless logical nature of any *finite* 'I'. Indeed, the text of §386 introduces the stages of spirit's development by relating Hegel's examination of subjective and objective spirit to spirit's appearance and finitude,

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[19]   As Robert Pippin puts it, a widely accepted view has it that Hegel came later to believe "that human social and political existence was best understood and legitimate as a manifestation of a grand metaphysical process, an Absolute Subject's manifestation of itself, or a Divine Mind's coming to self-consciousness" (Pippin 2002, 155). In a footnote, Pippin states that versions of this claim can be found in Habermas, Theunissen, Hösle and Honneth, *inter alia* (*ivi*, 168, note 3).

[20]   To solve these tensions between private lives and public orientation, individual and social reasons (Pinkard 2012, Chapters 4 and 5), interpreters have argued in favour of a systematic continuity of freedom and recognition in Hegel's early and mature writings, focussing on the development of self-consciousness and the necessity of the process of "recognition" (Houlgate 2010), as a social-ontological phenomenon which points to a holistic normative account of human personhood by distinguishing persons and their lifeworld from mere animals and their natural environment (Ikäheimo, 2009). In particular, some draw attention to the struggle for recognition and the thematization of intersubjectivity (Bykova 2013), and to the recognition of our mutual interdependence as normative for manifesting our individual free agency (Williams 2013).

[21]   See Derrida 1980, 119: "the only effective position to take in order not to be enveloped by Hegel would seem to be, for an instant, the following: to consider false-infinity (that is, in a profound way, original finitude) irreducible". See also Derrida 1997, 24: "Hegel [...] undoubtedly summed up the entire philosophy of the *logos*. He determined ontology as absolute logic; he assembled all the delimitations of philosophy as presence; he assigned to presence the eschatology of *parousia*, of the self-proximity of infinite subjectivity". Zambrana 2012 has challenged Derrida's reading arguing that "true infinity is crucial to Hegel's understanding of ideality as a question of normative authority, which does not fall prey to logocentrism". As Zambrana remarks, the notions of finitude and infinity should be understood as constitutively impure: "True infinity is thus the comprehension that neither finitude nor infinity can be held as absolute, pure notions, since neither is self-subsistent" (Zambrana 2012, 5).

referring to an intrinsic contradiction within the logical determination of finitude[22]. In the Logic of Quality of the 1830 *Encyclopaedia,* Hegel presents this "intrinsic contradiction" by mentioning that Plato's *Sophist* highlighted how any finite individual is equally well 'something' (the side of its 'sameness') *and also its other* (the side of its distinguished determinateness): each finite individual is exclusive only insofar as it involves its other (*Enz.* I, §94: 199; *EL,* 149). Put otherwise, Plato exhibited the interweaving network of forms which defines the sameness of any determinate thing[23]. Moreover, Hegel presents the 'I' as the most familiar example of being-for-itself, that is, of being manifest to oneself[24]. Hegel says that "we know ourselves as determinate beings who *are there* (*daseiend*), both distinct from other determinate beings and yet related to them"[25]. Hegel does not present the notion of 'I' as a monolithic punctual substance characterized by exclusive predicates, on the basis of our being autonomously cognizant of ourselves as subjective identities, both in continuity and discontinuity with our conspecifics. Rather, Hegel stresses how our self-knowledge that the universality of thought is embedded in any singular human being makes our subjectivity enter expressly into a free existence:

> The most familiar example of being-for-itself is the 'I'. We know ourselves to be beings who are there, first of all distinct from other such beings, and related to them. But secondly, we also know that this expanse of being-there is, so to speak, focused into the simple form of being-for-itself. When we say 'I', that is the expression of the infinite self-relation that is at the same time negative. It may be said that man distinguishes himself from the animals, and so from nature generally, because he knows himself as 'I'; what this says, at the same time, is that natural things never attain to free being-for-oneself, but, being restricted to being here, are always just being-for-another[26].

Man distinguishes himself from the animals, and so from nature generally, because he knows himself as 'I', but when we say 'I', this expresses the infinite self-relation which is also negative and exclusive. Note that the formal structure of the 'I' is not the distinctive identity which merely individuates any 'unique thing' from all others, unto itself, regardless of any relations to others. Indeed,

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[22]   "Spirit is the infinite Idea, and the disproportion between the Notion and reality, the meaning of finitude, has here the added determination of its constituting the appearance within spirit. [....] The determination of finitude has been elucidated and examined long since at its place in the logic" (*Enz.* III, §386: 71-73).

[23]   See *ibid.*: "[...] the expression of the contradiction, which the finite contains, [i. e.] that it is just as much something as its other".

[24]   See the Section on "Quality. C-Being-for-itself": Hegel, *Enz.* I, §96Z: 203-204; *EL*, 153.

[25]   *Ivi*, § 96Z, 203.

[26]   *Ivi*, 204.

Hegel refers to the 'I' as the most familiar example of that immediate relation to itself, merely *by excluding the other from itself*; as such, for "this determinacy is no longer the finite determinacy of something in distinction to another, but the infinite determinacy that contains distinction within it as sublated"[27]. This progress in thought has further consequences. This is why in the 1830 *Science of Logic*, Hegel presents the 'I' not only as as an example of qualitative being manifest to oneself but also as an example of the category of Quantity:

> for the 'I' is an absolute becoming-other, an infinite distancing or all-round repulsion that makes for the negative freedom of the being-for-itself which, however, remains absolutely simple continuity – the continuity of universality, of self-abiding-being interrupted by infinitely manifold limits, by the content of sensations, of intuition, and so forth. (*GW* 21, 179; *SL* 2010, 156–157)

The concrete content of consciousness, the manifold of sensations, intuitions, representations, are the 'discrete moments' of the simple continuity of the 'I'. In §2 of the 1830 *Encyclopaedia*, Hegel underscores the difference between philosophical thinking and "the thinking that is active in everything human and brings about the very humanity of what is human", by stressing that equally well: "*in-itself* there is only *One* thinking" (*Enz.* I, §2: 42; *EL*, 25). Accordingly, despite the difference between forms of thought which appear as feelings, beliefs, intuitions, representations and *thinking itself as form*, Hegel consistently maintains that thought (the 'I') determines and permeates all human content of consciousness. In the Remark to §20, Hegel states that the 'I' (*das Ich*) is "the thought" (*das Denken*) as the subject, and since "I am at the same time in all my sensations, representations (*Vorstellungen*), states, etc., thought is present everywhere and pervades all these determinations as [their] category" (*Enz.* I, §20A: 75; cf. *EL*, 51). The same point is made in the *Preface* to the second edition of the *Science of Logic*, where Hegel makes clear that the forms of thought are, in the first instance, displayed and stored in human language (*W* 5, 20). From the section on intelligence in the *Philosophy of Spirit* of 1805/1806, to §2 of the 1830 *Encyclopaedia*, up to the *Preface* to the second edition of the *Science of Logic*, Hegel always maintains that, through *das Ich* the forms of thought in general permeate, instinctively and unconsciously, all – even the most sensuous – *human* activities in their original qualitative difference from animality. The essence, the distinctive *nature* of man itself is a *logical nature*, and expresses itself, awakening spirit, as the *power* to give names to things, as language, the first *creative power* exerted by human intelligence, which therefore *essentially* belongs to the realm of Spirit. This

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[27]   *Ibid.*

transforming universal power is said to be a sort of "infection"; systematically, Hegel uses this term at various stages: with regard to magnetism (*Enz.* II, §314), vegetable nature (§§345–346), animal process of assimilation (§354, §§364–365), animal disease (§371) and in the §402 *Philosophy of Spirit* with the significance of 'magic dominion' over the world. At the level of the *Phenomenology*, the result is the "intelligibility" (*Verständlickeit*) of the content matter, which fills the gap between ordinary and philosophical consciousness and affords a ladder from the former to the latter.

This focus on the naturally logical activity of our 'I' to appropriate the external object making it as its own (*Eigentum*) belongs to the core of the Hegelian thought throughout its development, beginning from his famous *Aphorism* on Jakob Böhme (1803-1806), which has parallels in many systematic places[28]. Commenting in the Jena period on Böhme's vision of God's wrath when He becomes aware that his essence is lost, dispersed in the other of Himself which He has created, Hegel relates that intuition of a divine consuming fire that burns nature, transfiguring its immediate life in an eternal spiritual one, to the higher scientific work of consciousness. Human self-awareness, through conceptual knowing, shows how the natural essence of both the subject and the object is consumed so that the individual emerges conscious of his own self and intuition of nature's *spiritual* essence. Self-knowing subjects crush the alleged external substantiality of the reality of the world standing before his or her knowing, by making it *ideal*.

To clarify the epistemological and metaphysical conditions for developing a "thinking 'I'" through the relation between essence and appearance, in the next section (3) I outline the cognitive path of human natural consciousness until its transition into the practical relations with objects in real life, presenting the various dialectical stages of the relation between simple unity and diversity both *a parte objecti* and *a parte subjecti*. As remarked earlier, my critical point is that any universal 'I' must be thoroughly integrated with the real individual's distinctive and specific characteristics. Hegel begins to prove this thesis at the most immediate level of our phenomenical knowledge, by demonstrating how the dialectic of sense-certainty develops the characters of the sensibility and singularity of the object *and* the subject, their real individuality, precisely by bringing about the opposite feature of their intrinsic abstract universality. This is what comes through the words of language as the very first human spiritual

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[28] See for instance the 1805-1806 *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, the Addition to §248 of the *Encyclopaedia*, and Addition 1 to §42 of the *Encyclopaedia*: "Thus the Ego is, so to speak, the crucible and the fire through which the *indifferent* multiplicity is consumed and reduced to unity" (*Enz.* I, §42Z^1: 118; *EL*, 85, my emphasis).

act that consumes the immediate natural determinacy of the sensible world[29]. This tension between the intellectually fixed opposites of simple unity and multifarious diversity, inwardness and outwardness, conrete individuality and abstract universality, animates the movement of 'Perception' to 'Force and Understanding' and marks the transition to self-consciousness, that is, to the form of a practical, living and thinking 'I'. We will see how the whole movement of Perception is taken to be the one of an (internal) unitarian and universal *essence* that in perceiving is linked with an external multifarious diversity that is both inessential (i.e. the properties are mutually indifferent, not mutually exclusive) and necessary (to the determinateness of the thing). Furthermore, I will show how the outcome of the dialectic of the Understanding moves our knowledge towards a new configuration of both subject and object: towards *self-awareness*, as the autoscopy proper of self-consciousness, and towards contents, as 'Life'. Organic life can count as a kind of infinite object that the abstract, reflective thought-form of our Understanding cannot grasp[30], for it is characterized by the internal unity and the mutual exchange of internal and external, that is a principle of immanent differentiation preserving the manifoldness in the unity.

As Terry Pinkard correctly remarks, with the collapse of the idea that the so-called essence of things was an old metaphysical intrinsic, non-relational essence, and the result of being aware of our own conceptualizing activity, which contrasts itself with the world of independently existing objects:

> an alternative picture of the subject has emerged – namely, that of a practical, living subject who deals with objects in terms of his cognitive capacities and for whom his concepts are more like *tools* with which he can deal with his environment. Hegel calls this 'life'. (Pinkard 1994, 48)

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[29]   See *GW* 8, 190: "der Mensch spricht zu dem Dinge als dem seinigen und diß ist das Seyn des Gegenstandes".

[30]   In the *Zusatz* to §28 of the 1830 *Encyclopaedia* Hegel warns us to distinguish between the finite thinking of the understanding, which takes up the abstract determinations of thought as they are immediately given and in isolation, and the true, infinite thinking of reason. Formally speaking, the finite subsists in its relation to its other (i.e. an object that confronting me as something other presents itself as my limit and negation), but when thought takes thinking as its object, than the object confronting me no longer counts as a negative limit: infinite thinking determines as does finite thinking, but rather than fixing restricted thought-determinations, it regards them not as ultimate, but negates their abstraction and one-sidedness, unveiling their nature of being moments passing into one another.

3. From the Phenomenology of the Pure 'I' as Immediate Spirit to Life

As Russon remarks, the *phenomenological* study of our conscious experience means "that it is a study that describes experience 'from the inside'", and not according to some presupposed model of reality (Russon 2015, 51). In the Preface to the 1807 *Phenomenology* Hegel describes the relationship between the philosophical form of knowing and the ordinary cognitive strategies of unscientific consciousness against the background of his quest for the universal intelligibility of science, which implies its accessibility from the standpoint of our ordinary way of knowing. In sharp contrast to viewing science as an esoteric possession of few individuals by some special kind of intuition, faith or feeling of the True, and in sharp contrast to indefinite, vacuous formulas which are declared or asserted, rather than justified, Hegel articulates a double strategy: (1) to show what natural and philosophical consciousness have in common (the 'I' and the intelligibility of the world thanks to the theoretical approach of the abstract universality of our understanding), and (2) to point to the *complete determination* of the content we experience in knowing. In the former regard, Hegel emphasizes what affords everyone equal access to science:

> The intelligible (*verständige*) form of science is the path offered to everyone and equally available for all. To achieve rational knowledge through our own understanding (*Verstand*) is the rightful demand of a consciousness which is approaching science. *This is so both because the understanding* (Verstand) *is thought, the pure 'I' as such* (überhaupt) *and because what is intelligible* (das Verständige) *is what is already familiar and common both to science and to the unscientific consciousness alike*, and it is that through which unscientific consciousness is immediately enabled to have access to science. (*W*3, 20; Miller trans. rev., ¶13: 8; my emphasis)

In the Addition to §246 of the Philosophy of Nature in the *Encyclopaedia* Hegel makes clear that in simply thinking things, in simply giving to them a name, our intelligence 'transforms' them into something universal, intelligible though in a theoretically abstract way: we give them our own (human) form and turn them into something belonging to us, with which we *all* are acquainted and able to share, though at the cost of what nature really is. In bringing everything into the net of the universal determinations of thought we have *first* made the content intelligible, something we share and can communicate, and what is intelligible – i.e., all things whose unique sensuous singularity can be *said* or enunciated – is the content of our natural unscientific consciousness, which itself is immediate spirit, the pure 'I' as such[31]. Yet this is not at all regarded as an exclusively

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[31] "We also find that the theoretical approach is inwardly self-contradictory, for it appears to bring about the precise opposite of what it intends. We want to know the nature that really is, not something

subjective feature. In his 1830 Lectures on the *Science of Logic*, Hegel uses the example of a very simple sensory judgment ("the rose is red"), remarking that: (i) what appears to be totally sensory contains the copula, which is non-sensory; (ii) the division between subject and predicate contrasts to the undifferentiated sensory apprehension of a red-rose; (iii) what is more, when I say "red" for the singular red that I have before me, the predicate expresses a general objective characteristic that at once belongs both to blood, wine etc. *and* to me[32].

In his *Lectures on Philosophy of Spirit* from Berlin 1827-28, Hegel claims:

> The universal is nothing other than what is contained in the object. The universal is only in the subject and it has been asked, whether genera are in nature or are only in the subject [...] the universal is the truthful in objects. 'To provide marks, differentia, in a definition', one says, 'is necessary though only for the subject'. However, the mark by which one kind of species is distinct from another kind must be an essential mark, which is the root of its other characteristics (*VPG,* 230.308-318).

As Kenneth Westphal has pointed out, this kind of idealism, according to which the determinate objective quality of the things themselves that I immediately perceive is an intuited singularity that has the form of universality which *also* belongs to my thought, "is a form of ontological holism that is, and is intended to be, consistent with realism" (Westphal 2018, 420). Indeed, since language is the work of thought, nothing can be actually expressed in language (*versus* what is merely meant) that is not universal:

> However much they actually wanted to *say* (*sagen*) what they mean (*meinen*) about this piece of paper, and however much they wanted to *say* it, still it would be impossible because the sensuous 'this', which is what is meant, is *inaccessible* (*unerreichbar*) to

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which is not, but instead of leaving it alone and accepting it as it is in truth, instead of taking it as given, we make something completely different out of it. By thinking things, we transform them into something universal; things are singularities however, and the lion in general does not exist. We make them into something subjective, produced by us, belonging to us, and of course peculiar to us as men; for the things of nature do not think, and are neither representations nor thought" (*Enz.* II, §246Z: 198).

[32]   *VL,* 4.54-56: "was ich vor mir habe, ist nur das einzelne Rot, dieses Bestimmte, das aber auch [die] Form der Allgemenheit hat, diese gehört auch mir an". In his *Science of Logic,* Hegel analyses judgments of inherence as singularized universals which specify the logical form taken by content-conferring perceptual judgements. Paul Redding remarks: "to predicate 'red' of some particular rose is to attribute to it the particular redness that it has and not the general property redness that it has in common with, say, postboxes and fire engines" (Redding 2014, 10). However, he also notes: "Hegel's argument runs broadly along the lines that the negation of a judgement such as 'the rose is red' still carries a certain positive content, namely, that the rose has some other colour. When it is said that, for instance, the rose is not red, only the determinateness of the predicate is thereby denied and thus separated from the universality which *equally attaches to it*; the universal sphere, color, is retained; if the rose is not red, it is nonetheless assumed that it has a color, though another color. From the side of this universal sphere, the judgement is still positive"(*ivi*, 11: note 8; my italics).

the language which belongs to consciousness, that is, to what is in itself (*an sich*) universal. (*W* 3, 91s.; Miller trans. rev. ¶110: 66)

The key point here is that if nothing more is said of an existing thing than that it is an external object (*äußerer Gegenstand*), the thing is expressed as the most universal of all and what is expressed is only the *indifference of its externality*, i.e., "its sameness (*Gleichheit*) with everything instead of its distinctiveness" (*Unterschiedenheit*; *W* 3, 91s.; Miller trans. rev. ¶110: 66). At first the object that consciousness meant to know in sense-certainty appeared as something totally unaffected by its relation to consciousness, given to it as a singular, immediate and independent being, with no other determination of being intuited as an existing being-there within space and time. However, the dialectic of object as a *this* which is *here* and *now* had turned the initial certainty of actually grasping substantive individuals into an opposite truth. *A parte subjecti*, consciousness experiences that it apprehends the *this* only by dissolving it into a relational net of differentiated referents; *a parte objecti* is the "now", that is present at noon in so far as it is not the past night-time. For us, that experience had in fact exhibited the object as something *internally mediated in its singularity*: a simply self-identical (universal and undivided)[33] complex of many punctual determinations of the two abstract forms of externality: spacial juxtaposition (the *neben*) and temporal succession (the *nach*). This is what verbal language necessarily reveals when consciousness wants to "say" (or state) the individual existence it means to express[34]. Because of these two extremes of real individuality and abstract universality in the new stage of *Perception*, common sense despairs of reaching truth whenever that it tries to bring together the unitary being of a thing and its many different sensory aspects. In the same vein with the general perspective outlined in the *Preface*, the understanding (*Verstand*) is the finite mode by which the subject apprehends given objects in their determinate distinctions, but it bestows the form of abstract universality on these contents, which it fixes in mutual contra-distinction. Since *Perception* results for us from *Sense Certainty*, on the one hand, the thing is taken as essentially one, as a simple natural unity or a substantive individual which as this kind of non-relational identity *excludes* what is other than itself. On the other hand, however, the thing of *Perception* also necessarily *contains diversity*, it appears as constituted by a manifold of

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[33]   *W* 3, 85; Miller trans. rev. ¶96: 60: "Such a simple (*Ein solche Einfaches*), which is through negation, which is neither this nor that, a *not-this (ein Nichtdieses)*, and is equally indifferent to being this or that, is what we call a *universal*".

[34]   Westphal 2002-2003 has pointed out how fundamental is the interrelation between *sagen* and *bezeichen* (connotation and denotation, intension and extension, utterance and gesture) for Hegel's analysis and transition from sense-certainty to perception.

determinate properties. Logically speaking, Hegel states that in truth repulsion is essentially attraction and the excluding One sublates itself[35].

What emerges is that in consciousness' experience the perceived thing as the simple, unseparate complex of many properties, collapses through the determinateness that allegedly constitutes its essence: indeed, *Perception* inwardly *sublates itself*, because when it separates the simple inner self-determination of the thing from its multifarious way of being, it also separates the being of the thing from its immediate presence to a perceiver, and it derives (or posits, *setzt*) the thing as the whole ground of its determinate, apparent and specific parts or properties. This self-sublation of the finite is exactly what Hegel calls the dialectical moment of everything logically real in §79 and §81 of the 1830 *Encyclopaedia.*

In short, by its definition, *Perception* cannot go beyond an empirical, variable and contingent mixture of universality and singularity; this marks its boundaries. The unsolved sensuous opposition between the abstract extremes of essentiality and determinateness leads to the transition of this shape of consciousness to the superior and deeper unity of the *Understanding*, and to *force* as its object. The transition is carried out when consciousness moves to an unconditioned, supersensible, self-identical universality as the inner, *productive* ground of the manifold properties of the object. The thought-form of such a productive ground is a self-identical universality, which is not an immediate lifeless substance that lacks actual existence, but a *purposive activity* which has the power to make itself into what the thing is in itself, developing its parts and properties, bringing the inner nature of perceived things to actuality. Hegel's analysis of the deceptive experience of the "perceiving understanding" in the dialectic of *Perception* proves directly within the experience of consciousness that natural things must be objectively determined according to what is internal and necessary, not extrinsic or alien to them: their ground is force that expresses itself[36].

Note that with the transition to the chapter *Force and Understanding*, consciousness does not confront any longer an external object that is also foreign (*fremd*) to thought, *essentially other than the subject*. Through the determinations first of "force" and then of "laws" as universals which remain in identity with themselves within the flux of phenomena by ruling their variation, the inwardness of the natural thing becomes the thought of them, their concept. The discovery of the form of the laws of nature, which invariantly and generally govern what appears and happens in our mind-independent world, allows consciousness to bring back to simplicity, to the form of the

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[35]   On the dialectic of repulsion and attraction see Schick 2000, 235-251.

[36]   Here I refer to Ferrini 2005, 187-197.

universal, all the singularities which stand before the knowing subject. The transition from the *Understanding* – not as a faculty of cognition but as shape of the ordinary knowledge of consciousness[37] – to *Self-Consciousness* (according to its three shapes of appetite, struggle for recognition and work) is carried on through the immanent limits of the intellectual nature of the law which must fix within itself a necessary connection, between two irreducible opposite sides: one internal: theoretical, universal, necessary, qualitative, stable and ideal or supersensible (the formula), the other external: empirical, quantitative, transient, contingent and real or apparent (the side of the observed data). The shape of consciousness which knows the externality of nature through the laws of the understanding cannot go beyond the mutual externality of the two constitutive sides of the law, which as such remain quietly, i.e. *lifeless*, fixed within their difference. Note that the merely understanding consciousness cannot apprehend fluidly the difference between the theoretical and empirical side of a natural law, as related moments of the form that moves itself, the dynamic between foundation and existence.

The reflective understanding proves to be only able to express the static and quiet aspect of phenomena, proves to be inadequate to think what occurs in its experience of the law: the (relational) principle of internal difference, of the opposition itself, counts as something contradictory for the understanding. At the same time, the limits of our certainty of the object as something essentially other than our awareness of it have been brought before us. Indeed, what has also been traced out in *Force and Understanding* is the categorial structure of the object of knowledge, the structure of our ordinary intellectual procedures which determine the lawfulness of nature, its scientific objectivity.

To sum up, from a philosophical standpoint, the truth of sense-certainty was in fact the indifferent universality of the "here" and the "now", but this also marked the beginning of a path of liberation from any immediate dependence upon the object, from the intuitive apprehension of the "here is the tree" and the "now is noon" as grounding truth. For perceiving consciousness, a natural thing is inwardly differentiated between its particularity and its universality (in external relation to each other) and equally well it is determined by their empirical, contradictory mixture. For understanding consciousness, the natural thing is determined as *in itself external*: the independent existing singular being that confronts sensuous consciousness is reduced (or raised) to the universality of the appearance of an inner being-for-self; this requires developing *reflective* representations in which the subject becomes aware not just of the object as in itself external, but of its own objective way to represent the object. *A parte*

[37]   See Moneti 1986, 39.

subjecti, the outcome is that consciousness no longer takes as object what is in relation to it, but its own essential way of determining what is external to it; *a parte objecti*, we have the transition to a being that *is* the "appearance of an inner being-for-self"; that is, to a *living* being. Indeed, the being that is characterized by the internal unity and the mutual exchange of internal and external, that is a principle of immanent differentiation preserving the manifoldness in the unity, is the *organic* being (*Enz.* II §344Z: 347), the "infinite" form of which cannot be comprehended by the finite form of the understanding.

In the Addition to §418 of the *Encyclopaedia* Hegel underscores that when we confront any organic being, the *object switches over into the subjective*, so that consciousness discovers itself as the *essentiality* of the object it confronts. From the resolution of the contradiction of the section on the *Understanding* onward, the externality of nature begins to develop as spirit's *proper own* externality: from the external object, now spirit comes to reflect itself into itself, as the (internal) *essentiality* of the natural beings, and becomes manifest to itself, being aware of its own conceptualizing activity, that is, is for itself or objectified to itself (*wird sich selber gegenständlich*)[38]. Thus, the subject becomes ready to encounter, at first *in the shape of an external object*, another conscious human subject as its own reflective doublement. As Judith Butler notes, contextualizing the outset of Chapter 4 in the *Phenomenology*'s next section on Self-Consciousness:

> Why is it that the Other appears, and why is it that the Other appears as another shape? [...] In an earlier section of the *Phenomenology*, space, time, and distance are conceptualized in relation to 'force' (*Kraft*) and 'understanding' (*Verstand*). Understanding is differentiated from Perception (*Warnhemung*). In perception, the determinateness of a thing is known, along with its distinct and determinate qualities. We might understand this way of linking perception to determinateness as prefiguring the 'bounded' and distinct sense of the 'I' as it first comes face to face with its redoublement (*die Verdopplung*) in or as the Other. (Malabou & Butler 2011, 625-626).

In the next two sections (§§ 4, 5) I show how in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel argues that humans may be said to be thinking I's with the significance of relating as particular individual agents to their human essence in a process by which the immediate or abstract self-consciousness does *not* become another for itself *merely in order to be able to identify with itself* according to an alleged hypertrophy of the subject's sense of identity. By focusing on the master-serf relationship and on the import of what appears to be objectified in the serf's work for the externalization of the master's own inwardness, I highlight Hegel's

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[38]   See Hegel, *Enz.* III §418Z: 207.

idea of freedom as intersubjective cognitive and practical actualization. We will see how in Hegel's absolute idealism, *relational* characteristics enter the definition of what is substantial in human individuals *qua* embodied 'Egos', actually integrating both abstract and internally differentiated universality within mutually related individuals.

4. From the Abstract to the Thinking 'I'

Franco Chiereghin has noted how only *after* the master-serf dialectic do we no longer have the abstract 'I' of a human self-consciousness entangled with natural animal life, and only *after* the passage from the primitive shape of "appetite" (*Begierde*, often translated as "desire") to "recognition" humans may be said to be thinking 'I's', with the significance of relating as particular individual agents to their objective (human) essence, in such a way that each 'I' may share *thought* with all other 'I's' (Chiereghin 2009, 55-58). How can we make sense of this passage in light of our previous considerations about contingency and externality in the qualitative characteristics of the human self?

The phenomenological transition from the world of the *Understanding* to the world of *Life* is at first a transition to the *immediacy* of Life, to a physical world that is nothing but an environment inhabited by living organisms. Note how in those pages of the *Phenomenology* natural externality actually ceases to be merely indifferent externality but is now *equally well* an externality established by life in order to live[39]. Indeed, *Life* is common to all the realms of organic nature. In *Life* however there is neither freedom nor actual universality. As remarked earlier, in contrast with the results of the (human) dialectic of the *Understanding*, the substantiality of the animal's independent subjectivity, its individual existence, has not yet achieved being-for-itself. Its degree of unification of a multiplicity of distinct singularities can only be the sense of a common identity with the other conspecifics through the indefinite process of reproduction (the *Gattungsprocess*)[40]. Within animal life, universality is neither fully achieved nor sustained, for animal life cannot achieve any *enduring* (spiritual) concrete universal existence. Therefore, when human beings are considered phenomenally as driven only by instincts, thus living immersed within an unthinking condition as if they were *only* natural beings, they are isolated from their spiritual inwardness, external to, or estranged from, their

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[39] Compare Kisner 2008-9, 42-43 with *VPG,* 24-26.

[40] See *VPG,* 25.643-26.653; *Enz.* III §381Z: 20-21.

essential humanity (*VPW,* 27.643–653). Is this an entirely self-determining and internally self-justifying, "boot-strapping" claim[41]?

At first (at the stage of *Life* analysed at the outset of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, after *Consciousness*) the 'I', which constitutes the logical nature of any human animal, tries to solve the immediate appearance of its constitutive opposition between the side of continuity or commonality and the side of discreteness or particularity by destroying and absorbing *anything other* which limits and interrupts the continuity of its self-unity. Likewise, in natural life, animals driven by appetite treat any external object they encounter as mere means to reintegrating their own sensible self-unity (*VPG,* 35.843–856). This strategy seems to work also for human animals in so far as 'otherness' is constituted by external things devoid of self and *devoid of any objective essence for the human self*, which finds no resistance to appropriating and consuming whatever differs from it[42]. According to this external side, in desire and longing, things become immediately identical with the immediate human subjectivity, which exerts power over them as they exert power against it, in an endless cycle of mutual entanglement and momentary lack of differentiation. Subjectivity constantly relapses into itself out of its objectification[43], thus requiring continuous stimulation to restart its actualization. The key point here is the entanglement of the human self-unity with singularity and its full immersion in transitoriness, contrary to its inward, essential enduring universality, which in the state of nature altogether lacks any durable dimension: in short, given the intrinsic relatedness of sameness and otherness in the restless logical nature of the 'I', when the independence of the other, *qua* natural thing, is destroyed, the universal form of subjectivity also collapses. *Also humans may be unable to call themselves 'I'.*

The key point is: insofar as *for me* the other is an immediate other determinate being, something in nature existing simply as natural[44], Hegel claims that *I am*

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[41]   See Pippin 2008, 202: "Hegel's theory of recognition has turned out to be a theory of practical rationality of a radically 'boot-strapping' (internally self-determining and internally self-justifying sort)".

[42]   Russon 2015, 51-52 writes: "We typically imagine desire to be the desires *of* a person, an already formed and socially integrated ego. Hegel, though (like Freud, Lacan, Deleuze and Guattari in the twentieth century), investigates the primitive experience of desire that *precedes* ego formation. This desire (*Begierde*) [...] is a consciousness that exists only in and as the practice of carrying itself out, the 'self' that finds itself only as the experience of satisfaction in the 'consummation' of its encounter with its other. This primitive desire is not a *thought*, but a *behaviour*. In its most basic enactment, (self-)consciousness, then, is a matter of practice and, hence, inherently bodily. Most immediately, (self-) consciousness just is the body *lived as* the enactment of desire".

[43]   See *Enz*. III, §429Z.

[44]   See *ivi*, §431.

*unable to know myself as myself within this other, and therefore to be aware
and certain of my own self, of my own enduring universal identity*. This means
that for Hegel when a human being is captured in the cycle of destroying the
independence of the other, *qua* mere thing to consume, as a means to satisfy
needs, it also cannot reach any knowledge of oneself as a lasting universal form,
and not becoming aware of its kind of subjectivity, it cannot express it by saying
'I'. The necessity to overcome the state of natural life rests in the structure itself
of the 'human' appetite/desire, that on the one side, by showing the immanent
corporeality of the self, "reveals the impossibility of consciousness existing
independently of a body", and on the other side, awakes the self-awareness of
oneself as not being defined uniquely "by the very bodily reality" in and as which
desire is enacted (Russon 2015, 52).

Note that according to Hegel's *Logic of Essence*, if the 'thinking I' cannot
appear in the state of nature: this commits, urges and drives the inward, essential
and still implicit universal nature of any human *finite* subjectivity to prove itself
to be what it is by (practically) coming forth *in die Erscheinung.* By contrast, as
Marina Bykova remarks, Fichte's self-posited 'I' is immediately present to itself
in its original purity and thus *appears* fixed and indifferent. In this way, Fichte's
subject:

> is not practical because the external world, posited by the I as its own limitation, exists
> only in concept and not yet in reality. Thus, it lacks a necessary substantial aspect
> and ultimately affords no real development. Hegel rejects the notion of the I as fixed,
> unchangeable, and originally given [...] Hegel views the I as a *result*, rather than a
> beginning. Indeed this result is a product of the I's own development in its organic
> unity and dynamic entirety, the *whole* process. of 'the coming-to-be of itself' (*PhG*,
> *PS* 18/ *GW* 9: 18). [...] The I is not merely posited; it must create itself through self-
> mediation of its otherness in and through practical interactions with others within the
> real natural and social world. (Bykova 2019, 167)

In the state of *Life*, any self-consciousness directly manifests and proves its universal
essence by accepting to risk one's own life. This happens when the immediacy
and transitoriness of the others each (self-)consciousness distinguishes from and
refers to, means to encounter 'their Others', that is, individuals of the *same species*,
which cannot be destroyed and consumed as natural things *without opposing a
distinctive resistance, a kind of resistance that expresses human essence*. Hegel writes
that a self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much 'I' as 'object'[45], but two
humans initially confront each other as natural immediate beings irrespective of
each other. However, within the state of *Life*, the resistance of another 'I' to be

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[45]   *W* 3, 145: "Indem ein Selbstbewusstsein der Gegenstand ist, ist er ebensowohl Ich wie
Gegenstand".

treated solely as an object *must be different* from any kind of non-human animal's resistance. As recalled above, according to the 1827-28 *Lectures on Philosophy of Spirit,* "the mark by which one kind of species is distinct from another kind must be an essential mark, which is the root of its other characteristics" (*VPG,* 230.308-318)[46].

A "Battle unto Death" between humans must imply a *mutual assessment* of the opponent's physical force and vulnerability, not the use of teeth or claws, but tools as weapons and cognitive skills. Otherwise stated, entering such a struggle implies evaluating *mutual* weaknesses and strengths and *both* the opponents must respond to evidence and inference[47]. When human beings are considered as driven only by appetite or desire, their agency is inseparable from the existence of their's own bodily needs, and in the state of *Life* any human attempt to make another human being 'for oneself' cannot be "a mere cognizing of otherness; it must at the same time be a supersession of the other, an attempt to make the other exist 'for self-consciousness' in a concrete, objective manner" (Neuhouser 1989, 250). After the struggle for "recognition"[48], some individuals will prove their "courage", capacity of assessment, ability to "master" (i.e. ruling and controlling) things[49]; they will prove to be able to abstract from any committment, to be independent from domestic relations and circumstances, thus experiencing their universal essence by openly facing the possibility of death, eventually winning the battle; instead, by refusing to risk their own life because of their over-attachment to it, and then surrendering to "the Other", many individuals will experience the

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[46]   See on the point Ferrini 2009a, 95-100.

[47]   As Neuhouser remarks, the initial, naive and incomplete, certainty the humans have of themselves in the natural state becomes aware of otherness only at an experiential level: "It is only [...] when I try to make the animal really 'for me' by attempting to consume it, that I first encounter the otherness of the animal. It is from its threatening snarl, its attempts to flee – its resistance in general – that I learn that it is something other than myself" (Neuhouser 1989, 250). In explaining the transition from desire to recognition Brandom (2007) underscores that the other we struggle with is capable of recognizing us, but in my view this assumption would beg the question. Further (preliminary) conditions are necessary for the process of recognition, as the capacity of mutual assessment, artificial weapons, distinctive cognitive skills which must become manifest in a life-death struggle between *human* animals, where each part essentially proves the nature of its being against the other.

[48]   *W*3, 144: "Es ist ein *Selbstbewusstsein für ein Selbstbewusstsein*. Erst hiedurch ist es in der Tat". According to Hegel, then, no one can become self-conscious without passing through being consciously aware of another human being showing the same characteristics of awareness, and "for us" this has the significance to reach the concept of spirit. On the historical result of Hegel's master-serf relationship as disolving the Aristotelian natural relation of dependence among human beings, see Bodei 2019, 185-186.

[49]   See on this point Malabou's reconstruction of Derrida's interpretation of "Master and Serf": "Derrida uses Bataille as a surrogate to make Hegel speak *against* himself. The Hegelian notion of 'mastery' is doubled by Bataille's notion of 'sovereignity'. According to Derrida's Bataille, sovereignty would be the genuinely detached attitude,whereas mastery would be another name for a servile overattachment to life" (Malabou & Butler 2011, 613).

conserving sublation of a servile consciousness that also works for the durability of things as goods[50].

The justification for this juncture of the text that commits the future master's potential and implicit sense of subjectivity to fight, risking life against reification, facing the weaknesses and strengths of a conspecific through their proper assessment, is both logical and anthropological. The logical link between the quality of individual character, its constitution and behavior as manifesting inwardness, explains why contingencies and particularities such as needs and inclinations, affecting *external* existence and being part of any individual's being, can represent what *attracts* individualities when they are thought of as exclusive Ones and as many Ones, from the external viewpoint of atomism in the Logic of Being (*Enz*. I, §98: 205–209). Moreover, in the section "Phenomenology" of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, the commonality (*Gemeinsamkeit*) of the needs and the care (*Sorge*) to satisfy them which holds between master and serf, and also the acquisition, conservation and formation of objects of appetite through the serf's work, develop a provision (*Vorsorge*) regarding the future and secures it (*Enz*. III, §434: 224). Because what someone does must be considered only as mediated through *its* inwardness, rather than taken in its immediacy, reflected behaviors – such as care, cultivation, formation, or provision – can eventually mediate between the two rigid, impenetrable, singular extremes of the independent and dependent consciousness. It is worth noting that between superior and subordinate genuine recognition is impossible, and that "the first fully developed form of mutual recognition in the *Phenomenology* occurs at the very end of *Spirit* [...] in 'Evil and Forgiveness' [...] At this juncture, two moral judges finally recognize that they are equally fallible and equally competent to judge individual behaviour" (Westphal 2018, 243)[51]. Indeed, Hegel remarks that between master and serf recognition remains one-sided and unequal because "it lacks the moment, that what the master does to the other, it also does to itself, and what the serf does to oneself it also does to the other" (*W*3, 152)[52]. Since according to Hegel humans

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[50]   Bodei 2008, 244 points out how in "Master and Serf", the words *Knecht, servus,* comes from *servare* (to preserve, *bewahren*) and not from *servire* (to serve, *dienen*) and that *Timor Domini initium sapientiae* (Ps. III, 10) is only the beginning of the freedom of self-consciousness.

[51]   For Hegel's analysis of "Evil and Forgiveness" as crucial to his account of mutual recognition and his *proof* that "the 'I judge' is possible for each of us only insofar as it is also possible, and one recognises it is possible, for other members [...] of one's community", see Westphal 2018, 257-261.

[52]   See on the point Westphal 2018, 241-242. Against the background that the self-conscious 'I think' that matters most to philosophy is the 'I judge' that is central to rational thought and action, Westphal underscores that "Though initially focussed on mutual recognition, Hegel's analysis in 'Lord and Bondsman' sets this issue aside" and that the "structure of Hegel's text ought to alert us to his intention *not* to prove here that bare individual self-consciousness is possible only on the basis of

possess the characteristics of self-awareness, freedom and universality only as a potential (*GW* 14.1, §57Z: 64-65), in the next section (§5) my key point is to show how in "Master and Serf" Hegel introduces an argument of his own for linking the 'I think' and the thesis of mutual recognition[53]. I aim to clarify how work allows the serf to intuit a self-standing being as its own self and to acquire the sense of the universal enduring essence of its own self through its own means. Moreover, I shall show how what appears to be objectified in the serf's work *may* directly pertain to the externalization of the master's own inwardness, providing grounds for an intersubjective cognitive and practical actualization of freedom.

5. Relating Individual Subjects to their Objective Human Essence: The Emergence of Intersubjectivity and Corporeality

Emmanuel Renault has recently drawn attention to the relation between self-consciousness and nature, and on the true conception and actualization of freedom as depending "not only on intersubjective relations to others, but also on practical relation to natural materiality". In this way, he has enhanced work not just as a formative activity but also as a shape of self-consciousness. Renault remarks:

> As a matter of fact, the bondsman is deprived of freedom and of the recognition, but he acquires through work a conception of himself as having a set of capacities and as being the one who is able to use his own capacities to satisfy other's desires and get recognition. In Hegel's terms: the servile consciousness 'comes to acquire through his own means *a mind of his own*, and he does this precisely in the work in which there had seemed to be merely some outside's mind'. (Renault 2016, 211)

On this quotation from Hegel's *Phenomenology* Renault bases his taking distance from two theses that "are usually considered as decisive for a Hegelian conception of the social self": the social ontological thesis, according to which sociality should be identified with recognition (Renault 2016, 212)[54]; and the social psychological thesis, according to which the sociality of the self depends primarily on recognition. As to the latter, Renault highlights:

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our consciousness (or 'recognition') of other self-conscious people".

[53]   See Westphal 2018, 241.

[54]   References are to Deranty 2005 and 2009 and to Ikäheimo & Laitinen 2011.

that the type of self-conceptions that monitors the behavior of a self-consciousness is not only constituted in recognitive relationship with others but also in practical interactions with the environment, partly through the process of life, that is not social, and partly through work that is a social activity [...] specified by the social logic of producing for others, a social logic that is not reducible to the logic of recognition. (Renault 2016, 214)

It is certainly true that the concern for the satisfaction of needs are not only needs of recognition and that for Hegel the social self is also a working self, however, this analysis seems to require a further step, showing how working practice in a master-serf asymmetric system of production can induce a progress towards freedom into the master's self-consciousness, a progress that *is able to unify the being-in-itself of things and the being-for-itself of consciousness as well as independent and dependent forms of consciousness*.

As remarked earlier, the master and serf dialectic serves to develop a shared enduring form of subjective universality. Such durability is at first attained by what functions as a means for the satisfaction of the master's needs. Note however that this constitutes the sole, indirect, way for the master's own externalization. This prompts the master's self-consciousness to sublate its exclusive egoism which simply destroys and consumes things, and eventually *to refer to oneself what appears objectified in its serf* to whom its own identity relates: i.e. the discipline of an arbitrary, peculiar and contingent natural will. Hegel tells us that the result of the master and serf dialectic is the master's submitting "its own self-seeking will [*seinen eigenen selbstischen Willen*]" to the universal *law* of the *an-und-für-sich-seienden Willens (Enz*. III, §435Z: 225). which constitutes the common rational space of a legal statal institution;[55] this passage, the becoming of the human selves as subject of normative statuses, needs clarification, for at the phenomenological level of the *Philosophy of Spirit* in the 1830 *Encyclopaedia* Hegel does not make explicit how it is possible that the master may ever refer to oneself the serf's self-discipline of the will through the obedience to a lord and practical relations to natural materiality. As noted above, in the 1807 *Phenomenology* Hegel remarked that between master and serf recognition remains one-sided and unequal.

In the chapter on "Stubborn Attachments", an essay on "Master and Serf" in her 1997 book on *The Psychic Life of Power*, Judith Butler expressed the "vexed relation" between them in the formula "you be my body for me". It has been recently suggested that this reading in terms of 'bodily substitution' implies

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[55] "The master confronting the serf was not yet genuinely free, for he did not yet thoroughly see [*schaute an*] himself in the other. It is only by the serf becoming free that the master consequently also becomes completely free" (Enz. III §436Z: 226-227; see also §435Z).

"that it is of the structure of the body to be outside itself and that this imperative or demand – you be my body for me – can only ever be partially fulfilled" (Malabou & Butler 2011, 611). My key point here is to address this formula not from the standpoint of the impossibility of any final expropriation and appropriation of another's body, but from the side of the master's possibility of referring to oneself what cannot be objectified of its own self because it appears in the serf's 'other' consciousness. In the next section I shall develop the significance of "you be my body for me" not as a 'bodily substitution', but as a 'bodily extension', against the background of the master's mind-body union. In my view *this master's self-feeling is the means for* projecting its subjectivity into externality and ultimately submitting its own peculiar and arbitrary will to universal laws[56].

It appears to me that the being-for-self of the master (as a consciousness immediately relating to itself) exercises power over the other servile self in analogy to how its mind exercises power over its own corporeality: the master makes the immediacy of another consciousness, the serf's corporeality, the *executor* of its will, as if the serf were just an *extension and means* of its own body, by appropriating and enjoying the fruits of the serf's work.

The being-in-itself of the serf is submissive and dependent; however, *obedience* "develops in him (ultimately) the capacity to be *master* over himself" (my italics). Note that self-discipline involves the sublation of the serf will's immediacy, and *also* of the serf body's simple and immediate naturality (the performance of organic functions). In the *Anthropology*, Hegel notes that the human body is not naturally capable of projecting the subjective element (actualization of purposes) into external objectivity: the body *must be trained* to serve spirit.

In understanding Hegel's conception of mind in his *Anthropology*, recent scholarship has focused on the organic character of the cognitive functions, pointing to Hegel's commitment to a "soft version of naturalism", according to which "cognitive capacities are strictly connected with natural requisites and maintain a permanent relation with the natural dimension of the organic" (Seddone 2018, 75)[57]. Hegel's mind-body human relation, however, requires

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[56]   Commenting on the First Book of Aristotle's *Politics*, Bodei writes: "Resistenti e adatti alle fatiche e al lavoro fisico, gli schiavi stanno [...] al padrone come il corpo all'anima [...] Lo schiavo è, a tutti gli effetti, una parte viva, ma spazialmente distaccata, del padrone, dalla cui mente è guidato. In quanto suo prolungamento nella sfera delle cose, è assimilabile alla mano" (Bodei 2019, 87-88). See on this point *supra*, Chap. I, § 1. Simon Lumsden argues that human subjects identify through self-feeling, not reason, most practices and norms as their own: "Norms are for Hegel produced through collective processes of establishing values, customs and reasons to act, but he also emphasizes that these norms are for the most part embodied in subjects as habits through complex processes of socialization" (Lumsden 2013, 59-60).

[57]   For instance, Barbara Merker has shown how, for Hegel, "the theoretical, practical and evaluative

also accounting for the cognitive character of the performance of organic functions not merely as if the body were the practical instrument for inhabiting and experiencing the external environment. Indeed, Hegel says that contrary to animals, *hat der Mensch sich durch seine eigene Thätigkeit zum Herren seines Leibes erst zu machen* (*Enz.* III, §410Z: 190; Petry trans. II, 407). This means that the subject trains its own body *not just* "to adequately act in the perceived world", spreading "its normative effort by creating a system of rules and habits" (Seddone 2018, 78). Arbitrary and transitory will is mediated through planning and preserving for the future, avoiding destruction and consumption of resources to reach ends (satisfaction of needs and inclinations), but the *Anthropology* tells us that the discipline of the will and the opportunity to actualize freedom through a (long) process of spiritual appropriation of nature induced by work and obedience, must be preceded by a control over *one's own physical corporeality*. This becomes mediated through the spiritual development of skills to reach ends by means (technical instruments, tools, training to acquire physical abilities), shaping and improving the body's skills and performances.

To my view, in so far as the master exercises power over the serf as the master's will exercises power over its own corporeality, the key to unify the two consciousness appears to be grounded *on the self-feeling of their original mind-body unity*. Note that before their unification, the master's independent subjectivity is limited and interrupted by what is external in a twofold way, both inward and outward: by the immediacy of the servile dependent subjectivity's entanglement with the being-in-itself of natural things (to which the master's identity relates), as well as by the immediacy of the physical aspects of the master's own corporeality, which can inwardly resist its own spiritual power. Indeed, in §412 of the *Anthropology,* the soul, which is present everywhere, exerts a formative action (*Hineinbildung*) within corporeality (*Leiblichkeit*) but is unable to sublate completely the difference between soul and body. There is an irreducible purely organic aspect of the body which resists the moulding power of the soul and constitutes the limit to the soul's *Hineinbildung*. In the *Anthropology* this movement marks the birth of the pure 'I' from which we started this chapter. The actual soul, which is for itself, expels the organic aspect of its corporeality from its immediate being and so contrasts itself to its own corporeality, thus attaining the sense of the abstract, immaterial 'I'. As Malabou remarks:

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functions of the mind are grounded in something like a natural normativity, based on the interaction of the body's inner world with the outer world" (Merker 2012). On Hegel's "moderate naturalism" see also Seddone 2019, 11-12.

> The origin of individual identity is a paradoxical disjunction of the self that leads the soul to madness. Originally, the self is not identical to itself; the mind and the body are definitely split. This doubling of the self is intolerable and maddening. The 'feeling of self' in its immediate form is 'a mental derangement'. The 'body is a foreign being' that contradicts the unity of the self. (Malabou & Butler 2011, 624) [58]

We noted above that according to its logical structure, the 'I' is not a finite determinacy of something in distinction to an extraneous and alien another. The 'I's immediate self-relation results from excluding *its* own other from itself. The independent subjectivity of the master is thus *logically related* to the excluded dependent servile consciousness, which, in its structurally precarious finitude, through the practice and training necessary to apprehend how to work, has sublated the immediacy of both its will *and* body[59]. The master's determinacy *as* independent consciousness, its self-relation in referring to itself as 'I', relates the master's consciousness to an other which no longer confronts it with any absolutely alien self-external *or internal Anderssein*. As remarked earlier, in the *Psychology* section Hegel writes that the formal knowledge (*formelle Wissen*) of certainty raises itself into (infinite, un-limited) agreement of the subject, not with its existence limited by an alien object, but with its objectified essence, whereby the subject is by itself within *its own* otherness. *Also through the self-feeling of its anthropological mind-body union, the master's independent subjectivity comes to agree in principle with its thoroughly objectified spiritual essence*, thus becoming able to know itself as itself (as master) within this other (as effective serf). Otherwise, the result of the dialectic of lowly serfs bonded to their masters could never unify the being-in-itself of things and the being-for-itself of consciousness.

The unification of independent and dependent forms of consciousness takes the shape of free self-consciousness and is nothing but concrete, *embodied*, thinking 'I', reaching the true unity of subjectivity and objectivity. According to Hegel, the result of this dialectic exhibits the inner unity of the two divided consciousness and (ultimately) grounds the unqualified (un-limited) equality of human beings, so that no one of us has a right to dispose arbitrarily over another's will *and body*: mutual recognition, each 'I' regarding the other 'I' as a fellow creature *and* human being, implies that one knows oneself to be free because one acknowledges that one's own proper other is equally free: free *from* finite being-for-itself *and* from essential entanglement with thinghood: i.e.,

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[58]   The textual reference is to Hegel, *Enz*. III, §407.

[59]   As Zambrana notes (see *supra* note 21), in Hegel's *Logic,* the normative authority of reason, which in being self-authorizing is infinite, establishes that determinacy as a matter of *Geist*, i.e. the result of concrete practices that sustain or debunk specific form of determinations. In Zambrana's view, this means that the authority of any idea is "structurally precarious – *finite*" (Zambrana 2012).

we are each free from any merely instrumental account of reason and able to undertake responsibilities[60].

   To sum up: the dialectic of natural consciousness (in the chapter Consciousness of the *Phenomenology*: in the shapes of meaning, perception, and understanding) destroys the certainty that the being-other of the thing constitutes a foreign, extrinsic, independent essence, indifferent to the knowing subject. From the being-other of the object as something essentially alien to consciousness we pass to the object as self-consciousness's *own other* in "Master and Serf", where through service and work, external reality is practically transformed by obedience and by renouncing individual choice. This is why it has been pointed out that "the task of Hegel's epistemology is to reconcile a realist epistemology, including a correspondence conception of the nature of truth, with a very complex social and historical philosophy of mind and theory of knowledge" (Westphal 2016, 195).

Concluding Remarks

In this way Hegel can claim to have deduced from the logical structure of an embodied and affective thinking 'I' as concrete subjective consciousness exhibited within appearance, what Kant in the "Conjectural Beginning of Human History" referred to *Genesis* 3:22: "And thus the human being had entered into an equality with all rational beings, of whatever rank they might be". Kant developed this idea by focusing on a prerogative that a disembodied I had by its rational nature over all animals, regarding them as means to its free will for attaining arbitrary ends. According to Kant, the first time a human said to a sheep that its wool was for satisfying humankind's own needs (*Genesis* 3:21), the human also – if obscurely – implied the thought of the opposite: that a human must not say any such thing to any other human being, thus entering into an "equality with all rational being" (*Mut. Anf.*, 90-91). By contrast, according to Hegel, to put at mortal risk the self-sense of one's own natural essential singularity in the mutual attempt to destroy one another's life, is necessary to solve the extreme contradiction of the common identity of the abstract "I am I" in a natural state of *human* animality and appetite, in

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[60]   This point has been extensively examined by Westphal 2018. See Chap. 12 "Mutual Recognition and Rational Justification in Hegel's 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*" and Chap. 13 "Mutual Recognition and Rational Justification in Substantive Domains" (*ivi*, 231-293). Note that a standard belief throughout medieval Europe was the King as both lawgiver and protector of his people. See for instance the following passage of the coronation oath of the Saxon King Edgar in 973: "I will forbid extortion and all kinds of wrong-doing *to all orders* of men [...] I will enjoin *equity* [...] in *all* judgments" (Ashley 2008, 19; my italics).

which no one "idealistically" respects external things and no one immediately approaches other living beings regarding them as fellow creatures.

Kant's hypothesis regarding human identity indicates that the awareness of the common rationality of human beings is brought to light by philosophical reflection which recognizes the originary presence of that thought as the negative side of humans' primitive relation of dominion over animals: history will witness this fact and philosophy here would play only an analytical role. By contrast, with Hegel philosophy plays a genetic role in the shaping of the sense of what it is to be human, and the humanity of the human beings is an historical element: the real moments of the conquest of its consciousness of the equality of all rational beings, or its freedom, is what we found conceptualized in Hegel's philosophy of history and philosophy of right[61].

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[61] In the Introduction to his last book, *Dominio e sottomissione*, Remo Bodei acknowledged that his first idea to write an history of the concept of subservience among the humans originated from the reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology* Chapter on "Master and Serf", which, in his view, recapitulated all the theoretical path from Aristotle to the Bible, from the Stoics to Hobbes, from Rousseau to Fichte, relating all the historical different forms of human dominion and submission in light of the raising of an autonomous self-consciousness, the presupposition for liberty (Bodei 2019, 29). Lumsden (see *supra* note 11) shows how Hegel does not distinguish spirit from nature by dichotomising a wholly causal nature from a self-sufficient space of reasons in the way that Kant appears to do. Lumsden highlights that: "Embedding the ethical in the 'naturally determined character of the individual' and 'presenting spirit as world' is important to correct the abstractness and formalism of Kant's approach, which appeared to place an unrealistic authority in a reflective reason disconnected from cultural and natural life [...] Spirit is the term Hegel employs to grasp human beings as self-producing and with which he distinguishes self-determining humans from causal nature. His invocation of self-producing spirit does not mean, however, that spirit has left nature behind and is now residing in a disembodied space of reasons" (Lumsden 2016, 75-76).

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ABBREVIATIONS

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8

Education is the Art
of Making Humanity Ethical[*]

PRESTON STOVALL

I take the title of this essay from an addition to §151 in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. It continues:

> [Education] begins with pupils whose life is at the instinctive level and shows them the way to a second birth, the way to change their instinctive nature into a second, intellectual, nature, and makes this intellectual level habitual to them. At this point the clash between the natural and the subjective will disappears, the subject's internal struggle dies away. To this extent, habit is part of ethical life as it is of philosophic thought also, since such thought demands that mind be trained against capricious fancies, and that these be destroyed and overcome to leave the way clear for rational thinking. (Hegel 1952, 260)

This remark comes toward the beginning of Part 3 of the *Philosophy of Right*, on The Ethical Life. Hegel uses "ethical life" (*Sittlichkeit*) to refer to modes of

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thinking and acting that are governed by the norms of a historical community. By saying that the ethical life is *governed by* the norms of a historical community I mean that in the ethical life one's thoughts and deeds are evaluated by oneself and others according to various standards held by the members of the community. By calling it a mode of *historical* consciousness, I flag that our ethical lives are irremediably situated in historical contexts whose situations affect our lives in ways that are worth keeping in mind. In Hegel's telling, the ethical life is principally characterized by familial relations, the civic community induced by groups of families living together, and the state as the explicit codification of the norms of the community in a body of law and its institutions.

Hegel distinguished morality from the ethical life, holding (roughly) that the former concerned the subjective stance that the individual takes on what people should and should not do while the latter concerned the objective stance, embodied in the laws and customs of the community, on what people should and should not do. In this regard Hegel thinks of morality and the ethical life as the individual and communal poles along which the abstract idea of a right is developed over history in different communities. On this conception, the educator is tasked with inducting students into the norms of the community in such a way as to help them see that their individual or subjective modes of thought are also (or can be) expressions of the collective identity of the community. In this regard the educator helps communicate that we are each an 'I' that is 'We' and a 'We' that is 'I', as Hegel calls "the experience of what Spirit is" at ¶177 of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

The ethical life includes more than is conventionally labelled 'ethics', and talk of a people's 'ethos' does better in English. One is not born into an ethical life so much as raised up into it in virtue of the tutelage one receives from others in the community. In German the word *'Bildung'* covers the sort of education responsible for conferring an ethos or *Sittlichkeit* on a person. The process of *Bildung* includes acquiring an appreciation of the aesthetic as well as the moral sentiments of one's community, the sports teams one cheers for and the music one listens to. By this conception, our moral and legal rights and duties are species of a genus that includes conventional norms like professional attire, modes of greeting, the way one grooms one's hair or flies a national flag, etc. The genus of which morality and these other forms of ethical life are species is one of *social planning*. This does not by itself tell us anything interesting about what we ought and may do, either by way of morality or etiquette. But it is to say that, whatever else we are doing when we dispute these subjects, we are triangulating our agency as members of a community around a shared form of life.

Understood in this way, education is indeed an art whose telos is or involves the transformation of the merely natural human life into an ethical life. The edu-

cator, qua executor of that transformation, helps habituate people into the afferent and efferent habits of the society. And in doing that educators are tasked not just with tutelage over their students' cognitive abilities, but also with the public responsibility – a duty they bear to the rest of their community – of shaping the aesthetic and moral sentiments of a people. This is a bold and contentious position to take on education. It frames a unified view of human nature and human society, understood in terms of a development from the mode of life characteristic of the former to that of the latter, and without (yet) presupposing any particulars about what human nature or the social order is or ought to be. It also evokes the totalitarian thinking that dominated so much of the twentieth century. But we can entertain the idea of the educator as a person who habituates her or his students into a shared ethical life without yet committing ourselves to anything specific about what the educator ought to be doing by way of shaping people's sentiments. And so this idea can be profitably examined without having to stake a claim on the socio-political issues it may bring to mind.

1. On the Ground of Culture in Historical Tradition

Hegel holds that the complex skein of values, institutions, social activities, and self-understanding taught by culture is generally communicated through different forms of thought and material expression in different periods of human history, with religious traditions having been particularly important for this education. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel characterizes the ancient Greek polis as a setting where the social modes of human life take precedence over a merely natural existence (see Bykova 2019b; Harris 1997, Chapter 3; Williams 2019). The myth of the Olympian gods displacing the Titans marked, he believed, a transition from a conception of the divine as nature-based, and immediately embodying natural powers (e.g. Oceanus) to a conception of the divine as a family of individual moral persons bearing various duties and privileges toward one another, though preserving natural traits (e.g. Poseidon). For Hegel, the supplanting of our merely natural existence with a social one is embodied in burial rituals: by performing burial rites a community overturns the apparent victory that nature has over the human being by establishing that even in death the individual remains a part of the community. The religion of Christianity in turn effected an advance over Greek notions of the divine, Hegel thought, by revealing that via the sacrifices we make concerning what we want as individuals, and which we give up in favor of maintaining the stability of the community, we mirror the divine sacrifice of Christ and thereby take a share in the spirit that suffuses the community upon his resurrection. In this regard Hegel thinks Christianity

is an institution that helps educate us into second nature by communicating in particularly vivid detail that we are indeed an 'I' that is 'We' and a 'We' that is 'I'. From ¶¶784 and 785 on the "Revealed Religion" (emphasis in the original):

> The *death* of the divine Man, *as death*, is *abstract* negativity, the immediate result of the movement which ends only in *natural* universality. Death loses this natural meaning in spiritual self-consciousness, i.e. it comes to be its just stated Notion (*Begriff*); death becomes transfigured from its immediate meaning, viz. the non-being of *this particular* individual (*dieses Einzelnen*), into the *universality* of the Spirit who dwells in His community, dies in it every day, and is daily resurrected [...] This self-consciousness [...] does not actually *die*, as the *particular* self-consciousness *is pictured* (*wie der* Besondere vorgestellt *wird*) as being *actually* dead, but its particularity dies away in its universality [...] (Cf. Hegel 1977, 475-476)

While pre-modern communities developed their notions of the beautiful, the true, and the good through the media of artistic and religious expression, European nations in the modern age were, for Hegel, coming into *sittliche* self-consciousness more and more through the explicit instruction of philosophy[1]. In this regard modernity was for Hegel, as the Enlightenment was for Kant (e.g. 1996), a stage in the emergence of western civilization into a period of autonomy or self-determination: the heteronomous government imposed by political and religious authorities in the pre-modern period was gradually being replaced by institutions governed (putatively) according to principles of autonomy. No longer were people to be expected to simply do and believe as those in positions of authority demanded, as now there was an expectation that people would begin to exercise self-government in deed and thought[2].

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[1]   I have examined the development of Hegel's views on religion – and on the relationship between religion and spirit – in my (2014); Speight examines the development of his views on art and its relationship to spirit. The latter includes an illuminating discussion of how we might "shear off" Hegel's analysis of the different forms of art from the cultural traditions he weds them to (Speight 2019, 238-42).

[2]   Alain de Botton (2014) argues, on the basis of a reading of Hegel, that the news media should carry the torch for education into the current period. But de Botton thinks that journalists should stump for particular narratives directed at Enlightenment (or whatever comes next) and this leads him to say some rather striking things. In writing of the putative need for news organizations to get the public to care about news stories, de Botton recommends that journalists take a cue from literary figures as people who: "[...]understand that falsifications may occasionally need to be committed in the service of a goal higher still than accuracy: the hope of getting important ideas and images across to their impatient and distracted audiences" (de Botton 2014, 82-3). de Botton's book was published in 2014, and with the subsequent advent of 'fake news' it is hard to see how such a news media might be the way forward today.

2. Principles of Association in Autonomous Intentional Collectives

Kant and Hegel were prescient concerning the influence that notions of autonomy would have in the coming centuries. In WEIRD societies (western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic)[3], institutions as varied and widespread as the nation-state, parent/teacher associations, city zoning laws, and homeowner's covenants (claim to) operate on the principle that the rules that bind together an association of individuals are made binding on them in virtue of the collective recognition the people give to those rules as binding[4]. This is an ideal, of course, and it is easy for those of us in places like North American and Europe to take it for granted or lose sight of how momentous a change in human livelihood it has wrought for the portion of humanity enjoying it. But in many parts of the world today principles of autonomy are the default commitment for collective organization, and that fact reflects a watershed shift in human history. In its wake we tend to expect that institutions will operate by the exercise of a self-governed collective will, with the determination of the collective will deliberately arrived at via mutually-agreed upon mechanisms for decision making. I will refer to institutions with this structure as *autonomous intentional collectives* or just *autonomous collectives*[5].

If we draw these two themes together – education as the means of conferring a community's *Sittlichkeit* on its members and modernity as the flourishing of autonomous intentional collectives – then modern education can be thought of (in part) as the inculcation of habits for the reflective exercise of reason. In so far as autonomy characterizes the modern life, the modern educator is one who fosters a reflective stance in students. For only then can an autonomous collective be intelligently governed and so live well as the kind of thing it is. This is not to say that the answer as to what kind of community to constitute will come from reflection in one's study. A community is knit together when its members interact with and understand one another in ways that are characteristic of their time and place. Reason is operative here, but largely in its practical guise. It is also self-fulfilling in a certain sense. Knowing how to get along with and appreciate one's neighbors is a matter of navigating social byways, and this activity not only helps perfect the practical rationality of individual citizens, it also helps weave together the social fabric into one whole. And the fact that people have taken up the task of understanding and collectively identifying with their neighbors is proof that the effort to build a more thorough community is already in the offing. So there is something peculiar about the exercise of practical rationality in the intentional collective: the effort to craft a particular form of life can, simply in vir-

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[3] See *supra* the Conclusion of Wolters' contribution to this volume, Chap. 4 . *Ed. note*.

tue of the fact that one has taken up that effort with others of the same mindset, be such as to make it the case, over time, that the form of life in question exists.

We are still without a basis or ground for assessing what the educator in an *autonomous* intentional collective ought to be doing when it comes to shaping the ethical sensibilities of her or his students, however. The rest of this essay is devoted to investigating that ground. At the end of the essay I offer some tentative pedagogical proposals for the contemporary educator.

I should note that this discussion is independent of whether we suppose any autonomous intentional collective has ever existed. If the notion is a goal toward which groups of people can orient themselves, then we can investigate the role of the pedagogue in the autonomous intentional collective. All the same, while this investigation may abstract away from various socio-historical conditions to examine the functional relationship between pedagogy and the ethical life, it is pursued in a particular time and place. Because that time is one in which there are growing socio-political divisions across Europe and North America, with their own determinate problem spaces and relations to the ideas I canvas, I have tried to draw these issues into the discussion where relevant. In doing so I strive to be general enough to speak to different sides of the divide, though of course that cannot be accomplished in every case. These ruminations are framed by events and points of view that have not reached their full development. The seed for a comprehensive understanding of the historical person in the natural world was germinating for centuries before it broke ground and matured in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and I think we are at best half-way through the maturation of the organism that was born in that time. This essay is meant to help shed a bit of sunlight on it today.

Finally, it is worth flagging that much of this discussion is independent of whether the reader endorses notions of modernity that developed in the Enlightenment or rejects them in favor of so-called 'post-modern' deconstructions of the sort offered by a Marx, a Nietzsche, a Freud, or a Foucault. I think a case can be made that some aspects of these reactions to modernity embody the sense of radical freedom and alienation from custom and community that attends the casting-off of pre-modern forms of ethical life at the birth of modern autonomy, so that the term 'post-modern' is a misnomer in so far as these tendencies fall squarely within the orbit of modernity's unfolding. A properly post-modern moment would develop modes of thought and action that overcome this alienation by finding a way to wed a thorough understanding of our authority over the value-laden structures of human society with a recognition of the importance of tradition and community in shaping our institutions and self-conceptions[6]. Though

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[6]   This view of modernity, autonomy, and alienation came into shape during my engagement with

I return to this theme at the end of the essay, I will not argue for that position here. Instead, fans of more common notions of 'post-modernism' can read this discussion as an investigation into the pedagogical ground for the autonomous intentional collective considered qua her favored analysis. That analysis may lend itself to criticism of the moves made here, but by flagging my commitments outright I hope the investigation remains useful in spite of what may appear to be its perspectival limitations.

3. University Education and the Ethical Life

Given that we are not born angels, there is no doubt that the early-childhood educator has a role to play in shaping the moral sensibilities, as well as the general ethos, of her or his students. The more interesting question is whether and to what extent *higher* education has moral instruction as its aim. For it is one thing to note a causal relationship between education and habituation in the shaping of good citizens (whatever we take that to mean). It is another to suppose that in university instruction an educator has a right or duty to proselytize her or his own moral 'take' on the subject matters she or he discusses. Some of the issues educators talk about are settled, but many are not. And, the thought runs, the role of university educators is not one of imparting their own (perception of their culture's) values on students; rather, their duty is to impart state-of-the-art knowledge concerning whatever subjects they teach. On the other hand, the claim that university educators have a right or duty to promulgate particular ethical precepts resonates with the pedagogies of those concerned with issues of social justice. Among some academics today, it may seem that (properly contextualized) what Hegel says is not only true but of paramount importance for the educational system.

We appear to be left in a state of uncertainty, then. To what extent ought the university educator instill in students the habits of the ethical life of a community? More generally, and in particular to allow for iconoclastic ethical pedagogies, to what extent ought the university educator instill in students the habits of *any* ethical life?

These questions are not 'academic' in that pejorative sense that connotes disconnection from the world outside the academy. Academicians train the elites of WEIRD countries, and that training has an impact on the society that university students come to shape as they enter the professional world (Al-Gharbi 2019a, Jaschik 2017). And since the 1990s the American academy has made a marked ideological shift leftward. From Abrams (2016, n.p.):

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Brandom 2019.

> [During this period] the professoriate was changing while the electorate as a whole
> was not. Professors were more liberal than the country in 1990, but only by about
> 11 percentage points. By 2013, the gap had tripled; it is now more than 30 points. It
> seems reasonable to conclude that it is academics who shifted, as there is no equiva-
> lent movement among the masses whatsoever.

This shift is particularly pronounced in the social sciences and humanities (Ben-
nett 2015, Duarte *et al*. 2015, Langbert *et al*. 2016, and Wilson 2019), and at
elite liberal arts colleges (Langbert 2018 and Al-Gharbi 2019a). Statistical
over-representation of left-leaning faculty has been found in Britain (Carl 2017a
and 2017b) and Canada (Nakhaie & Adam 2008) as well. In recent years these
trends have become a topic of some concern (Campbell & Manning 2018, Duarte
et al. 2015, Haidt 2017, Inbar & Lammers 2012, Jaschik 2012, Wilson 2019, and
Woessnerd 2016). This turn of events has led to a situation in which some dis-
ciplines promulgate norms of behaviour and attitude that are out of step with
what most of the rest of the public, even the well-educated public, have adopted.
It is of real interest, then, to have some understanding of when and why univer-
sity educators are entitled or obliged to proselytize their take on the ethical life
of their communities.

4. The Ethical Code of the University Educator

The ethical landscape of the professional/public relationship has been mapped
in disciplines like business, engineering, medicine, and law. If education is an art
then there are principles that govern its successful practice as well. To frame an
initial perspective on the university educator's duties, then, we might begin by
looking at professional codes of ethics.

Of particular relevance is the fact that professional ethical codes give para-
mount importance to doing no harm to the public, serving the interests of one's
clients, and abiding by the standards of the profession (see the Appendix to
Harris *et al*. 2009). Like other professionals, educators bear a special relation
to members of the public that require their expertise. This relationship induces
a set of duties educators have to those who make use of their services. What
the client is to the lawyer and the patient is to the doctor, the student is to the
educator. And just as lawyers must work for and advise their clients in the cli-
ents' best interests, without compromising the principles of their profession, so
must educators keep in mind their charge to their students as held up against the
background of their profession and its place in society.

Support for this conclusion is found in the American Association of University Professors' "Statement on Professional Ethics" (AAUP 1966), published in 1966 and updated in 1987 and 2009. That statement, minus the introduction, consists of five numbered paragraphs, outlining professors' duties to 1) develop their own abilities, 2) educate their students, 3) maintain a collegial environment, 4) support the interests of their institutions of higher learning, and 5) contribute to the well-being of society at large. There is a thread or leitmotif running through these five paragraphs, and it offers a clue to how the AAUP sees the ethics of the profession. In each case the importance of free inquiry is remarked on: professors' scholarly interests "must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry"; in relation to students professors must "encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students"; in their relationships to their colleagues they must "respect and defend the free inquiry of associates"; their duties to their institutions obtain "provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom"; and concerning society we are told that "as citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom".

This leitmotif helps clarify the idea that modernity is characterized by the growth of individual and collective autonomy. For in a modern society the educator has a role to play not only in passing on knowledge and learning; the modern educator is also charged with the task of *criticising* existing shibboleths and opening up new possibilities. This is one reason why academic freedom is so important – it permits that unfettered critical revisionary spirit that is a ground for the flourishing of a free society.

5. The Public and the Professional Exercise of Reason

It does not follow, however, that the university educator's role is to teach students her or his own brand of ethical living. We may suppose that everyone, *qua* individual citizen, has a right or a duty to reflect on her or his community's *Sittlichkeit* and strive to spread certain views. This would be the *public* exercise of one's reason, in the sense Kant appeals to in answering the question "What is Enlightenment?". But in what Kant calls our *private* lives, by which he means our associations within existing institutional structures, we have a duty to abide by the dictates of those institutions (Kant 1996, 18).

> The *public* use of one's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among human beings; the *private use* of one's reason may, however, of-

> ten be very narrowly restricted without this particularly hindering the progress of enlightenment. But by the public use of one's own reason I understand that use which someone makes of it *as a scholar* before the entire public of the *world of readers.* What I call the private use of reason is that which one may make of it in a certain *civil* post or office with which he is entrusted.

Much of Kant's discussion about the public and private (or better: professional) uses of reason presupposes a kind of stability in the social order, where the public exercise of reason may call into question some otherwise generally-accepted norm or value without at the same time undermining the professional institutions within which those norms operate. By contrast, obedience to the norms governing the *public* use of one's reason in a *professional* setting will tend to corrode the functioning of that institution (Kant discusses a military officer who may offer a public criticism of a tactical or strategic move in a certain context, but who is obliged to obey his superior's orders when given them).

 We have now arrived at the core issue. Even if we grant that education is the art of making humanity ethical, and that modern educators have a duty to uphold principles of free inquiry, it is far from obvious what educators ought to do when it comes to advancing their favored community's particular ideological agenda. Where that agenda is more-or-less shared by the rest of a community, its promulgation will generally be accepted by that community. Where out of step with a community, or out of step with a larger community within which one's more local community is situated, there will be strife. But these are simply descriptive claims, and the question of whether the university educator has a right or a duty to inculcate a set of norms that are at odds with the general trend of society is a question of whether, as educators, we are allowed or obliged to follow the norms governing the public exercise of reason as we work in a professional setting – namely, as we teach our students.

6. Political Polarization Exacerbates the Problem of the Modern Educator's Duties

Owing to growing social discord, this bundle of ideas and questions is all the more pressing. Along a number of social-scientific metrics the peoples of Europe and North America have become more politically and socially divided in the last few decades. The Pew Research Center has been tracking this shift in the United States. Examining changes in political opinions from 1994 to 2014, a report from June of 2014 reads:

> Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines – and partisan
> antipathy is deeper and more extensive – than at any point in the last two decades.
> These trends manifest themselves in myriad ways, both in politics and in everyday
> life. And a new survey of 10,000 adults nationwide finds that these divisions are
> greatest among those who are the most engaged and active in the political process.
> (PRC 2014, n.p.)

And from section 2:

> Though negative ratings of the other party were common 20 years ago, relatively few
> Republicans and Democrats had deeply negative opinions. In 1994, when the GOP
> captured the House and Senate after a bitter midterm campaign, about two-thirds
> (68%) of Republicans and Republican leaners had an unfavorable opinion of the Dem-
> ocratic Party, but just 17% had a *very* unfavorable opinion. At the same time, though
> a majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners (57%) viewed the GOP unfavorably,
> just 16% had a *very* unfavorable view. Today, negative ratings have risen overall
> (about eight-in-ten of both Republicans and Democrats rate the other party unfavor-
> ably), but deeply negative views have more than doubled: 38% of Democrats and 43%
> of Republicans now view the opposite party in strongly negative terms.

These views became even more pronounced over the course of the 2016 U.S.
presidential election and its aftermath: for the first time, in surveys going back
to 1992, more than 50% of those who identify as either Democrat or Republican
held not only an unfavorable but a *very* unfavorable view of the other party (PRC
2016b). There is also less agreement between Democrats and Republicans over
what the nation's top priorities should be (Jones 2019), and a growing consensus
that the public discourse on political issues has become too divisive (PRC 2019).
Similar trends have been noted in Europe (Andreadis & Stavrakakis 2019, Camas
2019, Groskopf 2016, Lönnqvist *et al.* 2019, and Pisani-Ferry 2015).

College education appears correlated with ideological division as well, at
least in the United States. A 2016 study of over 6000 Americans found that
among those who have finished college but not gone to graduate school 44%
have liberal values and 29% have conservative values. The divide grows among
those with some postgraduate education: 54% have liberal values and 24% have
conservative values. This is in contrast with the rest of the public:

> About a third of those who have some college experience but do not have a bachelor's
> degree (36%) have consistently liberal or mostly liberal political values, as do just
> 26% of those with no more than a high school degree. Roughly a quarter in each of
> these groups (28% of those with some college experience, 26% of those with no more
> than a high school education) have consistently conservative or mostly conservative
> values. (PRC 2016a, n.p.)

Correlation is not causation, of course, and we might consider a variety of explanations for the ideological separation that attends university education: perhaps liberals are more likely to enter higher education, perhaps higher education exposes people to viewpoints that lend support to liberal values without any ideological priming on the part of university educators, etc. (see Gross & Simmons 2014). Furthermore, research indicates that while liberal arts colleges lean left the surrounding communities do so as well (Abrams 2019, Al-Gharbi 2019a and 2019b, Sachs 2019). From Sachs (2019, n.p.):

> For those concerned by the lack of academic viewpoint diversity, these findings represent both good and bad news. On the one hand, they suggest that the academy itself may not be entirely responsible for its own political imbalance. Discrimination and self-censorship on campus could indeed be important factors, but the academy may be doing less wrong than is commonly thought. On the other hand, this would mean that the problem may also be more intractable than is commonly thought.

For a less optimistic assessment see (Al-Gharbi 2019b). Once again these are not idle questions: concern over the influence of a liberal educated elite, and of higher education in general, led Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to rescind recognition of the Central European University in Budapest, forcing the institution to relocate to Vienna in September of 2019. It is perhaps unsurprising that Hungary is one of the most politically polarized countries in Europe (Vegetti 2019).

These factors complicate the role of the pedagogue in an autonomous intentional collective. Where the collective is undergoing a turbulent period of ethical living there will be a tendency on the part of ideological advocates to exercise reason in its *public* guise while in *professional* settings so as to corrode the influence of those institutions thought to be unjust. At the same time, such individuals may feel duty-bound to use their professional platforms to set up lines of influence and power that foster their favored conception of the ethical life. If we were in a period where the ethical life was more-or-less unified, we might take refuge in the Kantian hope that progress would eventually be equitably effected by the public use of reason alone. But where existing institutions are thought to be corrupt, it would seem that reason's corrosive influence would in fact be liberating. Notice that this conclusion is one that supports the position both of university activists seeking to influence a society's ethical life and those, like Orbán, who would limit the influence of the academy on that life. This is an idea, therefore, whose further consequences can be examined without staking a commitment to either point of view.

7. The Normal and the Revolutionary Ethical Life

Stepping back, we seem to be facing something like Kuhn's contrast between normal science and revolutionary science (Kuhn 2012). In normal science, researchers work within established theoretical frameworks and build up evidence in support of and against various hypotheses drawn within these frameworks. In revolutionary science, the theoretical frameworks that furnish the explanations of a normal scientific program are overturned. There follows a period of instability, with the possibility of making novel discoveries and proposals that are in an important sense discontinuous with the science of the pre-revolutionary period.

We can think correspondingly of normal and revolutionary periods in the ethical life. Derivatively, we can also consider normal and revolutionary attitudes toward the ethical life, normal and revolutionary pedagogy, etc. Normal pedagogy proceeds in areas of the ethical life where the educator treats the debate as settled. In such cases one expects the experts to be of one mind. If the educational system is functioning well, the rest of society will then either share that view or defer to the experts. As a consequence, in a well-functioning normal period of ethical living one can trust that what is generally found beyond the realm of plausibility by anyone will be recognized as such by everyone, with a stable network of deference to experts in other cases. Exceptions admitted, of course, as there will always be disagreement. But paradigmatically the normal ethical life is characterized by a collectively agreed-upon body of social norms (this is not to say that agreement constitutes knowledge, as we may nevertheless discover that the whole community is wrong – Brandom 2019 is good on this point). In a revolutionary period of ethical life, by contrast, individuals are in widespread disagreement over the norms of that life. Here the modern educator, tasked with training the citizens of autonomous intentional collectives and under a duty to help those citizens constitute such a collective, must be careful not to inhibit the free exercise of the cognitive capacities of her or his students.

During a revolutionary period the ethical principles that have been accepted by a community are brought up for public criticism. This may result in an effort by individuals to erode existing institutions as different factions strive to implement their favored agenda. It is true that a revolutionary period in the ethical life *may* be characterized by widespread disagreement over a people's identity *without* their eliding the public/professional distinction in the use of reason. But when that elision occurs different ideologies will compete for pedagogical influence and the resources that attend education – as seen, for instance, in efforts to institute the ideology as a new normal pedagogy and to co-opt existing insti-

tutions in the service of spreading it[7]. This lends itself to certain dysfunctional institutional tendencies. In an essay at *Palladium Magazine* in August of 2019 Natalia Dashan, a graduate of Yale who was present during a recent series of high-profile episodes of student activism there, criticized the administration's response in similar terms:

> In effect, a large fraction of the administrators form a revolutionary class within the rest of the university structure. They use both their existing power and new ideological mandates to expand their own domain at the expense of other players. The purpose of the administrators is to shape, tear down, and rebuild the university on the institutional level, which lets them act on ideological goals in a way students and faculty generally cannot. (Dashan 2019, n.p.)

In general these takeovers are most successful when there is little discussion about whether and why they should be happening. That in turn involves shunning competing value-frameworks by branding them beyond the pale of consideration both publicly and within the pedagogical setting. In times of extreme competition this leads to calls for ideological purity and more extreme forms of out-group denigration – our inborn tribalism often contributes at least a provocative murmuring in any event. In this regard polarization itself may become a successful political strategy. And when different ideological factions adopt this stance toward the rest of the community, there will be little ground for common conversation and the triangulation of agency among different points of view.

In periods of group polarization, then, one can expect to see ever more didactic forms of intra-group normal pedagogies coupled with inter-group factionalism over the ethical life. Where there is increased competition for resources, this factionalism may ossify into isolated pockets of ideological conflict. And so there is a danger in revolutionary periods of this sort that we cease to listen to those who disagree with us over issues that remain unsettled. It is for this reason important that educators in a revolutionary period resist the urge to treat their public points of view as normal. Some of the habits of education that are apt for the normal ethical life inhibit intelligent conversation and behaviour during revolutionary periods. And due to the way competition operates in periods of scare resources, these dysfunctions become strategies for selecting what amounts to the most ruthless competitors in the market for institutional success. It follows

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[7]   Interestingly, something similar may have happened in academic philosophy in the U.S. Katzav and Vaesen (2017) argue that the rise of analytic philosophy in America during the middle of the twentieth century was fueled by a 'journal capture' that replaced formerly pluralist editors at major journals with editors less inclined toward diverse approaches to philosophy: "The reason for the growing dominance of analytic philosophy appears to have been, at least in part, the suppression, by institutional means, of existing diversity and, possibly, the exploitation of American pluralism" (Katzav & Vaesen 2017, 774).

that, as pedagogues, we owe it to our communities to think carefully about when and why to adopt a normal attitude toward one's in-group ethical sentiments, particularly in periods of revolutionary ethical life. Intellectual humility, and the injunction to foster attitudes supporting uncoerced inquiry, require that the university educator resist the tendency toward ideological purity and normalized pedagogy in a revolutionary period.

Of course, I presume to speak to a community that is doing its best to avoid the situation described by Bolshevik intellectual Nikolai Bukharin: "In revolution, he will be victorious who cracks the other's skull" (Cohen 1980, 99). This presumption leaves open that there may be times when the right thing to do is crack skulls (for a recent defense of the duty to uncivil social resistance see Delmas 2018). But I am here examining the duties we have in revolutionary periods marked by civility in the ethical life. Once again, so long as the idea is coherent it may be profitably used as an ideal against which to consider the conditions for its realization *even if* no such period has ever existed.

8. Proposals

We need guidelines for pedagogy in revolutionary periods of ethical living, and we might look to different educational contexts for insight into the university educator's duties in these periods. Examples of pedagogical instruction that reach across different value systems include missionary work and foreign exchange programs, and these might be looked to as a basis for specifying some best practices. I do not have anything systematic to say, but it would seem that some protocols are fairly obvious and easily adopted. In an age of increasing distrust in the media, increasingly clever means for people to distort the facts, and the ability to disseminate information quickly, it is important that citizens be given the tools for discerning the good argument from the bad. While there is some reason to doubt the efficacy of critical reasoning courses at the university level (Sesardic 2017), there is good evidence that philosophical instruction in primary school improves students' cognitive and social abilities across a number of metrics, and that these improvements remain years *after* the instruction has ceased (Stovall 2018a). Either way, university educators can endeavor to model this kind of thinking in their courses and public outreach. This need not involve valorizing reason as a cure-all. We require a view of the whole person, and the whole person is not merely a thinking and acting thing – it is also a feeling, sensing, emoting thing, a being whose affective nature is as important to its well-being as its thinking and effective natures (for this reason the study of beauty has long been part of the study of truth and goodness).

As members of a profession, university educators have a task to perform in the service of those who make use of our abilities. The academic also has a role to play in digesting and disseminating ideas to the larger community of scholars and the public. Success in these endeavors requires that we discuss the ideas of those we disagree with, and aim for charity in the interpretation. This may mean listening to people who do not model the kind of discourse we prefer. I return to this in a moment, as it is not obvious just what that requires. But as a general principle it is surely sound. There is no hope for future agreement over what now divides us when we are not interested in understanding other points of view. And as it happens, in research going back decades in the United States, there appears to be more agreement between different political factions than is recognized by the extreme partisans of those factions (Stevens 2019). This presents a live opportunity to help different groups understand one another. One might also hope that courses on ethics in journalism were given a bit more attention by the people we get our news from.

It would seem important for the university educator interested in the ethical life to speak to the public as well. To do so is to help constitute a community containing an educated public. There are a number of new media websites, from across the political spectrum, that now host social commentaries directed at an educated public, and these outlets might be used to foster the conversations we require[8]. In contributing to this end the educator can model the kind of critical, sympathetic, and conciliatory attitudes needed for mutual understanding. This will mean, among other things, helping different ideological communities appreciate the perspectives of those who do not share their ideologies.

Toward clearing a space for that conversation, we should collectively resist calls for professional censure and disinvitation over the expression of *verboten* thoughts, whether from the right or the left[9]. Similarly, there should be room for people to contribute to the public discussion either anonymously or pseudonymously. I know personally of two cases in the last year where colleagues in philosophy – one on the right side of the political spectrum and the other on the left – were pseudonymously taking part in public conversation and were outed by people with an ideological grudge against them. Neither individual had a permanent position, let alone tenure, at the time of the outing. This behaviour is inimical to the open discussion of contentious issues in a period of revolutionary ethical life. At the same time, anonymity and pseudonymity can fuel polarization. It

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[8]   I have in mind e-places like Aeon, *Civil American*, Medium, UnHerd, The Post-Millenial, Quillette, Salon, Slate, and Vox.

[9]   Instances of this trend in recent years are too numerous to cite, but Turning Point USA's 'professor watchlist' (Warner 2018) and the treatment of Lindsey Shephard at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University (Todd 2019) are representative cases from the right and the left, respectively.

is much easier to dehumanize your interlocutor, play loose with the facts, adopt the stance of the fanatic, etc. if you don't have to worry about standing behind what you've said. And so by speaking under our own names we help constitute a community of responsibility. Meanwhile, our willingness to do so fosters open discussion by displaying to others that it is possible.

Some standards of behaviour for the university pedagogue are more difficult to determine, but I propose that during revolutionary periods of ethical living the university educator should generally resist the normal standpoint. If a view is not uncommon among the community within which one is teaching – whether among one's students or other academics – the educator has a (defeasible!) duty not to treat that view as beyond the realm of discussion (so long as it is pedagogically relevant). This may mean engaging with ideas we find morally repugnant. But that is just part of what we owe one another as autonomous beings living together – we must show each other the respect we are owed as part of our common community. This is a rational ideal, and it presumes we are not facing bayonets. But in a community where (e.g.) Nazi philosophy is prevalent there is a need to speak to it, I believe (once again I am assuming that violence is not immanent). I am not claiming that everyone ought to be willing to do this, but a community that does not speak with those who support a rising tide of illiberal political ideology is a community that is failing to sustain a healthy ethical life. Minimally (and deafeasibly) if the view is a target of criticism by one's ideological stance, one should be willing to allow those who hold the view to defend it (in an appropriate venue). We owe this to one another as partners in the shared task of constituting a social order *even if* we are morally and affectively repulsed by some of what our partners believe.

Notice that there are grounds, on this view, for the educator to refuse consideration of certain perspectives. In a period of turmoil over our ethical lives we may still collectively agree that some points of view are simply off the table. And we must be thoughtful when determining which venues a polarizing discussion might best be for; not every debate should take place in the classroom. At the same time, we should help students find the right venues for the conversations they want to have, and encourage students to seek out and listen to the views of those they disagree with.

More generally, where the issues are socially and politically contested the educator should strive for a critical rather than an ideological pedagogy. Elsewhere I have characterized these two stances as follows:

> [T]he *ideological* stance or attitude deserves special contrast with the *critical*. The ideological stance is characterized by *epistemic certainty*, and it is *brash*, *monological*, and *exhortative*. The ideologue knows what she thinks, and she knows what you should think, too. The critical stance is characterized by *epistemic humility*, and it is

careful, *dialogical*, and *inquisitive*. The critical person sees political conversation as a dialogue, and she is both interested in learning from conversation and willing to change her position on the basis of what she learns. The ideologue is convinced that she is right, however, and conversation can only be an opportunity to convert non-believers to the Truth, to agree with like-minded thinkers about what the Truth is, or to castigate non-believers as Wrong. (Stovall 2017, n.p.)

While the modern educator during a period of revolutionary ethical living should in general avoid the ideological stance over issues of ethical concern, two exceptions are worth noting. First, in the public exercise of reason the educator is as free to be an ideologue as anyone else. But second, there is room for ideology within the pedagogical context as well: specifically, when giving a professional assessment of an issue in a venue dedicated to that activity – e.g. in research publications, at conferences and workshops, and in courses dedicated to the subject. All the same the line of thought in this essay militates against an ideological stance that treats the contested areas of the ethical life as settled, or treats competing views as anathema.

There are signs for hope on this front. One result of the growing recognition of ideological polarization in the academy was the founding of the Heterodox Academy, an organization devoted to increasing viewpoint diversity in higher education, in September of 2015. They currently have a membership of 3,000 with an additional 400 graduate student members, consisting of an ideologically diverse group of scholars across the academy. Members of the Heterodox Academy are actively trying to foster viewpoint diversity and policies that support free inquiry in higher education. The organization hosts conferences, workshops, and essays drawing together research on the issues of ideological monovision facing the academy today. They also engage in public outreach directed at explaining the importance of free inquiry (see the "Press" page of their website) and policy advising (HxA Executive Team 2019).

One final remark. There appears to be a growing sense, perceived by those on the left and by those on the right, that liberalism of the sort that developed in the twentieth century emphasized individual autonomy at the unhealthy expense of community relationships. This has come in the form of various 'post-liberal' statements concerning the dual importance of individual liberty and responsibility to a community (Brooks 2019, Franklin 2019, Goodhart 2017, Fukuyama 2018, Papazoglou 2019, Polimédio 2019, Steiner 2019). Whatever the merits of these criticisms of liberalism, they are right to draw attention to the dual poles of rights and duties without which neither makes sense: duties without rights stifle the human spirit, while rights without duties provide it no structure. At the same time, as Hegel emphasizes, there may be an ever-present tension between what the individual takes her or his rights and duties to be and what the community

takes them to be. The specific character of this tension may vary both across communities and within a single community over time, but if this tension is a standing feature of the ethical life then there is a standing need for particular institutional structures, and the agency they afford, sufficient to integrate the individual and the community in the time and place one lives.

Religion once played that role in the life of Spirit, though it is not clear it does so now. I am not convinced that an entirely irreligious culture is desirable, and if the work of Richard Shweder and his collaborators on the universality of the 'three ethics' of Autonomy, Community, and Divinity is correct, then the religious impulse is as important for human well-being as the drives toward individual autonomy and respect for one's community (cf. Shweder *et al.* 1997 and Jensen 2011). Either way, there is the possibility that something much like the religious attitude might play part of the role that religion has historically played in the ethical life. In his 1998 *Achieving Our Country* Richard Rorty argued for a secularisation of the idea that the United States is a work of providence meant to usher in a new age for humankind. This *Ersatz* conception of the U.S. as a 'city on a hill' is one that would see American citizens striving to create a more perfect union, but without the overt religious interpretation of that effort. We should be wary of trivializing notions of the divine and its place in our individual and communal lives, and as I say I'm not convinced that an irreligious culture would be a good thing even if it were possible. But one way of understanding what Matthew Yglesias 2019 has dubbed the 'Great Awokening' of contemporary social justice activism, in a nod toward the Great Awakenings of religious revival that have occurred in American history, is that it embodies the effort to reconcile the individual or subjective sense of right and duty with communal or objective standards. All the same, just as the excesses of liberal individualism distort the relationship between the individual and the community to a point where neither is healthy, so are there excesses in 'woke' social reform that threaten the health of individual and community, though after a different fashion.

Concluding Remarks

The social upheaval and discord that modern citizens face in the twenty-first century indicates that we are in something like a period of revolutionary ethical living. Generally accepted customs for our shared forms of life are fragmenting, and as factions arise and attempt to institute new normal standards across society the university educator bears a special role in helping us navigate this period of transition. The existence of autonomous intentional collectives depends upon the existence of people who are adept at the critical exercise of reason as a

self-governing mode of life. And so the modern educator must foster the capacity for the free exercise of our *geistige* faculties. Given their role in modern society, then, university educators should resist the urge to employ normal pedagogy concerning the issues in the ethical life that are undergoing discussion.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century it is clear that we are not living in Kant's Enlightened Age, the period he imagined would result from the Age of Enlightenment. Indeed, it is doubtful that we continue to live by the standards that led Kant to characterize his time as an Age of Enlightenment. But it is a feature of practical rationality that where conditions are right its use may make oneself into a thing one would not be without so conceiving oneself. In this sense practical rationality affords persons a kind of self-determination that the non-rational world does not possess. Consequently, in so far as a community of people continues to work at the project that thinkers like Kant and Hegel saw themselves engaged in, the Enlightenment will remain a live option for our collective effort.

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PART III

The 'I' and the 'We' in Context

III.2 – Ethnic Resilience, National Identities and Diaspora

Diaspora and Self-Representation: The Case Study of Greek People's Identity, Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries

OLGA KATSIARDI-HERING

Introductory Remarks

A shorter version of this essay was presented at the international conference *Human Diversity in Context*, organized by Cinzia Ferrini in Trieste on September 2018[1]. The conference took place in the splendid *Palazzo Economo*[2]. Years ago, arriving in Trieste by the train from Greece to begin my research about the Greek presence in the Habsburg free port of Trieste (Katsiardi-Hering, 2019), the first building I saw in front of the railway station was this *palazzo*. I had the chance to make acquaintance of the gentle, friendly family of Giovanni Economo in the late 1970s but not to see the inside of this building, as it belonged to the state[3]. The founder[4] of this palace was one of the members of the Greek trade-diaspora. His

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[1] I would like to thank my colleague Prof. Cinzia Ferrini for the invitation to participate in this very interesting conference; she did an excellent and systematic job.

[2] See https://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/opencms/MiBAC/sito-MiBAC/Luogo/MibacUnif/Luoghi-della-Cultura/visualizza_asset.html?id=187494&pagename=186801 (accessed 22 July 2019), today the headquarters of the *Soprintendenza Archeologia, belle arti e paesaggio del Friuli Venezia Giulia* in Trieste.

[3] See also http://ricerca.gelocal.it/ilpiccolo/archivio/ilpiccolo/2009/12/05/NZ_27_APRE. html?refresh_ce (accessed 22 July 2019).

[4] See about them http://ricerca.gelocal.it/ilpiccolo/archivio/ilpiccolo/2009/12/05/NZ_27_

family originated from Edessa and Thessaloniki (in the nineteenth century these cities were under the Ottoman Empire) and had established in Bucharest and Braila, having formed networks with Greeks – and not only – in other places of the commercial diaspora. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Demetrio and Giovanni Economo had founded – among other concerns – a large flour mill in Trieste, built to take advantage of the bright grain trade from the Black Sea at that time (Herlihy 1963 and Harlaftis 1990)[5]. As an active member of the commercial and industrial society of Trieste and an active member of the Greek Orthodox Community in Trieste, Demetrio Economo had provided money for a music and literature on translation contest (Papaioannou 1982 and Kasinis 2003)[6] held under the auspices of the University of Athens, and also offered money for the school of the Greek Community in Trieste. Giovanni was given the title of an Austrian Baron. Why do I begin with such details? My subject is, in short, *Diaspora* (the Greek one) *and Identity.* The Economo family were representative members of the trade diaspora which was active in various empires, countries and cities, originated from cities that belonged at that time to the Ottoman Empire, were active members of the Greek community in Trieste, the free port of the Habsburg Empire, previously in the Romanian capital city and in the city-port of Braila as well, and had commercial and cultural connections with both the Greek University and members of the Austrian aristocracy. The neurologist Constantin von Economo (1876-1931)[7], who was famous in the early twentieth century for his research into *encephalitis lethargica*, was born to Giovanni and Elena Economo, parents of Greek origin, in Braila but migrated immediately after his birth to Trieste; according to his internet biographies, he is presented as "An Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist of Romanian origin and Greek descent"[8]. Where is the identity here? And which one? What provides him with an identity?

APRE.html also
http://www.movio.beniculturali.it/pmfvg/viverelottocentoatrieste/it/78/la-famiglia-economo
and http://www.christopherlong.co.uk/gen/schilizzigen/fg01/fg01_456.html (accessed 22 July 2019). A biography of this rich family remains to be written.

[5]   See the results of the big research project: https://blacksea.gr/en/teams/harlaftis-gelina/ (accessed 22 July 2019). The literature on the grain trade in the Black Sea is very promising.

[6]   https://sivenas.wordpress.com/2018/02/01/η-μεγάλη-οικογένεια-οικονόμου-της-έδε-11/ (accessed 22 July 2019).

[7]   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantin_von_Economo
https://www.jstor.org/stable/23632102?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6515395_Constantin_von_Economo%27s_ contribution_to_the_understanding_of_movement_disorders (accessed 24 July 2019).

[8]   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantin_von_Economo
https://www.alamyimages.fr/timbre-autrichien-1976-constantin-economo-constantin-freiherr-von-economo-1876-1931-romanian-psychiatre-et-neurologue-de-grec-orig-image178790661.html (accessed 24 July 2019).

The city of his birth? The ethnic origin of his parents? The cities (Trieste, Vienna) where he lived, studied and worked?

1. Issues of Identity in the Greek Orthodox Trade Diaspora in the Habsburg Empire

I must mention from the start that Trieste is a city with its roots in migration after the emperor Charles VI declared it a free port in the year 1719, and the so called *città teresiana* took shape during Maria Theresa's reign (Godoli 1984, Finzi & Panjek 2001 and Andreozzi & Mocarelli 2017) [Fig. 1] . The city grew as the main harbor of the Habsburg Empire during the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries, due to the economic, administrative and political measures taken by Maria Theresia's imperial successors and new migrations of Italians, Austrians, Slovenians, Greeks, Jews, Serbs, Armenians and others (Finzi & Panjek 2001). To the Economo example I am adding two more cases, also from the Greek-Orthodox diaspora of this city. Nearby and on the coast stands the majestic *Palazzo Carciotti* (Illy *et al.*, 1995)[9]. It belonged to one of this city richest families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Demetrio Carciotti (Katsiardi-Hering 2001, 519-522), originated from the Peloponnese, traded in Smyrna in the Ottoman Empire, migrated to Trieste in the 1770s and was able, also through strong family trade networks, to buy and restore this building, one of the four or five buildings belonging to him and his family, in the 1790s. He married Maria Voinović, the daughter of a rich Serbian family from Trieste (Dogo 2001); however, in the will he drew up in 1819, as they had no children, he disposed that his property had to be bequeathed to his brother Procopio (Koulouri 1991) if he married a woman of Greek origin; otherwise, his rich legacy would pass to the children of his Greek sister, if they married to partners of Greek origin. Procopio was a deacon and, according to the Greek Orthodox ritual, was not permitted to marry. Nevertheless, he managed to get permission to marry from a Metropolitan in the Peloponnese. He also had no progeny and litigation, initiated by members of the family, led to *fidei commessi* (Sollinger's Witwe 1850), sequestration etc. The third case is of another member of the Greek community in Trieste, of Ambrosio St. Rallis (Katsiardi-Hering 2001, 519-520), who was of Chiot origin and a member of the rich international Chiot commercial, maritime network (Harlaftis 1993). Although he was an Austrian baron, a very active member[10] of

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9   See: https://www.turismofvg.it/en/76241/Carciotti-Palace (accessed 12 August 2019)

10   *Inter alia*, he had established his own commercial society (1825), collaborated with the Sinas Bank in Vienna, sat on the Board of the *i.r. privilegierte Österreichische Nationalbank*, was a member of the *Camera di Commercio e d'Industria*, sat on the Board of the *Banca Commerciale Triestina* and the
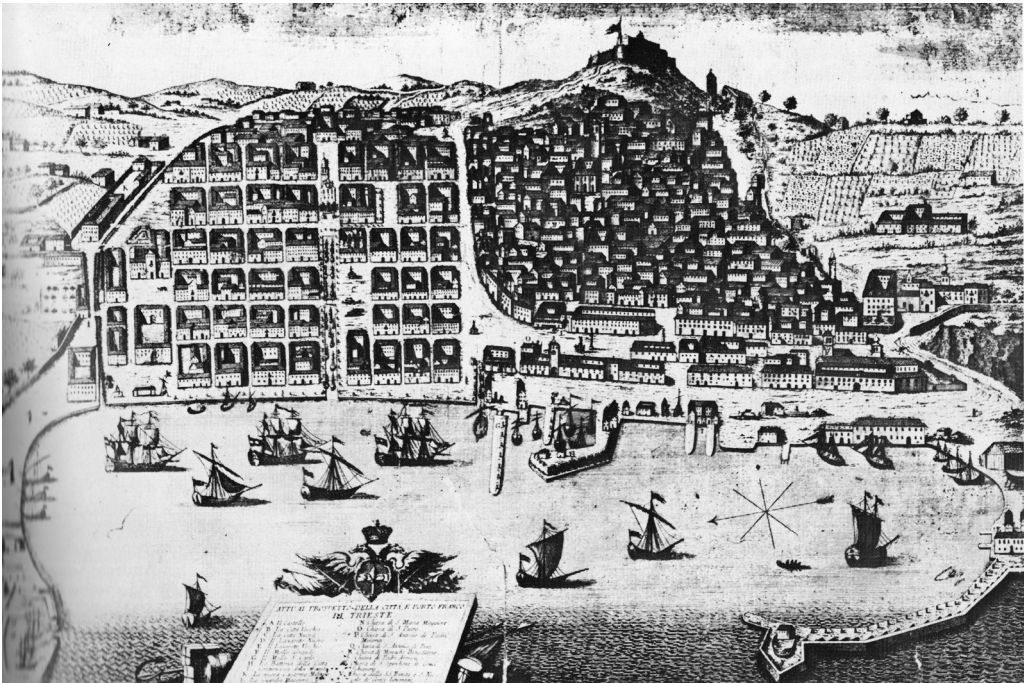
Figure 1 – Trieste 1791, ca.

Source: Godoli, 1984, p. 119 (Fig. 77, G.B. Sperandio, "Attuale Prospetto della Città e Porto Franco di Trieste", 1791 ca.)

the economic and social upper class of Trieste, for many years president of the Greek community of Trieste, in his will (1874) he disposed that:

> […] as far as religion is concerned, I have always numbered myself among the more tolerant. However, convinced deep down that the union of religion and nationality plays a powerful role in ensuring harmony within the family, I recommend my sons and grandsons not to enter into marriages unless it is with Greek Orthodox ladies of the Greek nation and, if possible, they should be from Chiot families so as to ensure the greatest similarity in customs and education […] (OK-H trans.)[11].

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i.r. Privilegiata Banca Filiale di Sconto, was a director of the *Assicurazioni Generali*, the *Agenzia della Compagnia ellenica 'La Fenice' per assicurazioni marittime a Trieste* and represented the *National Bank of Greece* in Trieste.

[11]   The original text reads as follows: "[…] In fatto di religione sono stato sempre uomo dei più tolleranti : essendo intimamente convinto che l'unità di religione e di nazionalità contribuisce potentemente all'armonia nel seno della famiglia consiglio ai miei figli e nipoti di non unirsi in matrimonio che con persone di religione greca orientale ed appartenenti alla nazionalità ellenica e possibilmente di famiglie sciotte per la maggiore omogeneità dei costumi e dell'educazione […]" (Archivio di Stato di Trieste, *Tribunale Commerciale e Marittimo,* b. 1201, fasc. Ambrosio di St. Ralli, Ventilazione ereditaria).

I could provide multiple such examples from the whole Greek diaspora, covering various times and locations. I am sure that many could do the same with other diasporas, too. In these examples, we have all the parameters that the fervid discussion on diasporas and identities confronts: homelands (city of birth/of origin/of ancestors, empires, newly-established nation states as sending or host countries), involvement in the religion/ethnic communities in the host countries, mixed marriages and ethnicity, economic interest and networks, endowments in the homeland and host country, wills, family relations, integration or assimilation, personal and collective identities, flexible or plural identities and sentiments of belonging, hybridities etc. There is no point providing additional examples at this juncture; I have used these cases to introduce the problems pertaining to the specification of the two main issues of diaspora and identity.

We are living in an era in which migration is a crucial theme in socio-anthropological discussions and a virulent political debate in Europe and elsewhere. The problems involved in receiving refugees or migrants or in their so-called 'integration' feature in our daily news. 'Diaspora' is a word of Greek origin (σπείρω = scatter) and with a Proto-Indo-European etymological root, *spr* (Tölölyan 1993, 10), from which the Armenian word *spurk* = diaspora is derived. It had its first application to the historical Jewish diaspora (Tölölyan 1993, 11-12; Fossey & Morin 1991, Vol. 2; Rozen 2008, Introduction). Although there were multiple historical diasporas – such as the Greek, the Armenian etc. – the word was not so common in migration studies until the late 1970s.

Greek historians used the term "first and second Hellenic *colonization*" (αποικισμός) (Graham 1982) for, respectively, the migrations in Southeastern Europe, the Black Sea and Asia Minor, particularly in the eighth-sixth centuries B.C., and for the establishment of new city-colonies in new areas. These colonies were in real communication with their sending metropolises. In the early modern era (fifteenth-early nineteenth century), to which I am referring here, we use the term *paroikia*[12] for the settlements of migrants in host cities who have received privileges from the host states to found commercial firms, churches and communities (Zakharov, Harlaftis and Katsiardi-Hering 2012, Introduction)[13]. The *paroikies* balanced their dual roles, as they had both to accept the rules and laws of their host country and to retain their links with their homeland. The trade communities to which I refer were formed around Greeks who maintained links with their places of origin or its broader area, as they established combined trade firms with members of their families or

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[12] Παροικία ≺ 'παρά [para] + οίκῶ [live] = I live / I am established in a host country, particularly after having been granted permission and privileges (in German *Niederlassung*).

[13] Herodotus frequently used the word *emporium* to define a trading city.

others from their places of origin. Most of the products they exported to the host commercial cities came from the Levant, while they also exported goods from their host cities to their homelands. This allowed their members to make a living by continuously moving back and forth between the two, building family trade networks and maintaining their cultural or ethnic identity. Some of them lived in a kind of Greek/Greco/görög 'neighborhood' (Venice, Vienna, Pest *et al.*) (Seirinidou 1997 and Ransmayr 2017), others formed the bright cosmopolitan centre of a city (Trieste) (Katsiardi-Hering 2019), shaping a multilateral social belonging. Greek historiography uses the term *koinotita=community*, which indicates both the total population of a diaspora group in a new settlement and a particular form of social organization within that group, which can be identified with a General Assembly of its adult members, having special statutes, etc. 'Merchant colonies', 'nations', 'ethnic minority merchants', 'diaspora merchants', 'confraternities' or '*compagnies*' and 'communities' are all characteristic of the establishment of groups of merchants of a shared religion or ethnicity in a foreign land, and of the creation of international commercial networks in the early modern period (Zakharov, Harlaftis and Katsiardi-Hering 2012, 2). In the early modern era after the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries, the territories of South-eastern Europe and Asia Minor were under Venetian rule (*Stato da Mar*) or Ottoman dominion, as a result of which many Greeks or Greek-speaking inhabitants dispersed into the Ottoman Empire or areas under the Venetians. In the late 19th century, some Greek intellectuals and politicians began to speak about these 'dispersed' people as the 'Hellenic Diaspora', meaning those people of a Greek ethnic origin then living in the Ottoman Empire who had to be joined under the Greek nation-state (Katsiardi-Hering 2012). A trend under the term of *Megali Idea* [Great Idea] (Vogli 2012) was the irredentist ideological policy of the Greek nation-state until 1922 and the so-called 'Asia Minor catastrophe'. In this essay, I shall use the term 'diaspora' to refer to the early modern period and the establishment of *paroikies* outside the Ottoman empire and outside the areas under the Venetian rule in the Levant [Fig. 2]. One could distinguish three periods of the modern Greek diaspora: a) fifteenth – early seventeenth centuries: a cultural and commercial diaspora established primarily in Venice, Ancona, Livorno and Naples, as well as a great migration of Greek-Orthodox populations which established themselves in the south of the Italian peninsula, Sicily, Tuscany and Corsica; b) late 17th – early nineteenth centuries: a more or less commercial diaspora established in Venice, Ancona and Livorno, but primarily in Central Europe and Ukraine-Russian lands, Marseille, Amsterdam, London); c) Late nineteenth – twentieth centuries: established on the Black Sea shores, in Egypt, London, Trieste, Calcutta, USA, Australia, Germany.
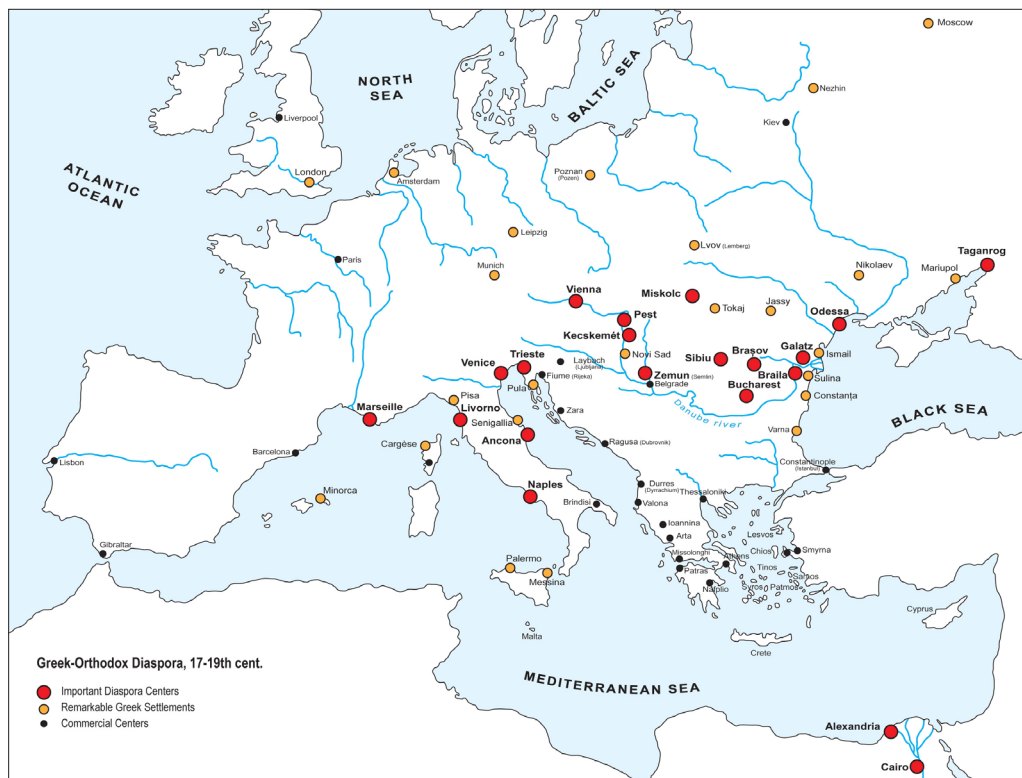
FIGURE 2 – Greek-Orthodox Diaspora (17th-19th centuries)
SOURCE: Katsiardi-Hering & Stassinopoulou 2017, 12

This marked a change of *paradigm*, becoming a commercial and labor diaspora[14]. Apart from the Greek Orthodox presence in Venice (Maltezou 1998, *Dimosia Ilaria* 1999, Koutmanis 2007, Koutmanis 2013, Burke 2016 and Grenet 2016), where an Orthodox church and confraternity had been established since the end of the fifteenth century, the main Greek Orthodox diaspora in the Habsburg empire took place after the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718) (Katsiardi-Hering & Stassinopoulou 2017). The crucial characteristic of this migration movement was trade. According to the treaty of Passarowitz between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs (Ingrao, Samardžić & Pešalj 2011), their subjects could enjoy a privileged tax status in the other empire if they transported products from their empire of origin. The Greek Orthodox Ottoman subjects

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[14] About the rich literature on the Greek diaspora see http://diaspora.arch.uoa.gr/main/index. php?lang=en (accessed 26 July 2019).

were the main beneficiaries of this agreement. They became the 'Conquering Balkan Orthodox merchants', according to the emblematic article by Traian Stoianovich (Stoianovich 1960). The next big wave of migration came after the Treaty of Kučuk Kainardja between Russia and the Ottoman Empire (1774) (Hassiotis 1997, Kardasis 2001 and Sifnaiou & Harlaftis 2015). This Treaty opened up the Black Sea to Greek-Ottoman mariners and tradesmen; when Catherine the Great conquered the southern part of Russia (Novorossija), it facilitated the migration and settlement of Greeks and other people from Southeastern Europe in city ports, such as Odessa (Herlihy 1986, Sifneos 2017).

2. RELIGION AND ETHNIC ORIGIN IN A PRE-NATIONALISTIC AGE: ISSUES OF SELF-REPRESENTATION

Writing that, I shall have to return for a while to the recent theoretical discussion about diaspora and identity. As I mentioned earlier, the term 'diaspora' became common after the 1970s (Tötölyan 1993, 13-15, 19-20; Brubaker 2005) and 1980s, while the emphasis on the links binding the homeland and host country also changed. In the meantime, "the concept of identity invaded the social sciences in the 1970s – before then it was a concept associated mainly with psychoanalysis [...]" (Stråth 2011, 24). According to Bo Stråth, the real cause for this development "was the linguistic turn, which shifted the ontological perspective from socio-economic structures to language itself" (Stråth 2011, 24). In the fervent discourse which followed, categories such as the construction and (de)/(re)construction of identities monopolized the arguments. An equally fervent discourse about ideological and political formations or reconstructions such as the nation – another term and a topic of the modernity and of the Enlightenment – have also contributed to a new orientation in relation to the diaspora. The turn towards "representational practices" (Tziovas 2009, 6), imagined, fragile or transparent identities, or "how an individual or a whole community feels about itself and 'represents' itself to itself and others" (Tölölyan 1993, 15), discussions about personal and collective identities, occurred according to "elaborations of theories of pluralism and multiculturalism" in the era of globalization.

> The question of how identities, solidarity and community are constructed under 'us/them' demarcations is crucial. [...] The use of a vocabulary of 'construction' and 'invention' in this context does not mean that ties of solidarity and community are created entirely independently, but rather that they *emerge* in a complex interaction marked by historical and cultural conditions. (Stråth 2011, 21)[15]

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[15]   On the 'us/them' dichotomy see *supra* Chiandetti's contribution to this volume: Chap. 3, §1. *Ed. note.*

New trends centred on talking of 'belonging' rather than identity have enriched the discussion. As Brubaker remarks:

> Diaspora can be seen as an alternative to the essentialization of belonging, but it can also represent a non-territorial form of essentialized belonging. Talk of the deterritorialization of identity is all well and good; but it still presupposes that there is 'an identity' that is reconfigured, stretched in space to cross state boundaries, but on some level fundamentally the same. (Brubaker 2005, 12)

All these debates take as a starting point the existence of the nation-states and their role in relation to diaspora, as sending entities as well as hosting ones, and consequently their migration policy in various times and circumstances. By contrast, I shall focus my remarks on the Greek Orthodox trade diaspora, and not on the massive migration of the so-called Greco-Albanesi of the fifteenth-seventeenth centuries towards the South Italian peninsula and Sicily (Scalora 2018). The Greek Orthodox migrants of concerned here, were subjects of the Ottoman Empire, meaning of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire, and migrated, from the fifteenth century onwards, to the Venetian capital city, to the Habsburg empire and to the Russian empire. In the first two, the Catholic religion predominated among the local inhabitants, but they also included people of other faiths or ethnic identities. The Russian Empire was predominantly an Orthodox one, although it, too, included people of other religions. We must also stress the significance of the local origin of those migrants. Here, I highlight the role of religion and of 'ethnic' origin; I set aside national identity, because the characteristics by which these migrating people were categorized by the host authorities, when granting them privileges to establish[16] or build a church, were their religion and their subject-hood. The privileges were given to *Greci-Orientali/ Griechen Schismatischen/Greci non uniti colla Chiesa Cattolica* etc. Very often they were categorized by the authorities under the term *Acatolici* (=non Catholics) (Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 107-109, 142-146, 221-224) or in terms of their subject-hood (Ottoman / Turkish or Venetian *re'ayas / Untertanen / sudditi*). Another crucial difference between the case considered here and the theoretical approach taken to more recent migration phenomena in the diaspora literature concerns 'citizenship' (Babarantseva & Sutherland 2012, Introduction: 4-9) and the nation-state identity of those migrants. My Greek Orthodox were not citizens; they were *re'ayas*/imperial subjects. Some of them decided or were forced by changes in local policies of their host states (e.g. in Hungary after 1774) to be naturalized;

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[16]   See e.g. among others the cases of the Communities in Venice, Nježin, Trieste, Vienna, Pest etc. (Mavoreidi 1976, Burke 2016, Carras 2010, Katsiardi-Hering 2019, Seirinidou 2010, Ransmayr 2018 and Mantouvalos 2017 *et al.*

this meant that after that year, Greek Orthodox merchants who had until then travelled back and forth or traded on a provisional basis had to take the Hungarian oath if they wanted to establish themselves permanently in the Hungarian lands (Mantouvalos 2017). As a consequence, Magyarization came about more rapidly in the Hungarian cities, particularly for the Greeks and Aromanians and less for the Serbs, who existed in larger numbers in these lands than the other Orthodox peoples (Pešalj 2012 and Ristović 2012). For most of the other Orthodox, naturalization (Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 381-390; Ransmayr 2018, 327-368) could have been a real step towards integration and/or assimilation. This was, more or less, the case for those who decided to remain in the host city, to widen their business ventures to also embrace foreign networks, and to become a type of *bürgerlicher Handelsmann* (Seirinidou 2011, 71-124)*.* It is interesting to see in the sources the division, for instance, in the Orthodox Community in Naples between the *Greci-Veneti* (subjects of Venice) and the *Greci-Ottomani* (subjects of the Porte) (Grenet 2016, 58). From the end of the eighteenth century, there were two confraternities in Vienna, the Greek Ottoman subjects on the one hand, and the Imperial subjects (*Kaiserliche Königliche Untertanen*) on the other (Seirinidou 2010, Seirinidou 2011 and Ransmayr 2018). Greek-Orthodox people (Greeks not united with the Roman Catholic Church) from the Ottoman regions of Epirus, Macedonia and Thessaly participated in both. The Greek Orthodox religion and the Greek language (or the Aromanian language for some originally from Pindos in Epirus, Macedonia, or Thessaly, who very often received the Imperial subject-hood) were the links that made them 'belong' to a specific group. They also had established a 'Greek national school' since the early nineteenth century (Seirinidou 2011, 305-338)[17]. Their subject-hood divided them more or less in their entrepreneurial networks. What about identity? Where can we localize it, and what are we searching for in this pre-nationalistic era? Perhaps we can speak about a linguistic or religious or cultural identity, but are these enough for the self-representation of these migrants?

3. Processes of Othering within Greek Orthodox Religion: Specifying Collective Identities[18]

Before continuing, a short explanation is needed of the term 'Greek'. "The *Griechen, Greci* or the *Greci scismatici* or the *Griechen nicht unirte* (Greeks not

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[17]   See also Mantouvalos 2012 on the interesting case of the Greek School in the Greek-Aromanian community in Miskolc, Hungary.

[18]   On processes of othering in religion as ingroup/outgroup issues, see *supra* Wolters' contribution to this volume: Chap. 4. *Ed. note*.

united with the Catholic Church) were the terms used by the Catholic host authorities for those who adhered to the *Greci orientali* creed, which is to say members of the Eastern Orthodox Church." (Katsiardi-Hering 2012, 134). In theory, most of the Christian inhabitants of South-eastern Europe – or at least those who moved to Central Europe to trade – fell into this category. The presence of Serbs in Hungarian lands is also due to the so-called *velika seoba* (Makuljević 2017, 54-55)[19], an organized migration movement (late seventeenth century) of thousands of Serbs and Aromanians/Vlachs from the South and their settlement in the military zone spanning the borders to the Ottoman empire. The establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Metropolis of Karlowitz in the Habsburg territory from the early eighteenth century strengthened the position of the Serbs (Adler 1976). At this time, in many cities in the diaspora, Greeks, Serbs and Aromanians (Ottoman subjects) were under the same church and confraternity. And, in theory, Serbs (Illirici), Greeks and (Macedonian) Vlachs/Aromanians alike from Macedonia, Thessaly and Epirus enjoyed the privileges pertaining to this religious category. Having acquired privileges, these merchants proceeded to build a church and to organize the community. (Katsiardi-Hering 2012, 134). The controversies were more pronounced among Greeks and Serbs in particular, since both people had a long established written language and culture. The 'us/them' dicothomy was fiercer between them. The alleged motivation for the litigations that led to their communal and ecclesiastical separation was the use of the Greek language in the church. The case of Trieste is a representative: Greeks and Serbs had established the Orthodox Church of Saint Spyridion after the privileges granted by Maria Theresia (1751). In the 1770s-early1780s, the memoranda sent to the authorities (Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 65-140) by both parties show an early (1770s) proclamation of national identity, years before the French revolution and the propagation of nationalism. The cases brought before the local authorities were based on the meaning of the 'nazione greca' and 'dei Greci dati al Rito della Chiesa Orientale, e non uniti con la Cattolica Romana' in Trieste (Stefani 1960, 80, 86, according to the privileges' text 1750, 1751). Greeks and Serbs both sought to appropriate the term for themselves. The word 'nation' had the meaning of a group with some features similar to those of a confraternity, and not yet the connotations attributed to it by the spread of the national ideas after the end of the eighteenth century. However, in their memorandum to Maria Theresa (1770) the leaders of the Greek group, Nikolaos Plastaras and Vartholomeos Bartelas, declared:

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[19]   For the Greek-Orthodox communities in the Hungarian lands, see the map published by Mantouvalos 2017, 31.

[...] Everyone is persuaded, that the religion unity cannot also form the unity of the Nation [here the meaning of the nation is: the Greek-Oriental community of Trieste, according to the privileges' language]. Since the ancient times differed the Nations of the Assyrians, Phoenicians, Chaldeans, Mideans, Skythians among them and in our time the same happens for many other nations, which are the daughters of the same Church, and for this reason the Right (il jus) of a Nation cannot be valid for all the Nations [...] (OK-H trans.)[20]

This was in response to Serb pretensions (commencing in 1766), who maintained: "the expresssions 'Greek Nation', 'Orthodox Connationals' are referred to the Orthodox co-religionists" and they insisted (1780): "And in short it turns out from the whole text of the (Privileges) Diplom, that the term Greek embraces all the Nations who profess the Religion of Greek 'di rito orientale', properly the Diplom and not only the Greek nation"[21].

After the separation of the Serbs and Greeks in 1782, in the statutes of their new Greek community (1784), the Greeks/Γραικοί referred to the '*nazione propriamente greca*/το Γένος των κυρίως Γραικών' (*Costituzioni e capitoli 1784*). The Greeks and Aromanians (Vlachs) of the community in Pest maintained a similar stance in their memorandum of 1788 towards the Illyrians/Serbs, whom they no longer wished to be part of their Greek Orthodox church, although they shared the same dogma[22]. Similarly, the Greeks in Semlin /Zemun, near Belgrade, presented themselves as descendants of the "*Hellenes,* the famous nation of the Romaeans [Ρωμιοί]" and they decided (1785) to found a Hellenic school in their community (Katsiardi-Hering 2011, 246)[23]. Such self-representation as collective

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[20]   [...] Ognun si persuade, che l'unità della Religione, non può formare anche unità di Nazione. Fin dai più tempi sono state sempre distinte le Nazioni degl'Assirij, Fenicj, Caldei, Medi, Sciti, e nei nostri Secoli tant'altre Nazioni, quantunque Figlie della stessa Chiesa, non perciò il jus d'una Nazione esser deve commune a tutte, non potendo nel Tempio d'una Nazione leggislatare tutte [...]: Archivio Storico della Comunità Greco Ortodossa di Trieste, N. 590, r. 1 (COM-AMM.I.a.1), *Ta perisothenta,* anno 1780, c. 36, e "Protocollo degli atti della Deputazione", c. 36; see also Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 138.

[21]   [...] "le espressioni 'Nazione Greca', 'Connazionali Ortodossi' si riferiscono ai correligionari ortodossi" and "E in somma risulta di tutto il contesto del Diploma che la voce Greci abbraccia tutte le Nazioni che professano la Religione Greca di rito orientale, onde propriamente il Diploma, e non della sola nazione Greca" (Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 138).

[22]   "Wir unterfertigte in Pest wohnende, der Nation nach Griechen, Walachen Christen der nicht unirten orientalischen Kirche haben indem wir zusammen kommen sind mit gemeinschaftlichen Willen [...] beschlossen [...] eine Kirche zubauen damit [...]der allmächtige Gott gepriesen wird auf immer in unserer väterlichen Mundart (der Griechischen) der Hellenischen.[...] da unsere Nation [...] vermehrt ist und keinen Platz in der Kirche der Illyrier, unserer Glaubensgenossen hat, [...] um von allen Hass, Feindschaft und Eifersucht zu entfernen [...] da unsere Mundart und jene der Illyrien verschieden ist" (Katsiardi-Hering 2011, 243).

[23]   Katsiardi-Hering, Papadia-Lala, Nikolaou, Karamanolakis 2018 offers a cultural and historical discussion of the terms 'Hellen, Romaios, Greek' and the related identities.

identity can also be found in the censuses of the confraternities[24]. The examples can be multiplied from Greek Orthodox communities throughout the Habsburg empire, but also in Marseille, the Italian Peninsula as well as from the Greek communities in the Orthodox Russian empire. I wish to conclude this discussion of the connotations of the national and collective identity with one final point: After the start of the Greek Revolution (1821), the Austrian authorities (1824) ordered the Greeks in Trieste to use the word 'community' (*comunità, Gemeinde*) in their statutes and in the official correspondence rather than the term 'nation':

> [...] (the term) Nation wants to denote a big social union, of which all the members are united with each other in a single political body with one and the same constraint. But in Trieste exists a religious Community of the Greek-oriental dogma (rito), and its members do not belong to one and the same Government or Nation [...] (OK-H trans.)[25]

The Greeks complied with the mandate. They changed their seals, using the term 'comunità /Gemeinde' instead of 'nazione' in their official correspondence in the Italian and German languages, but they continued for many years to use in Greek the term Το Γένος (meaning both the nation and the community) των εν Τεργέστη Γραικών. We need no further examples of the highly flexible identity discourse in the cases we are exploring.

4. ISSUES OF RECOGNITION AND MODELS OF INCLUSIVE IDENTITIES

The problem becomes more complicated if we look at official Austrian or Hungarian terminology used in the various censuses of the *Graeci* as *Instantia de Quaestu viri Graecis...turcicarum mercium registrendis* or *Graecorum Porta Ottomanica Suditorum* etc. conducted by the authorities in the eighteenth century (Katsiardi-Hering 2011 and Mantouvalos 2012a). Here we find mixing of the terms 'Graecus' and 'Ottomanus' and 'Turcicus' –the last two of which relate to subject-hood. Recently, I have noted the emergence of a body of literature[26]

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[24]   In these censuses we find terms such as: "*Nazione del Rito e Lingua Greca Orientale/Nazione Greco Levantina /Nazione Illirica di Rito Greco* Orientale" [=Nation of the faith and language of Greek-Orientals, Nation Greek-Levantine or Illyrian nation of Greek Oriental creed in Trieste] etc. (Katsiardi-Hering 2011, 245-246).

[25]   [...] [la Nazione] si vuole denotare una unione grande sociale, e di cui i membri tutti insieme sono fra loro uniti in un solo corpo politico con uno, ed il medesimo vincolo. In Trieste esiste bensi una Comunità religiosa di rito Greco-orientale, i di lei membri però non appartengono ad uno, e al medesimo Governo, o Nazione [...] (Katsiardi-Hering 2019, 276).

[26]   Do Paço 2015. The book is based on a known Imperial Census of 1766/1767 of merchants in Vienna with Ottoman subject-hood, but is very limited and fails to make any real comparisons with

emphasizing the role of the Ottoman merchants, in general, during our period and their participation in the Mediterranean and/or central Habsburg trade which tries to play down the ethnic or ethno-religious role or identities, connotations, belonging (we can use many terms!) of those merchants, and I would like to add it to my argument. I understand that the majority of the Diaspora merchants discussed here originated in the Ottoman empire (or also from the Venetian lands in the Levant) and migrated because of advantageous tax or commercial conditions due to the relationship between the Ottomans and the Venetians, the Habsburg empire and later the British and Russian ones (Eldem 2006, Katsiardi-Hering 2009, Katsiardi-Hering & Stassinopoulou 2017). During the late 19th and early twentieth centuries, new conditions emerged which led to changing roles of the traditional commercial European powers in the Eastern Mediterranean; this was largely due to opening up the Black Sea, grain trade and founding new commercial / diaspora centres with new orientations (Isabella & Zanou 2016, 4). Another crucial factor was founding new nation states in Southeastern Europe; some of the port cities (Braila, Galatz, Constanța, Varna etc) no longer belonged directly to the Ottoman empire, but rather to the new nation-states. In these, as in the older Greek diaspora communities, citizens of the newly-established Greek state conducted their trade with co-nationals of other subject-hood or citizenship (e.g. Ottoman, Ionian, Romanian etc.). The interesting detail is that the majority of these Greeks continued to belong to their old or newly-established Greek Orthodox communities (Kontogeorgis 2012, Id. 2013, Id. 2018; Ransmayr 2018, 327-355) and to collaborate economically with their members, paying little attention to state citizenship. The important factor that united or characterized them was language, religion, origins and 'cultural belonging', economic interest. The authorities recognized them as Greeks. Many of them continued to maintain strong ties with their places of origin, a practice which had been common among the Greeks, the Aromanians and the Serbs since the sixteenth century (Ploumidis 1972 and Cotovanu 2014), and which strengthened still further after the establishment of the Greek nation state. The socio-anthropological phenomenon of ευεργέται/'benefactors' (Arvanitakis 2006) is well-researched and proves not only the economic relationships between the diaspora and their places of origin, but can also serve as an evidence of personal identity or belonging and culturally-bounded understanding of diaspora (Seirinidou 2010, Seirinidou 2011, 407-414; Stassinopoulou 2012)[27]. A still stronger proof of this connection with homelands is provided by the also very well researched commercial networks built up by

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the wealth of archival material available and the literature on the role of Christian merchants in the Habsburg empire. Additionally, see Seirinidou 2011 and Ransmayr 2018.

[27]   See the research project about the "Social commitment in the Greek Communities of Vienna (18th-20th c.)" https://wienergriechen.univie.ac.at/en/ (accessed 28 July 2019).

members of the diaspora (Baghdiantz-McCabe, Harlaftis, Pepelasis-Minoglou 2005, Stassinopoulou & Chatziioannou 2005, Vlami & Mandouvalos 2013) with members of their families in other diaspora centres or with other co-nationals/expatriates (ομογενείς is the Greek word) in the Levant.

Giving these examples, I don't intend to insist on a monothematic identity, in particular among members of the second or third generations and as a consequence of mixed marriages in the diaspora communities. I could argue instead for a multilateral, shifting identity or belonging, very often based on a cultural or social diversity with many aspects and variations among members of the same community, or often with "poetic and imaginative force" (Stråth 2011, 26). "In short it is vital to stress that identities are not hermetically sealed entities that are internally consistent and which necessarily exclude other identities" (Jones & Krzyżanowski 2011, 42). I would agree with Khachig Tölölyan's view: "In general, the trans-nationalist elites are less in need of nation-states than of 'countries'" (Tölölyan 1993, 5); the examples with which I began my article may be proof of this. And he continued "diasporas exist neither in necessary opposition to their homelands' nationalism nor in a servile relationship to them" (Tölölyan 1993, 7). This argument can be used not only for the nation-state era of today and the relations towards its migrants abroad, but also for the era in which I am referring to. In the Greek diaspora many projects were hatched in the late eighteenth-early nineteenth centuries for preparing rebellions with the real or imaginary support of the French or the Russians, aimed at the liberating the Greek lands from the Ottomans (Katsiardi-Hering 2009, 128-137). The *Philiki Hetaireia* (the Secret Society of the Friends) was established in Odessa, in 1814, by a small group of Greek merchants of Ottoman subject-hood, subsequently expanding secretly through South-eastern Europe and preparing the Greek Revolution of 1821 (Frangos 1971). Rigas Velestinlis (Kitromilides 2013), a Greek intellectual of the diaspora in the Danubian Principalities and an Ottoman subject, has published his enlightened books and revolutionary political texts in secret in Vienna (1791, 1796-1797) in the printing house of the Markides Poulios, who were Greek brothers and originated from Thessaly in the Ottoman Empire, but had been 'nationalized' as Austrian subjects. Rigas was captured by the Austrian police in Trieste (1797) after being betrayed by another Greek merchant of Austrian subject-hood (Katsiardi-Hering 1999). The assassination of Rigas by Turks in Belgrade, along with some likeminded Diaspora Greeks –Ottoman subjects–, has had a very powerful ideological and political impact over the years among the Balkan peoples. Their assassination contributed to the ideological preparation of the coming revolts and revolutions against the Ottomans in the nineteenth century.

The personality of Adamantios Korais, the greatest intellectual of the Greek Enlightenment, is one of the most representative cases of social, ideological, political change and self-representation among the diaspora Greeks (Kitromilides 2013). Native in Smyrna, he went to Amsterdam in the 1780s as an agent of his merchant family. According to the surviving letters of the astonished servant who accompanied him, Stamatis Petrou, he quickly changed his habits of dressing, appreciated the Calvinists, and took an 'amorosa' (Iliou 1976) from among the local maidens. This change turned out to be very radical. He changed his orientation, studied Medicine and Philosophy in Montpellier, and spent the rest of his life in Paris, where he communicated with the local intellectuals, the Ideologues and others. He remained a true Γραικός/Greek, as he said, and a convinced European, I could add, and he propagated the European orientation among his co-nationals. He published a lot of books, edited his 'Hellenic Library' = texts of ancient Greek writers, etc. He had a very rich correspondence with Diaspora and Levantine Greeks (Korais 1964-1984), and his publications spread all over the diaspora and Greek schools in the Levant. In Venice and in Vienna, thousands of Greek books were published in Greek printing houses (Koumarianou, Droulia, Layton 1986 and Staikos 1995) and sold or distributed in the Levant, contributing to the strengthening of the education of the Greeks there. Korais' target was the national awaking of the Greeks through the education. He lived at a time, in which many Greeks from the Levant and Diaspora Greeks, the recipients of scholarships, studied in European Universities (Vienna, Paris, Leipzig, Göttingen, München, Halle, Tübingen, Oxford etc.) and acquired a strong ideological orientation towards Europe (Turczynski 1959, Tsirpanlis 1979, Heppner & Katsiardi 1998). But despite Korais' still important work, the conservative newly-established Greek state did not permit him to be buried in Greece after his death in Paris (1833) (Iliou 1989). Although Korais remained faithful to the Orthodox dogma, his inclinations towards Calvinism delayed the official decision to transport his remains to Athens until 1877! The dichotomy between East and West was still existing!

Concluding Remarks

I conclude with some final remarks. I would agree with Tziovas' opinion:

> Deepening the crisis of identity, diaspora and exile are no longer identified with wilderness, instability or oblivion, but emerge as new conceptions of 'home', pointing to an identity premised more on memory and less on common territory. The stereotype of the migrant as either denying his/her past or trying to retrieve it gives way to a negotiation that includes both. Living between a lost past and a non-

> integrated present, diasporic and migrant subjects experience a perpetual state of liminality while their identities are formed 'on the move' (Tziovas 2009, 5).

As I mentioned above, one of the difficulties we have understanding the historical aspects of the problem of identity in the diaspora is the nationalistic idea of the nineteenth century onwards (Kitromilides 2008), which concentrated on the connection between a national centre and its 'dispersed' people and not on the diaspora as a social phenomenon with its own dimensions, perspectives and prerogatives. Being part of a diaspora meant living, working away from 'home' – with 'home' meaning the place of origin, the broad area in which more or less the same language, religion, customs and administrative relations existed –, or very often moving between 'home' and the hosting land for commercial or cultural reasons, or ever communicating with this broad area of 'home', real or imagined (Stock 2010), creating a dual or multiple identity and belonging. This was particularly the case for the second or third generation, who tried – or were forced at the insistence of older relatives – to preserve the characteristics of this real or imagined 'belonging home'. The attempt in Venice, Trieste, Vienna, Semlin, Pest *et al.* by Greek and Serbian community members to establish schools, to publish books for teaching the Greek or Serbian language along with the local languages to their pupils, was partly a process of integration, but it was simultaneously an awareness of differentiation and an effort to retain the social and ideological ties with 'home'. And what does homeland mean for the people of this Diaspora who moved to new lands and established themselves there, retained connections with their villages and cities but, in many cases, managed to integrate in their hosting land (Kokot & Tölölyan; Alfonso 2004, Introduction; Brubaker 2005, 5)? Another aspect we have to take into consideration is the non-'permanence' and 'continuity' of an identity, and principally of a collective identity (Leerssen 2007, 335). A permanence of identity can be attributed more or less to members of modern nation states, but not to the members of multi-ethnic empires, as in our case. Taking the example of Trieste in the nineteenth century, one can talk about 'triestinità'[28], a kind of identity which could be attributed to almost every inhabitant of that cosmopolitan town, each of whom was descended from migrants from various places in Central Europe and the Levant; a 'triestinità' which would face many difficulties from the era of irredentism (late nineteenth/ early twentieth century) on.

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[28]   The notion of 'triestinità' is variously discussed in history and literature, from the pluralistic point of view of Italo Svevo to the nationalistic one of Attilio Tamaro http://www.letteraturaitaliana. net/autori/svevo_italo_1.html (accessed 30 July 2019). For a very good analysis of the variegated society of Trieste, see Millo 1989.

It was in the cultural centres of the diaspora that the new national ideas spread among community members through schools, books, teaching, and through these centres that the ideas reached their 'home' lands. "Diasporic subjects are marked by hybridity and heterogeneity – cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national – and these subjects are defined by a traversal of the boundaries demarcating nation and diaspora" (Evans Braziel & Mannur 2003, 5). Whether a foreigner (Faber 1997), an 'acatholic', a 'privileged merchant', or a naturalized one, it was not self-evident that everybody in the commercial diaspora could be integrated or assimilated. In the era of emerging nationalisms, many – the great majority students, scholars and mid-scale merchants – emerged as 'long-distance nationalists' of sorts, if we may apply Benedict Anderson's term to the era we are discussing (Brubaker 2005, 2). In some cases, one could speak of a 'symbolic ethnicity', which can be applied to some Armenians (Brubaker 2005, 10), but also to the case of diaspora Greeks who lived for more than two generations in host cities outside the Ottoman empire and the newly established Greek nation-state.

One can note a continuous economic and ideological dialogue between Diaspora and the Greeks' 'home' lands throughout the centuries under investigation. Travel was a real connecting medium between these people (Fossey & Morin 1991).

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When National Assimilation Policies Encounter Ethnic Resilience: The Case of Western European Roma[*]

PAOLA TONINATO

1. Constructing the 'Gypsy' as 'Other'

The Romani presence in Western Europe dates back to the early fifteenth century. Roma and Sinti encountered almost immediately hostile reactions by official authorities who labelled them as 'Gypsies' and regarded them as alien and undesirable. The ensuing rise of anti-Gypsy policies prevented the emergence of a positive image by failing to recognise their contribution to the European cultural and social landscape. In the attempt to subject so-called 'Gypsies' to state control, non-Gypsy authorities enacted a number of policies that aimed at excluding and ultimately assimilating Romani groups within mainstream European society. Such policies were based on a number of deeply engrained views and stereotypical categories whose legacy is still with us today. This is

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[*] The terms 'Roma' (pl.) and 'Rom' (m.s.) are ethnonyms (self-definitions) used by Gypsy groups, especially in southern/Eastern Europe, while the word 'Gypsies' is a term imposed on the Roma by the non-Roma. In this study the term Gypsy is mainly used in opposition to the Roma's self-definitions; however, the word is also used to refer to Romani groups in general, since there is no umbrella term that is accepted by all Romani people. Other ethnonyms used by Gypsies are Romanichals in England, America, Australia and New Zealand, Sinti in Germany, Austria, central and northern Italy and southern France, Kalé in Spain and Manuś in France.

amply testified by chronicles and written sources recording the first arrival of groups of nomadic Gypsies in Italy, Germany, France, the Netherlands and the Iberian states and, later on, in England (Fraser 1995[2]).

From the outset, official sources depict Roma and Sinti diversity in negative terms. Fifteenth-century chronicles from Italy are a clear example of this. For instance, in the *Chronicon Forliviense* we find the following description of a group of Gypsies who, the chronicler noted incidentally, were said to have come from India:

> [In 1422] arrived in Forlì some people, sent by the Emperor, who were eager to receive our faith. They arrived in Forlì on August the 7th. And, as I heard, some said that they were from India. They stayed here for two days, and *were not moderate people, but [behaved] almost like wild and ferocious beasts*. There were almost two hundred of them, and were going to the Pope in Rome: men, women and children. (PT trans.)[1]

Gypsies are here depicted as "immoderate people" (*gentes non multum morigeratae*), behaving almost like "beasts" and "wild animals" (*quasi bruta animalia et furentes*). This animal-like behaviour seems to be a recurrent motif in contemporary historical accounts about Gypsies. They are variously depicted as the "scum of the nation", as people who "lived like dogs" and had no religion. A coeval text, the *Chronica Bononiensis*, described Gypsies as unclean, savage creatures, and it claims that they were closer to animals than humans (it was reported that they ate "like pigs").

> On July 18th, 1422, there came to Bologna a duke of Egypt, named duke Andrew, together with women, children and men of his country, in number about a hundred. [...] Note that they were the ugliest people ever seen. They were skinny and black, and they ate like pigs. (PT trans.)[2]

It is worth noticing that the anonymous author of the *Chronica* described the "skinny and black" Gypsies as the "ugliest people ever seen" ("la piu brutta genia che mai fosse in queste parti", *ibid.*). A slightly earlier text, this time from

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[1]   Original text in: *Chronicon fratris Hieronymu de Forolivio*, quoted in Muratori 1723-1751, Vol. XIX (1731), 890: "Eodem millesimo [1422] venerunt Forlivium quedam gentes missae ab imperatore, cupientes recipere fidem nostram et fuerunt in Forlivium die VII. Augusto. Et, ut audivi, aliqui dicebant quod erant de India. Et steterunt hinc inde per due dies *gentes non multum morigeratae, sed quasi bruta animalia et furentes*. Et fuerunt numero quasi ducenti, et ibant versus Romam ad Papam, scilicet viri et mulieres et pargoli" (PT emphasis).

[2]   Original text in: *Corpus Chronicorum Bononiensium*, quoted in Muratori 1723-1751, Vol. XVIII (1730), 611: "A dì 18 luglio 1422 venne in Bologna *un duca di Egitto*, il quale aveva nome Andrea e venne con donne, putti ed uomini del suo paese e potevano essere ben cento persone. [...] *Nota che questa era la più brutta genia, che mai fosse in queste parti. Erano magri e negri e mangiavano come porci*" (PT emphasis).

FIGURE 1
A dark-skinned Gypsy (Colocci 1899, 129)

Germany, the *Chronica Novella*, recorded the passage of a "strange, wandering horde of people" through northern Germany in 1417. According to this chronicle, these people were "very ugly" and "as black as Tartars" (Cornerus 1743, Vol. 2: col. 1225). Ten years later, the anonymous writer of the *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris* summed up this less-than-flattering portrait by describing a group of Gypsies in the following terms:

> [T]heir children – almost all of them – had their ears pierced and wore a silver ring in each ear [...]. The men were *very dark*, with curly hair; the women were *the ugliest* you ever saw and the darkest, all with scarred faces and hair as black as a horse's tail. (*Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris (1405-49)*, 237).[3]

In a later text (Spelman 1626, 239), Gypsies were portrayed as "hideously black, burnt by the sun, filthy in their clothing, and dirty in all their habits" (*homines nigredine deformes, excocti sole, immundi veste, & usu rerum omnium foedi*).

Similar examples of official written records stigmatising Gypsies can be found throughout Western Europe. They contributed to establish a negative portrayal based on a range of stereotypical features that persist until today.

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[3] The original text reads: "[L]es enfants d'iceux [...] presque tous avaient les deux oreilles percées, et en chacune oreille un anel d'argent [...] les hommes étaient très nours, les cheveux crépés, les plus laides femmes qu'on pût voir et les plus noires; toutes avaient le visage deplaié, cheveux noirs comme la queue d'un cheval".

The first set of features that stands out emphasises the 'otherness' of Gypsies' physical appearance, marked by 'blackness' and 'ugliness'. We know that, in early modern times, colour perception was associated with a complex set of symbols and popular beliefs. At the time, a direct link was established between inner qualities and outward appearances, and physical appearances were thought to be reflections of an internal state. In other words, the darkness of the Gypsies symbolised more than a physical quality: it was an indication of their dangerous and evil nature. Apparently, this is confirmed by the belief that the Gypsies descended from Ham, one of the three sons of Noah, cursed by his father and condemned to wander the earth forever. Gypsies were also accused of "disguising" themselves as pilgrims and many believed that they were "born to be thieves" (Fraser 1995[2]). From the start, European authorities regarded Gypsies as strangers and outsiders. They were seen as *radically different* from the local population, so different that they were thought to be closer to 'beasts' than other humans. The dehumanization of minority groups underlines at least two processes: on the one hand, the symbolic displacement of Gypsies from the body of European civilization; on the other hand, the use of a powerful labeling device through which the settled majority was able to establish a narrative of ethnic superiority vis-à-vis nomadic groups.

There is another unsettling feature emphasized by the non-Gypsies: the uncertainty of their origins, which gave rise to a range of divergent and often misleading ideas about their supposed homeland. This is evident in the two texts quoted above: the first one hinted at an Indian origin of the Gypsies, while the second one pointed out that they came from Egypt. Incidentally, the term 'Gypsies', which is still used today as an umbrella term to refer to all different Romani groups, is a contraction of the word 'Egyptians'.

Why was it so important for the non-Gypsies to establish a precise place of origin for the Gypsies? From a sedentary perspective, a well-established geographical origin is a basic component in the formation of ethnic groups. However, Gypsies seemed to have no strong attachment and no clear memory of a specific homeland. This was regarded with great perplexity by the settled population. And – last but not least – what was unsettling for the European population were the Gypsies' 'peculiar' social habits, and in particular their nomadic economic and dwelling practices. A number of occupations carried out by Gypsies, such as forging, entertaining and fortune telling, were regarded as dangerous and included among the so-called "forbidden trades", the *negotia illicita* (Le Goff 1980, 59–60). From the sixteenth century onwards, Gypsy nomadism was in itself sufficient ground for a process of othering and punishment.

Nomadic groups of Gypsies were part of a larger group of 'marginals' (including day workers, beggars, itinerant monks, and pilgrims), that moved

around Europe during the Middle Ages and the early modern period. In medieval society the wandering habits of these marginal subjects was largely tolerated, and the peripatetic way of life of pilgrims and hermits was regarded as socially and culturally acceptable, as they embodied the ideal of the *homo viator* (Ladner 1967). However, within a medieval *Weltanschauung,* where the communities shaped the individuals' social identity and granted them their value, nomadism was not accepted as a way of life, but was rather perceived as a temporary, exceptional state that could only be accepted for religious motives:

> in the social imagination of people of the Middle Ages, the fact of living in one place, of being rooted lastingly in the same locality and in the same community of persons, had a positive value, since people's sense of order and social security was founded on blood ties and neighborly connections. (Geremek 1990, 348)[4]

When Gypsies began to appear in Western Europe, the religious climate began to change (due to the Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation), and the attitude towards pilgrims and the wandering poor became increasingly intolerant (Geremek 1980, 71). A distinction began to emerge between the so-called 'deserving' poor (the old, the sick and so forth), who were worthy of assistance, and the 'undeserving' poor (also called "false" or "sturdy beggars" and "vagabonds") who were able to work, but instead chose to lead an unproductive way of life. The Gypsies were included in this second category and were considered as a threat to society, as they were often accused of bringing desease, criminality and social unrest.

In many respects, the fate of the Gypsies resembles that of other ethnic minorities such as Jews and Moors. In particular, both Gypsies and Jews were non-national minorities; they were a scattered, itinerant and stateless people and they both stubbornly retained their separate identities and refused to abandon their customs. Like other 'marginal' groups, the Gypsies failed to fit into the new political order. Their cultural and social habits, in particular their nomadism, were at odds with the centralising efforts of the emerging European states. It is in this context that Gypsies' diversity was emphasized and conceptualised in terms of 'deviance' from the accepted (aesthetic, social and cultural) standard norm. At this time pre-existing stereotypes and symbolic markers of the 'otherness' of Gypsies (especially those stigmatizing their primitive and canny nature) were reactivated and deployed in the legal domain, to enforce a policy of exclusion of the Gypsies from the body of the State.

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[4] This approach is still at the roots of today's immigration debate in American and European politics: see *supra* the reference to Papazoglou 2019's assessment of the legacy of the 1980s communitarism *vs.* the 1970s Rawl's reappraisal of liberalism in Stovall's contribution to this volume, Chap. 9: §9 (*Ed. note*).

2. FROM EXCLUSION TO ASSIMILATION: WESTERN-EUROPEAN STATE POLICIES AGAINST GYPSIES

Like other marginal groups, Gypsies were excluded from the state-building process at different levels. First, the construction of national borders was achieved through the banishment of transnational, non-territorial minorities (such as the Gypsies). Second, the creation of a unified administrative system entailed stricter control over its citizens, including their movements, economic activities and social status. And third, the rise of modern nation-states brought with it the need to introduce taxes to raise money (for the functioning of the state, the army, etc.). The Gypsies, because of their nomadic habits and activities, were able to avoid this form of centralised control. Their 'unwillingness' to fit into the new social and political order ultimately led to the outlawing of their whole way of life.

The sheer volume of anti-Gypsy measures enacted throughout Western Europe between the late fifteenth century and the eighteenth century indicates that state authorities were concerned about the geographical mobility of their Gypsy population. They were anxious to bring it under control and tried to achieve this by either forbidding them from entering European countries or charging them to leave under threat of incarceration and corporal punishment.

In Italy, a large number of decrees and legal measures against Gypsies (variously named by local authorities as 'zingani', 'Cingani' or 'Cingari') began to appear at the end of the fifteenth century. An edict issued in April 1493 under the rule of Ludovico il Moro in the State of Milan ordered them to leave immediately and threatened that they would be hanged if they refused to do so. In 1570, an edict issued in the Duchy of Modena went as far as inciting the local population to incarcerate the Cingari, to rob them and beat them. A further edict issued in Milan on 11 July 1657 referred to the Cingari as the "most dangerous people who ha[d] ever entered the state", and ordered them to leave the territory in three days' time, under pain of imprisonment for five years for men and of public flogging for women.

Extreme anti-Gypsy measures were also enacted in the Republic of Venice. For example, a resolution issued in 1558 by the Council of the Pregadi established that, "considering the evil disposition of the Gypsies, and the annoyance, damages, and manifold troubles that our faithful subjects sustain from their intercourse" (considerando la mala qualità dei Cingani, e la molestia, danni e molti disturbi, che ricevono li fedeli nostri dalla loro practica), they should be expelled at once from the territory of the Republic. Crucially, this edict established that "the said Gypsies, both men and women, found in our territories, may be with impunity slain, without the perpetrators of such murders to incur any penalty whatever"[5].

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[5]   Extract and translation of this edict taken from the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* (1), 1 (1890-91), 358–359.

Figure 2
German sign warning off Gypsies
(Archive Stadtmuseum Nördlingen)
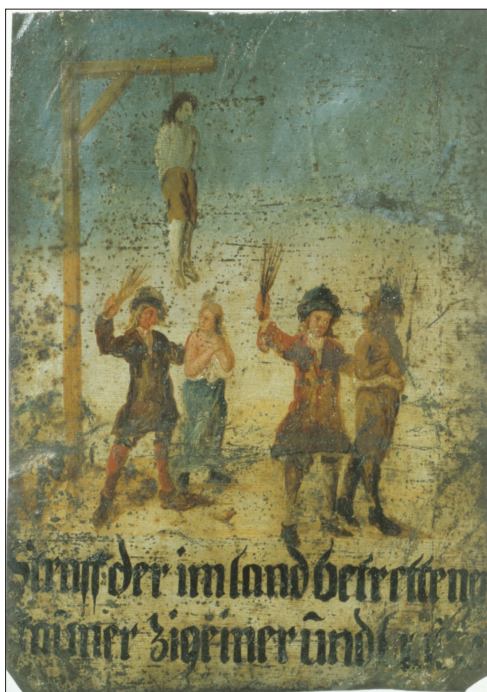
In addition to written bans and expulsion orders, non-Gypsy authorities displayed explicit anti-Gypsy signs and visual warnings. Such warnings were placed at strategic locations such as road crossings, city gates, town halls, church doors, taverns and other public places (Opfermann 2007, 141). They usually included both an inscription and a visual representation of the punishment for criminals and transgressors, to convey more effectively their message to a non-literate readership, particularly the Gypsies.

The figure above is an example of eighteenth-century *Zigeunerwarntafel*, a visual warning aimed at preventing Gypsies, vagabonds and rogues from entering the country. The wooden panel shows gallows on which hangs a Gypsy, while in the foreground a man and a woman are being flogged. As in the case of written texts, the *Zigeunerwarntafeln* targeted Gypsies based on their ethnicity and officially outlawed their nomadic practices.

Similar anti-Gypsy warnings are still in use today. They can be observed at the entrance to urban areas and are used to demarcate so-called 'anti-Gypsy territories', that is, territories declared off-limits to the Roma by non-Gypsy authorities (Piasere 2005[2], 164-174).

Despite their severity, exclusionary policies failed in removing the so-called 'Gypsy problem'. In fact, the Gypsies' spatial and social marginality largely suited their socio-economic practices, which entailed the provision of goods and services to non-Gypsies in an itinerant fashion.

Once the authorities realised the ineffectiveness of their banishing methods, it became increasingly clear that a radical change in approach was necessary. This led to a major shift in official policies over the following centuries: *policies of exclusion* were gradually replaced by policies of *forced inclusion*, which ultimately aimed to assimilate the Gypsies into mainstream society. It is in this context that existing stereotypes of Gypsy primitivism were invoked once again to validate the official use of education as a tool to 'reform' and 'civilise' them.

The policies implemented by Maria Theresia of Austria were a radical attempt to apply these principles to assimilate the Gypsies. Under her rule, Gypsies were supposed to stop "behaving like Gypsies": they had to leave behind their nomadic life and their traditional occupations, together with their traditional clothes and eating habits (Mayerhofer 1988). In 1773 marriage between Gypsies was prohibited by law. They were also forbidden to speak their own language and had to adopt the language spoken in their host countries. To put it differently, Gypsies had to abandon all the 'aberrant' features that interfered with their full emancipation: in other words, what formed their ethnic identity.

These enlightenment policies were based on the premise that it was possible to reform the Gypsies by forcing them to relinquish their 'unsettled manner of life'. They were also based on the belief that any hope of improving their condition ultimately lay in their successful education, which is why young Gypsies became the focus of special educational measures. All Gypsy children were to be forcibly removed from their parents at the age of five and entrusted to peasant families who were compensated by the authorities for their services. Such measures are by no means confined to the past: the forced removal of Gypsy children from their parents continued during the twentieth century, until as recently as the 1970s, leaving a traumatic mark on the cultural memory of the Gypsies of central Europe (Tauber 2002, 108). Quite ironically, non-Gypsy authorities were doing precisely what Gypsies were traditionally accused of: stealing children.

Policies of forced sedentarisation, manual work and physical punishment signalled a change in the official attitude towards Gypsies. Clearly, compulsory sedentarisation was primarily aimed at controlling nomadic Gypsies and preventing other Gypsies from entering the country. However, the ultimate goal was to *assimilate* them into mainstream society and *suppressing* their ethnic identity altogether. In the end, such policies failed to achieve the expected result: the Gypsies did not relinquish their cultural roots. The assimilationist approach, however, forced them to hide their identity, thus 'making themselves invisible'

to non-Gypsies. Rejected by the majority, the Gypsies have been confined to 'residual' spaces at the margins of dominant society. And while in the past this position might have been fairly compatible with their nomadic way of life, it later became clear that, especially in countries such as Italy, such marginalisation would come at great social cost: the creation of a vicious circle of poverty and the factual segregation of the Roma population in 'urban ghettos'. In fact, the basic logic underlying the creation of 'Gypsy camps' ('campi nomadi') has been unveiled on several occasions: the aprioristic belief that all Romani groups are nomadic, and that therefore they need to be placed in a separate location, away from city dwellers. There is, however, a great difference between these 'nomad camps' and the encampments in the past, which were close to non-Romani villages and cities, allowing the proximity with the non-Gypsies needed to carry out services and other economic activities. The main objective of the 'camps system' is to relegate the Romani population to remote and marginal areas where inter-ethnic exchange is minimal.

3. From a Paradigm of Deviance to a Paradigm of Resistance

Faced with the constant threat of assimilation and persecution, the Roma have nevertheless been able to preserve their way of life, adapting to their changed conditions, but ultimately retaining their cultural distinctiveness. For this reason, they have been defined as "resistance people" (Asséo 1989).

How can we account for the centuries-old resilience of the Roma? How can we explain what has been called the "puzzle of Roma persistence" (Stewart 1997b)? The resilience of the Romani people is neither mysterious nor fortuitous, but is the result of several concurring factors that need to be understood within the wider context of social relations between Gypsies and non-Gypsies.

First, there are some external factors that help to elucidate the dynamics contributing to the 'survival' of the Roma in a relentlessly hostile environment. Despite the virulence and profusion of anti-Gypsy policies enacted in Europe from the fifteenth century onwards, they ultimately failed to eradicate the Romani presence, let alone assimilate Roma and Sinti into European society. This should be seen partly as a consequence of the unsystematic, sporadic nature of these polices, but was equally a result of the refusal of local governments to allow Gypsies to settle, which gave rise to a vicious circle preventing Gypsies from pursuing their itinerant way of life while at the same time trying to prevent contact with the settled majority. Crucially however, such policies were doomed to fail because the Gypsies understandably refused to abandon their way of life and be separated from their children and families.

It has been suggested that the Roma "seemed to have survived in spite, and perhaps even *because* of persecution by 'settled Europe'" (Quintana & Floyd 1972, 34; PT emphasis). There is some truth to this statement. Being subjected to the constant threat of assimilation can engender a sense of cultural cohesiveness and even a sense of pride in having been able to stand up and survive against all the odds. Admittedly, the Roma have no state of their own to protect them, no social and cultural capital, no diplomatic weight to exert influence in the political arena. But this does not prevent them from developing a strong sense of "moral superiority" vis-à-vis the powerful but often credulous Gaje (non-Gypsies)[6]. This has less to do with abiding to an abstract set of rules and qualities and has more to do with the performance of *Romanipe*, or Gypsiness, in everyday interactions with the non-Gypsies. Such moral superiority manifests itself in 'doing things in the Romani way' that immediately identifies in-group members and becomes the vehicle through which the Roma reassert their distinctiveness from the non-Gypsies. This is also conveyed and reinforced through the oral tradition, within which the Gypsy's talent for outwitting credulous non-Gypsies appears to be a consolidated trope[7].

Furthermore, when assessing the resilience of the Romani people, we should acknowledge internal factors, that is, factors that are inherent to their specific cultural and social system. In the case of Roma, survival is the result of ethnic strategies that have proved remarkably successful. These include their great flexibility and ability to modify their habits and cultural practices according to changing historical and social circumstances. According to ethnographic research, such characteristics are particularly evident among itinerant and peripatetic groups (Berland & Rao 2004, Gmelch 1986, Okely 1983, Berland & Salo 1986, Rao 1987).

A clear example of Roma's adaptability can be observed in the social and economic context, where they have displayed, similarly to other peripatetics, "flexibility and sensitivity to the elements comprising the social and ecocultural environments of those communities among which they maintain themselves" (Berland & Salo 1986, 3)[8]. This has involved Romani groups becoming specialised in a variety of occupations and activities that can be generally grouped within

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[6]   On Gypsies' sense of "moral superiority" as a strategy to distinguish themselves from the dominant group, see Sutherland 1975, Okely 1983, Williams 1993, Stewart 1997a and 1997b, Gay y Blasco 1999.

[7]   See, among others, the studies of Giulio Soravia and Jane Dick-Zatta in relation to oral narratives of Italian Roma and Sinti, Jelena Čvorović's research on Serbian Roma and Diane Tong's *Gypsy Folktales*.

[8]   Peripatetics are endogamous groups who "employ regular spatial mobility as an economic strategy" (Rao 1987, 1). They occupy a particular peripatetic niche, that is, "a demand for specialized services/goods which sedentary communities cannot, or are unwilling to support on a fulltime basis" (Berland 1987, 248).

the categories of trading, seasonal work, crafts and entertainment (Mayall 1988, Willems 1997).

Traditionally, Gypsies were blacksmiths and metal workers, artisans, musicians and horse dealers. They also took on seasonal jobs and engaged in occasional work when and where it was necessary. And, most importantly, they were able to adjust their occupational skills to the ever-changing social and economic landscape: the advent of the industrial revolution and agricultural capitalism meant that traditional trades had to be replaced by newly emerged opportunities which enabled them to retain their self-employed status.

Most of the occupations carried out by Gypsies filled an economic niche located at the margins of the dominant economy. Like other ethnic middlemen groups and itinerant traders in Medieval and early modern Europe, Roma/Gypsies filled an existing gap between supply and demand. They fulfilled a crucial function in European economy and society, providing a stimulus to the development of local industries and contributing to connecting rural communities that would have remained otherwise isolated (Mayall 1988).

The economic adaptability of the Roma/Gypsies enabled them to respond creatively to technological and economic changes without becoming entirely excluded from or assimilated into a wage- and salary-based economy. Such behaviour is analogous to the economic and social behaviour of hunting and gathering peoples whose survival depends on their ability to successfully adapt to the natural environment. It is also directly correlated to the flexible structure of their social system and the transnational, diasporic character of their communities (Toninato 2009).

As has been remarked, Roma and Sinti do not constitute just 'one people', but a widely dispersed mosaic of groups speaking different dialects of the Romani language as well as a variety of non-Romani languages, and sharing with the surrounding societies a whole range of cultural traits[9]. The fragmented nature of the Romani diaspora is further complicated by a difficult relationship with non-Gypsies and a general lack of integration in their 'host' countries[10]. The reason

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[9]   The dispersion of the Roma is mirrored in the variety of terms and ethnonyms used by Romani groups in defining themselves. Depending on their geographical location, Gypsies call themselves *Roma* in central, southern and eastern Europe, *Romanichals* in England, the US, Australia and New Zealand, *Sinti* in Germany, Austria, central and northern Italy, and in southern France, *Kalé* in Spain, *Manuś* in France and so forth.

[10]   The Roma and Sinti constitute Europe's largest ethnic minority group and are the least represented and the least protected among the other European minorities. Reports commissioned by EU institutions have revealed that the Roma in the European Union suffer severe discrimination and social exclusion in at least four key areas: education, employment, housing and healthcare (European Commission 2004). The report has also revealed widespread anti-Romani racism and recurrent human rights infringements, as well as violations of civil and political rights against Romani minorities in Europe. As the report demonstrates, such violations not only occur in the new

why Roma/Gypsies managed to survive multiple displacements and persecution without the protection of a nation-state cannot be fully grasped unless we are prepared to relinquish a way of regarding identity, and national identity in particular, as inextricably associated with a nation and a territory[11]. Against any primordialism argument, which contends that nations are original and natural phenomena, the case of non-territorial, non-state ethnic minorities such as the Roma/Gypsies shows that there is no necessary connection between a people, a territory, and a language. Theirs is an example of a deterritorialised multilingual community lacking two key aspects of the classical diaspora paradigm: a direct connection with its original homeland and "the development of a return movement that gains collective approbation" (Cohen 1997, 26).

For Roma/Gypsies, the experience of living in a diaspora appears to be both a permanent condition and a strategy of survival. On the other hand, their dispersion came about as a dynamic adaptation and a diversified response to past and ongoing changes in the social and economic environment. As already mentioned, Romani groups differ widely with respect to their pattern of settlement, their economic and cultural practices, and their language. However, despite the dispersed features of Romani communities, there are powerful centripetal forces and agents that preserve intra-group cohesion and provide them with a sense of common belonging.

In the absence of other strong forms of territorial attachment, the social role of the family is paramount. The Roma's social structure consists of a 'web of families': the extended family and the nuclear family. Families provide protection, education and economic solidarity. In a context of dispersal and social fragmentation, mobility ensures that family ties and alliances between families are established and maintained. In addition, Romani groups rely on strong feelings of solidarity and cooperation among their group members. In fact, their survival depends on "the commitment of each individual and family to his fellow community members". It is what anthropologists call an "ethics of sharing" which entails "being open to the needs of others" and helping those facing economic hardship (Stewart 1997b, 88-89).

It can be argued that the key to their resilience lies in the very diversity of Romani life (Liegeois 1986) and that the kaleidoscopic nature of Roma/Gypsy cultures has been key to their successful adaptation overtime (Lockwood 1986). Indeed, the wide dispersion of Romani groups and constant interethnic

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Central and Eastern EU member-states, but also in older EU member states. The situation of the Roma in Italy is critical. Italy is known in Europe as 'Campland', the country of 'camps for nomads' (campi-nomadi) which is where many Roma are forced to live.

[11]   For a critique of national identity as an essentialist construct see in particular Anderson 1983 and Gellner 1983.

contact enabled Romani culture and identity not simply to survive, but to thrive (Silverman 1988, Okely 1997). As Judith Okely has remarked:

> [we] have in the Gypsies or the Roma a centuries-old tradition of interlocking cultures between the Gypsies and non-Gypsies variously named Gadzos or gorgios by Gypsies [...]. They are both an example of *culture in the borderlands* and of continuous meaning-making in the face of a dominant encircling system with the greater political and eco power. (Okely 2003, 153; PT emphasis)

As an example of 'culture in the borderlands', Roma/Gypsies need to continuously engage in interactions and exchanges across the ethnic boundary: from this perspective, their survival is based not on isolation and lack of contact with the dominant culture, but on boundary-crossing.

4. Contemporary Resilient Strategies Among Western European Roma

Another key aspect of Roma/Gypsies' resilience analysed in this chapter focuses on their ability to enact a range of strategies which entail not only successful adaptation to changing historical and social circumstances, but innovation and creativity in two domains: the political and literary field.

The first evidence of Romani political mobilisation dates back to the beginning of the twentieth-century in Eastern Europe. In the period following the second World War, especially in the post-Communist period, Gypsy associations have been created all over Europe. In 1971 the First World Romani Congress (WRC) was held in London. On this occasion the congress introduced some crucial symbols of *Romanestan*, the Romani 'nation': a Romani anthem (*Djélem, Djélem/* We travelled on) and a Romani flag. A few years later, in 1978, the International Romani Union (IRU) was established.

It is only during the past few decades, however, that Romani activists succeeded in giving rise to a coordinated international intelligentsia, whose common aims are to fight discrimination and marginalisation and to give voice to their people's claims. They intend to do so by adopting strategies for the political mobilisation of the Roma on an ethnic basis (Acton 1974 and Acton 1997, Goodwin 2004, McGarry 2010 and Klímová-Alexander 2017). In this context a Romani diaspora discourse started to emerge.

At the core of Romani diaspora discourse is the belief in the Indian origin of the Roma/Gypsies. This belief may be traced back to the late Middle Ages but gained currency only at the end of the eighteenth century and is based on striking analogies between *Romanes*, the Romani language, and Indo-Aryan languages. This linguistic evidence was used as evidence of the route taken by

the Gypsies during their migrations from India towards Europe. The idea of an 'Indian connection' survived well into the twentieth century. Today, most Romani academics and political activists uphold the notion of a Romani diaspora that originated in India and promote the diffusion of a common Romani language. This view is held in particular by the activists of the International Romani Union who argue that the Roma constitute a deterritorialised, stateless diaspora of Indian origins[12].

In 2000, during the Fifth Romani World Congress, the IRU declared that the Romani people constitute a 'non-territorial', stateless Nation. The features of the Romani Nation, a nation that 'does not want to become a state' (Acton & Klimová 2001, 216-217) differ considerably from the European paradigm of the nation-state to the point that, some argue, it stands "in dialectical opposition to the limitations of the nation state, because of its 'trans-national' character and its 'non-territoriality'" (Acton 2006, 27). In their "Declaration of Nation", IRU representatives made no territorial claims, nor did they envisage a nationalist project, but rather appealed to a principle of self-determination in formulating a demand for recognition and political representation of the Roma at the transnational level[13].

The rise of political activism among the Roma/Gypsies fulfils a number of crucial functions. It establishes them as political actors bringing Romani issues to the forefront of the international agenda. It also enables Roma/Gypsies to regain some form of control over the discourse about their identity, meeting their need of speaking for themselves and of being recognized as a people in their own right.

The emergence of a Romani political discourse constitutes a good example of a resilient ethnic strategy based on an innovative, strategic interpretation of the transnational nature of the Romani population, and "a bold attempt to turn the fluidity in national identities throughout Europe" to their advantage (Younge 2000, 15). If properly grounded on democratic consensus and stripped of any essentialist connotations, claims for the recognition of the Roma/Gypsies as a non-territorial nation may provide them with "legal anchorage" (Pogány 2012), which is "intended to raise the political profile of Roma in international political, diplomatic and legal *fora*" (Pogány 2012, 379). In addition, such claims also complement current efforts to de-territorialise and de-nationalise minority rights and the development of a legal discourse centered on concepts of post-ethnic, post-national citizenship (Kymlicka 2007, 227).

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[12]   For further discussion of the notion of a Gypsy diaspora see Toninato 2009.

[13]   On the risks and paradoxes involved in Romani diasporic discourse see Willems & Lucassen 2000; Younge 2000.

Another innovative strategy through which Roma/Gypsies gained a voice in the public sphere (Hirschman 1970) while also deconstructing anti-Gypsy stereotypes and prejudices is the use of writing for literary purposes. Despite stereotypes that characterise them as people 'without writing', ethnographic findings show that Roma, Sinti and Travellers have developed a deep understanding of literacy (both alphabetic and non-alphabetic) and of its socio-political implications (Toninato 2014). The rise of an 'autochthonous' Romani written literature dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century. It comprises a wide variety of genres and is characterised by a linguistically hybrid corpus, mirroring the diasporic features of Romani communities[14].

As a result of historical experience and cultural flexibility, Roma/Gypsies tend to be bilingual or multilingual, and Romani authors tend to deploy a range of multicultural skills in their literary endeavours. Their works do not merely result from adapting to a literate environment, but stem from the creative appropriation and refashioning of a literary space across multiple linguistic and semiotic codes. Writing in more than one language enables Roma writers to challenge and relativise the inter-ethnic divide. This implies a continuous manipulation of linguistic boundaries, also within the text, as can be seen in the following poem by Damian Le Bas:

> [...] When I was twelve year old I wrote
> A poem about the sea, and never mentioned boats
> But I did mention '*Gypsum*': It's a stone, a frost-white crystal.
> What was Gypsum like? I didn't know back then, I guessed.
> But I thought it was crystalline, and, like the sea,
> Possessed of a frosty, foamy zest (good guess, I says
> To meself, *ta-divves*- Now, today).
> So that's what *mandi* wrote:
> 'The shore receives its cleansing Gypsum glaze'.
> 'This works, perhaps, a little obscurely',
> Scrawled the *jinnapen-mush* upon the page
> In *jinnapen-mush's* (oops, 'a teacher's') *lolli* (ah: 'red' ink), so you would think
> He meant it very surely
> I never told him 'Gypsum' was a special word for me
> Though it comes from *Gypsos* (chalk, in Greek, you see)
> Especially
> Because it sounded like the English word '*Egyptian'*
> (And our special, shorter version, '*Gypsy'*)
> That refers

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[14] *Romanes*, a language of Sanskrit origins which bears remarkable affinities to languages spoken in contemporary India, is highly fragmented and has been influenced in the course of time by a number of European and non-European languages (Iranian languages, Greek, Romanian, German, Italian and others). This has led to the creation of not just one, but a multiplicity of Romani writing systems.

In ethnic terms
To me, and to
My family[15].

This multilingual text can be read as an example of deterritorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari 1986) within which the poet succeeds in destabilising the major language. It does so through code-switching and an etymological word-play centred around ethnically charged hetero-definitions ('Egyptian', 'Gypsy'), which are questioned and reduced to their mere signifier. The result is a cross-lexical interplay that acts as a powerful strategy of cultural criticism.

A further textual strategy used by Romani authors to challenge 'Gypsy' stereotypes is the use of subversive mimicry (Bhabha 1994), a strategy whereby the 'colonized' apparently echoes the colonial images and practices of the colonizer while at the same time retaining their fundamental ambivalence, thus revealing the ambivalence of colonial discourse while at the same time disrupting its authority (Bhabha 1994, 88). In the context of Romani poetry, mimicry operates within hybrid texts through which the author engages with hetero-ascribed images and stereotypes and manages to invest them with a new meaning (Toninato 2004 and Toninato 2014). The poet also manages to challenge the monological structure of fictional representations of Gypsy identity, in which the 'Gypsies'' point of view is always absent, by including the point of view of both the observer and the observed, thus retaining the ambivalence of the post-colonial discourse as outlined by Bhabha.

Finally, at the more general level, the emergence of a Romani literary field has played a crucial role in the process of political autonomisation of the Romani people, allowing the Romani voice to enter the public sphere despite enduring social exclusion and lack of political recognition of Romani minorities. From their marginal position, Romani writers have been able to carve out an alternative space of literary enunciation for themselves, by turning their life 'on the borders' into a site of syncretic linguistic and cultural practices that destabilize the monological and monolingual features of the dominant literary field and opens up new discursive spaces for transcultural dialogue.

Concluding Remarks

Looking at the relationship between state authorities and Romani minorities from an historical perspective, we observe that, from the fifteenth century onwards, Western European states adopted policies aimed at excluding the 'Gypsies' from settled society. These measures were based on a binary logic that

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[15]   From the unpublished poem *Words I Like* by Damian Le Bas; PT emphasis.

regarded them as 'inferior' and savages. These anti-Gypsy policies were marked by violence and culminated in the persecution, the attempted assimilation, and ultimately the marginalisation of Romani minorities throughout Europe.

The assimilationist and segregationist approach to Gypsies' difference, however, failed to achieve its objectives. In the face of relentlessly hostile attitudes, Roma and Sinti groups have shown remarkable cultural persistence, due to a number of resilient ethnic strategies. First, the dispersed character of the European Gypsy population and their flexible social structure – complemented by a strong sense of in-group solidarity – allowed them to negotiate their ethnic specificity while maintaining the Gypsy/non-Gypsy ethnic divide. Furthermore, the flexibility of their cultural and social system enabled them to actively adapt to changing socio-political circumstances without forsaking their ethnic distinctiveness.

For centuries, European societies have defined themselves in opposition to Roma (and Jews), representing them as 'the other within', or, in sociological terms, as 'internal strangers' (Simmel 1908 and Simmel 1950) whose rights to an autonomous cultural and social life have been constantly denied. To this purpose, dominant versions of 'Gypsy' identities have acted as a negative mirror of 'civilized' values, supporting the creation of a model, that of the nation-state, based on territorial closure and relying on a homogenizing, nationalizing logic. The historical evidence, however, indicates that European societies were neither homogeneous nor static, and shows that Roma and Sinti, despite being labelled as 'deviant' and a threat to the settled Europeans, were in fact engaging in a range of occupations and activities that were functional to their local economy and responded to the actual needs of settled communities. Roma/Gypsies' positive contribution to European culture is also evident in their role in preserving non-Romani folkloric and musical heritage (Cotten 1954, Vekerdi1976, Leblon 2003, Čvorović 2010, Silverman 2012, Tong 1989). Defining Roma as a "pariah" group (Weber 1920, 13) fails to highlight the fact that Roma's marginality and social exclusion is mainly the result of historical, political and social processes imposed from the outside (Weyrauch 2001, 6) and runs the risk of overshadowing the positive (and reciprocal) influences and outcomes of Roma/non-Roma interactions. It also partakes of the dangers of viewing Roma/Gypsies as a mere projection of our age-old fear of the nomad, or as helpless victims of Western European civilization.

It is high time we acknowledged the active role of Roma and Sinti and their positive contributions to European civilization. It has been rightly observed that

the long association and intermingling with other peoples in Europe have indelibly marked their language, their ancestry, their culture and their society. After so many centuries, they have every claim to be considered 'of Europe'. They are indeed among the continent's few pan-Europeans (Fraser 1995[2], 9).

The diasporic feature of the Romani population and the truly transnational nature of their heritage entails that they "may well have known Europe better and more intimately than many Europeans did" (MacLaughlin 1999, 42). Until this is recognised, we will not be able to fully understand the complex historical interconnections that gave rise to the multifaceted European cultural landscape.

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PART IV

Injured Identities
and Histories of Discrimination

The Exhausted Intertext as Cultural Memory: Erased and Displaced Identities in Caryl Phillips' *The Nature of Blood* and *The Lost Child**

ROBERTA GEFTER WONDRICH

Introductory Remarks

A consideration of Caryl Phillips' profile as one of the most important contemporary writers in English today should mention Pieter Vermeulen's remarkable synthesis of "the vast scope of Phillips's imagination and archival labour" (Vermeulen 2019, 38). As his work has constantly focussed on issues of belonging, origins, displacement, some of his most significant works weave together different narratives set in different places in Europe and abroad and at different moments in time, dramatizing the condition of unbelonging and identitarian loss (and particularly of the African diaspora and the slave trade) with recognizably postmodernist and postcolonial novelistic strategies. His preoccupation with racial and religious difference, identitarian precariousness and the historical process of the construction of nationality is pervasive, and very subtly articulated in his entire career through the expression of "some specific forms of double consciousness" which Paul Gilroy identifies as a

requirement of a Black and British cultural identity (Gilroy 1993, 1). Two novels in particular, marking his earlier and most recent output, probe into the aporias of historical and societal identity in the present through some recurrent tropes and figures, and remarkably engage with the canonical intertext and two of the greatest traumas of modern history: colonial slavery and the Holocaust. These are the ambitious historical novel *The Nature of Blood* (1997), which features a rewriting of *Othello* and two narratives of the Jewish diaspora set respectively in the fifteenth century and 1948, and the recent *The Lost Child* (2015) which combines a sort of prequel to *Wuthering Heights,* a biofictional dramatization of Emily Brontë's last days and an ill-fated love story between a black Caribbean and a middle class English woman in 1960s England.

Featuring a section which reads as prequel of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, the eccentric, anti-normative most celebrated English mid-19th century romance, *The Lost Child* explores the potential and the limits of both the source text itself and of its protagonist, the dark Heathcliff, as an icon of otherness and contested identity, while also drawing from and recreating other literary and non-literary sources such as a short story by Jean Rhys, a police story of the 1960s English Midlands and many pop songs of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Brontë's masterpiece is, in fact, a crucial intertext which was both formative in Phillips' literary *Bildung* and a key text in late twentieth-century literary dramatizations of British identity. Emily Brontë features in the opening and penultimate chapters of the novel, in the context of the Haworth household, and embodies a sort of unifying, although deeply troubled, authorial consciousness.

As Françoise Král suggests, the prequel as a contemporary fictional genre is not only to be considered as a critical reappraisal of official history, but also of a personal and authorial reception of the source text, "of one's memory and understanding of the canonical texts one has grown up with" (Král 2019, 53). This essay considers precisely this comprehensive – both subjective and cultural – understanding of the canonical intertext as both a tribute and an act of emancipation (Král 2019, 53). It examines this key aspect through the complexity of Phillips' rewritings of *Othello* and *Wuthering Heights* in the context of his exploration of a problematic notion of transnational and transhistorical identity.

Both novels interweave different narratives of unbelonging (a distinctive trope in Phillips' work, as mentioned above) and the search for an impossible rootedness, and dramatize racial, ethnic and religious difference as an existential plight produced by colonial history and its traumas. This is a core concern of Phillips', as a novelist and an intellectual, who repeatedly thematised such identitarian difference as deeply distressing and disabling for his protagonists, who ultimately fail in their struggle to come to terms with it and reach out to a deeper human connectedness with their families and social environment.

As a "novelist who engages with Britain's past and sense of identity as with the collective amnesia which has often characterised fictional as well as historical delineations of the British landscape" (Král 2019, 53), Phillips uses issues of race, exile and identity in the multicultural world of the past and the present as conduits for a radical meditation on the human condition in history.

1. RACE, IDENTITY AND CULTURAL MEMORY THROUGH THE INTERTEXT IN *THE NATURE OF BLOOD* AND *THE LOST CHILD*

This essay investigates how Phillips' literary agenda thrives on the traditionally problematic connection of the intertextual engagement with the source text, mainly through forms of novel expansion[1] and rewrites – specifically the prequel and the biofictional – as a subtle, sophisticated critique to the idea of the intertext itself as a matrix of cultural memory.

The conventional notion of the postcolonial rewriting of the canonical text – be it a prequel, sequel or coquel – has been largely conceived in ethical and ideological terms as a counterdiscursive strategy which has been represented as a "rerighting" of the Eurocentric, andro-centric, metropolitan imagination underpinning colonial and non-colonial literature, to quote Chantal Zabus' influential formula (Zabus 2006). Moving away from conventional literary strategies of counterreadings of master plots, Phillips' fiction foregrounds a far more complex, searching and at times ambivalent engagement with his intertexts and his cultural background, and he does so in an only apparently less ambitious form in his penultimate novel to date, *The Lost Child* (2015).

Significantly, in two different stages of his career, Phillips has considered two key figures of 'the other' in the English canon, both of which embody some of the most recurrent dark sides of his main characters. Othello and Heathcliff are displaced, other, and ultimately self-consciously destructive characters, and they refract that constellation of Phillips' contemporary subjects which feature the traditional figures of the orphan, the outcast and the exile who get lost or remain adrift in environments which disown or erase their identitarian heritage and their possibility to belong. The intertext is thus not primarily a cardinal feature in the construction of the new text as the object of a revisionist process – postcolonial/postmodern/neo-historical –, but rather a matrix, where hints and elements of ambiguity, instability and ambivalence are retrieved, amplified and transfigured to produce a critique of the displaced history of oppression and amnesia of the West.

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[1]   See a recent overview of the phenomenon in Anglophone literatures in Parey 2019, 10.

Among the distinctive traits of Phillips' literary agenda and his specific use of intertextuality the question of race is constantly present as part of his conception of identity in history, hence developing both in a transnational and transhistorical perspective. In the two novels considered in this contribution, this bond is central and confirms the continuity not only of this concern but of his literary politics in joining different cultural and historical dimensions. Phillips' writing constantly dwells on how race is a permanent marker of difference which defines the racial other as outsider. However, his protagonists, especially the female ones, are above all social and cultural misfits, who progressively lose themselves, adrift in a hostile or unsympathetic human environment. In his pamphlet-travelogue *The European Tribe*, published in 1987, Phillips famously wrote: "the Jew is still Europe's nigger" (*ET* 53). The connection between the history of the Jews in Europe and the history of the Blacks is a structuring one in Phillips' work, a powerful ideal link which probes deep into the question of identity in the European and transatlantic world and which seems to suggest a metonymical rather than metaphorical view of history (Craps 2008, 198). As Ann Whitehead points out in her study of trauma fiction, Phillips may have referred to Paul Gilroy's analysis and advocation for dialogue between black and Jewish cultures in turning to Renaissance Venice as his fictional setting, a choice which allowed him an intertextual use of Shakespeare's black and Jewish protagonists, Othello and Shylock (Whitehead 2004, 103). Moreover, the Mediterranean setting of most of the novel (Venice, Cyprus and Israel), can be read in the light of a parallel with the Caribbean as a space of transit, heterogeneity and archipelagic/labyrinthine nature, a Mediterranean – and its Europe – as historically failed, according to Ledent (2001, 193).

For biographical reasons, the history of the persecuted Jews in fact figures so prominently in his work as it provided a "prism" (Craps 2008, 199) to the young writer growing up as a black child of Caribbean origins in the 1960s Midlands, in the face of the public amnesia that surrounded the history of British slavery. Having arrived in England from Saint Kitts as a very small child, his whole heritage as a second-generation immigrant was of no avail to him when he made his way to Oxford, so that, in search of historical and identitarian mainstays, Phillips turned to Jewish history, which proved inspirational to his own predicament. This happened not only in the years when the whole of Europe was addressing the incommensurability of the Holocaust, but also because of the silence under which the condition of the first and especially second generation of black immigrants was treated in Britain at the time[2].

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[2]   Several critics underlined this context, and notably Clingman 2009, 170.

The figure of the survivor from the Holocaust is already present in an earlier novel, *Higher Ground* (1989) in the character of Irina, a Polish Jew living in England. Moreover, the Jewish-black association also proved to unravel a personal connection, as Phillips revealed to have had a Portuguese Jewish grandfather who never acknowledged his grandchildren. This autobiographical detail clearly strengthens the subjective and personal commitment to the thematic cluster of displaced racial and cultural identity in Phillips' work, where, nonetheless, what counts primarily is not so much race but the condition of being an outsider (Clingman 2009, 76), as his characters invariably prove in their different conditions of suffering and discrimination.

The Nature of Blood inaugurates Phillips' ambitiously disjointed polyphony of storylines and narratives, which he resumes in *The Lost Child* and which is a significant constituent of the use of intertextuality in his literary agenda. It has four major narratives which constantly intersect, at varying length, challenging the reader to follow the protagonists' brooding and parallel undoing. The framing narrative, which opens and closes the novel, is that of Stephan Stern, a Jewish doctor who left Germany for Palestine before the war and who, in the Israel of the 1990s, encounters a young woman, Malka, an Ethiopian Jewish immigrant who remains an outsider because of her ethnicity. The most prominent narrative, related mainly in the first person, concerns his niece Eva Stern, a survivor from Bergen-Belsen who had been forced to become part of a *Sonderkommando*, charged with the task of burning bodies. The narrative covers her life in Germany in the mid-Thirties, with her family history recalling that of Anne Frank's, her liberation by English troops in 1945 and her suicide, further to her mental breakdown and sentimental delusion for a married British soldier. A third narrative, written mainly in the third person in a more factual style, recounts the blood-libel execution of some Jews of Portobuffolè, near Venice, in the late fifteenth century. It is a harrowing tale of injustice and sacrificial violence, which cannot fail to evoke the themes and motifs which run through *The Merchant of Venice*, in its treatment of law and its critique of justice.

The fourth and most openly 'literary' narrative is a sort of 'coquel' revisitation of Othello's story in Venice, which describes him as a psychological and emotional outsider the nation-state. In the opening page of *The Nature of Blood,* the question of belonging is framed in the context of the Jewish nation-building struggle: a little boy asks one of the protagonists, the Jewish doctor Stephan Stern, who left Germany before the Nazi deportations to the camps started, to found a new nation-state in Palestine: "Tell me, what will be the name of the country?"; the country of origin is, in fact, as in Stephan Stern's words, "A world that I can never put down to rest" (*NB* 11). The fundamental questioning of the idea of nation as belonging, rootedness, identity, constantly resonates in this early novel through

its polyphonic structure, but the novel also dramatizes "the violence of memory" (*NB* 33) which haunts Eva Stern's life as a survivor of the camps, and who no longer can use the word "home" (*NB* 37).

In *The Nature of Blood* and *The Lost Child*, Stephan Stern and Julius Wilson, the male characters who single-mindedly pursue an ideal commitment to the idea of the nation and nation-building, and who therefore conceive of identity in essentialist terms, are responsible for the bereavement of their families, as they intentionally abandon their wives and children. Significantly, though, they are not beset by guilt, and this betrayal of family and origins is shared in by the black general himself in *The Nature of Blood*, who, hired by the Venetian Republic which employed foreign commanders to prevent uprisings from the Venetian military, reveals he has left his wife and son in Africa, where he had been of royal blood. Upon discovering the obscurity and complex social rituals of Venetian society, he becomes aware of his foreignness and loneliness in that elusive city-state of "overwhelming beauty" (*NB* 121) where "(S)uddenly the world was muffled in mist" (*NB* 117), and he feels unable to sustain the pressure of finding himself in the "underworld" of the Jewish ghetto. Ultimately, he realises that his marriage to Desdemona will definitely cut him off from his past and his country and lead him to "a quality of isolation [...] never before experienced" (*NB* 159). The loss of identity as a condition of otherness in a society which is only apparently hospitable to foreigners, while it actually exploits them for exclusively financial and political purposes, is dramatized in the Shakespearean narrative of *The Nature of Blood* in the only passage where Othello, now in Cyprus, is polemically addressed by the authorial voice in the second person, in tones of indictment, for having relinquished his past, and thus his true identity:

> And so you shadow her every move, attend to every whim, like the black Uncle Tom that you are, Fighting the white man's war for him/wide-receiver in the Venetian army/The republic's grinning Satchmo hoisting his sword like a trumpet/you tuck your black skin away beneath their epauletted uniform, appropriate their words (Rude am I in speech), their manners, worry your nappy wollen head with anxiety about learning their ways, yet you conveniently forget your own family, and thrust your wife and son to the back of your noble mind. O strong man, O strong man, O valiant soldier, O weak man. You are lost, a sad black man. [...] My friend, the Yoruba have a saying: the river that does not know its source will dry up. You will do well to remember this. (*NB* 180-181)

The scene closes on the black general before he is reunited with Desdemona, leaving the reader in anticipation of the ensuing fatal error whereby the tragic hero kills his innocent beloved, as well as in doubt as to the possibility of an alternative, though hardly plausible, ending. The authorial voice chastises the weakness of Othello as the mimic man, now turned into "a figment of the Venetian

imagination" (*NB* 182), a subaltern subject whose personal memory has been displaced and written over by his assimilation, thus exposing the effaced history of the African as Other. This is one of the most avowedly ideological passages of Phillips' early output, and possibly too conspicuously so in the already ambitious narrative orchestration of the novel. Despite this formal flaw, it persuasively proclaims the intertextual-transtextual project and palimpsestuous quality of *The Nature of Blood*, and reclaims the Othello myth as part of an ongoing discourse on identity in a national and transnational context, which finds a modern counterpart in the character of Stephan Stern, haunted by the memories of his abandoned wife and child fifty years after.

On the whole, I agree with Stef Craps in viewing the structural use Phillips makes of intertextuality (not only, of course in *The Nature of Blood*) as the key feature of his approach to the core question of identity, of historical and cultural memory and amnesia, of racial and religious difference. The intertext as hypotext and as the product of an ongoing blending of different textualities, in fact, also signals Phillips' critical remove from the historical reality he tries to represent, in all its cogency and unspeakable traumatic legacy (Craps 2008, 199-200). It proclaims his creative attempt to mediate, articulate and renew such representation (where the very notion of 'representation' is, of course, inherently problematic), in spite of the shortcomings and inherent liabilities that are entailed by literary ventriloquism as a cultural practice widely adopted by neo-Victorianism and other contemporary trends of literary rewritings and expansions.

The metaphor of ventriloquism is thus suggestive of the complex attempt to restore agency to marginalized and silenced subjects of history[3], as would be the case with the victims of the historical traumas considered in these two novels. Yet literary ventriloquism implies itself a form of cultural power, which is all the more evident when engaged in re-voicing submerged or elided individual and communal histories of violence. As critics have repeatedly pointed out, Phillips' output has been consistently concerned with this "narrative reclamation/ adoption of absent stories, the unvoiced accounts of orphans and stolen or denied children of Empire" (Ledent & O'Callaghan 2017, 2) through a recurrent address of the literary canon and of European literature at large.

The Nature of Blood is thus not a consolatory narrative, nor a monitory, ideological pronouncement against totalitarianism by a talented young writer. As Stephen Craps remarked, in reworking the Anne Frank's story by partly weaving it into the character of Eva Stern, but complicating this character into a morally

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[3]   See, among others, Widdowson 2006. About the forms and strategies of literary ventriloquism in neo-Victorianism, see Davies 2002.

dubious one, who had been part of a *Sonderkommand*[4]*,* Phillips also foregrounds that dimension of ambivalence and moral complexity which is irreducible in any fictional revisitation of the traumas of history, thereby evading the risk – and the temptation – to seek comforting narratives which aim at the empathetic reviving of sacrificial figures. The question of race as central to the nexus between the exploration of identity and the use of the English literary canon is also central to Phillips' penultimate novel to date, *The Lost Child,* where the male protagonists are all deeply affected by their racial hybridity in their identitarian plight.

The novel is structured in ten chapters framed by the neo-Victorian narrative inspired to Emily Brontë's last days of life and by the reimagined Heathcliff story of *Wuthering Heights*. The opening chapter begins in Liverpool and depicts the agony of a slave woman who has been abandoned to her lot by an Englishman who will later turn out to be Mr. Earnshaw, and the father of her child, the Brontëan Heathcliff. The second and penultimate ones complete the intertextual construct of the novel, as they focus on Emily Brontë's agonizing longing for her brother Branwell, who in her reverie she identifies with Heathcliff, her fictional creation. The third and last chapters narrate the slave woman's death and little Heathcliff's forced homecoming with Mr. Earnshaw, bound for his new house in the moors, which the readers recognise as Wuthering Heights. The other main storyline, set in the Midlands and London from the 1960s to the 1970s, deals with the tormented life of Monica Johnson, a middle class only daughter who falls in love with a young Caribbean immigrant, Julius Wilson, has two children and tries to survive the breakup of their relationship and his abandonment once he decides to pursue his decolonizing nationalist commitment back home. Lonely and destitute, she spirals into mental alienation and finally commits suicide after her younger son disappears, abducted by a local paedophile. The novel thus clearly builds on a postcolonial contemporary revision of the character of Heathcliff as Mr. Earnshaw's illegitimate son of mixed blood, born of a former slave in the foremost world slave market of the eighteenth century, the city of Liverpool, following a critical interpretation of Heathcliff's 'otherness' that was inaugurated by Susan Meyer's study on "reverse imperialism" in *Wuthering Heights*[5]*.* It also resonates with Terry Eagleton's interpretation of little black Heathcliff as a figure who represents the impoverished Irish children who had arrived in Liverpool in 1845, at the time of Branwell Brontë's visit to the city, Emily's lost, deranged brother with whom the novel's Byronic hero has "a strong kinship" (Eagleton 1996, 3). Heathcliff as racial other becomes the key figure of

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[4]   The special units of deported, mostly Jewish, who had to collaborate with the Nazis inside the camps. Phillips had already dramatized the ambivalence in the victims of the horrors of history in the character of an African slave who is spared his life but made complicit in the slave trade.

[5]   See Meyer 1996, Chap. 3.

the disruptive, othering absent presence of British imperialist slavery in English literature, and the novel further enlarges the resonances of Brontë's source text in encompassing the Black Atlantic and its disseminated history of loss, human, racial, cultural, geographical.

While the eighteenth century mixed blood child is recognisably an embodiment of alterity, the two boys who grow up without a father, witness their mother's progressive derangement and undergo the ordeal of foster parenting, embody the precarious, unacknowledged condition of the first generation of Black British of Caribbean origin who simply could not belong in the England of the 1960s and 1970s. In *The Lost Child* perhaps the most explicit representation of the young boy's displacement as the son of a black man and a white English woman occurs when he arrives in the new school, where he is the only black boy, looking "pathetically out of place" (*LC* 115) and realizes he will not be part of that social environment:

> "my name is Tommy Wilson"
> "And where are you from, Thomas?"
> "I'm from England." His fellow pupils release a volley of scornful cackling
> that threatens to swell into hysteria. (LC 117).

The dialogue subsumes identity, race, nationhood and belonging in the painful exclusion which represents the common fate of all the lost children of the novel, the half-blood child/little Heathcliff and the two brothers, who, like him who nurses the slave woman, are also forced to become caregivers to their ailing mother (especially Ben, the smartest and older). The tripartite narrative layering, thus, eventually pulls the strings of the novel's intertextual coherence, where each protagonist's plight is reflective of the others'. Far from finding its main significance in the mere re-righting of Brontë's masterpiece through the adoption of a combined biofictional and prequel narrative, *The Lost Child* is, among other things, an accomplished postcolonial text in its ideological and cultural assumptions, since the postcolonial in Phillips always intersects with other dimensions, which enrich its significance.

It resonates with historical trauma, primarily the Holocaust, migrancy, Jewish and African diaspora and the experience of bereavement, even familial and societal. The lost, orphaned and 'other' child of the occluded history of British slavery is then the unifying figure (significantly silent, although presented as intelligent and alert) who foreshadows the other lost children of the Empire, adrift in search of a home where they can belong. The novel unfolds this accretion of affinities through a narrative poetics that weaves together fiction with the biographical and the intertextual in a very knowing, apparently contrived but ultimately effective way. Even if not so immediately rewarding upon first reading,

in fact, *The Lost Child* reasserts Phillips' taking a stance against interpretation as authority-driven and ideologically inflected, as it avoids any slippage into new stereotypical re-uses of the source text, and resonates through a kind of long haul effect. It is actually one of those novels which "gain(s) richness and power with re-reading" (Attridge 2015, 16) and may constitute an adequate example of that "act" of reading/ act of literature theorised by Derrida and Attridge (Attridge 2017, "Introduction"). It is therefore rather in this perspective – that of the literary text as an event, rather than a self-contained object – that I consider these two novels as able to unfold their most authentic value, and Attridge's conception seems to validate the complexity as well as the possibly intentional flaws of these texts' address to their readers.

2. Renewing, Revoicing the Intertext: A Multivocal, Disjointed Unity

Phillips' narrative strategy in both novels is again worthy of consideration at this point, before probing deeper in his use of intertextuality in the last two sections (§§ 3, 4). While in the earlier C*rossing the River* or *Higher Ground* the different storylines or narrative layers were kept distinct and told sequentially, both *The Nature of Blood* and *The Lost Child* display self-standing discrete units, with some relevant differences: in *The Nature of Blood* the narrative sections follow in an almost seamless flow, but they often interlace through very short passages, while in *The Lost Child* the three stories are organized in ten chapters, and each reconnects with the previous one. Furthermore, in *The Lost Child*, as mentioned, there are also other voices which contribute to the disorienting polyphony of the novel; not a jarring cacophony but, rather, a kind of palimpsestuous layering of heterogeneous voices including pop songs from the 1960s and early 1970s[6]. Thus, third and first-person narration mingle in a narrative texture which connects different temporal and historical plans and different locations (late fifteenth-century Venice to early 1990s Israel, eighteenth-century Liverpool to 1970s Midlands) in novelistic formats which do not strive to achieve final closure or attain a higher coherence through specific devices such as leitmotivs. Rather, as Stephen Clingman remarked, Phillips' "writing raises disruption to a highly structured principle" (Clingman 2009, 76). Thus, significantly, it is the disruption of the very *lives* that are narrated which is foregrounded by the shifting, intentionally confusing unfolding of the narration, which clearly engages

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[6]   A device which had been successfully employed in the early 1990s by the Irish novelist Patrick McCabe in his *The Butcher Boy* (1992) and *Breakfast on Pluto* (1995), which are also centred on the progressive mental derangement of the protagonists.

the reader in a modernist, "writerly [...] act of literature"[7], in Derek Attridge's words. This disjunctive, erratic quality of Philips' narrative structures is thus effective both at the level of reading the individual narrative strains and of the interpretive challenge of assembling and combining them into a further act of reading.

Far from a mere display of formal adroitness and artistic sophistication, this structure openly proclaims both the inevitability (i.e. the historical dissemination) of individual, isolated and plural existential narratives and the imperative of connectedness, affinity and refraction through the cultural and literary endeavor. It should be remarked how this achievement has the tangible effect of sacrificing a more appealing and immediate form of readerly experience, a *plaisir du texte* targeted at a wider readership, for an experience of re-reading, as illustrated. Furthermore, the very texture of both novels, fractured and inconsequential as it is, argues for a revision of the more conventional and widely practiced uses of intertextuality and trans-textuality, and notably of the rewritings of the source text in postcolonial and contemporary writing, and rather gestures towards a radical questioning of its cultural influence as perceived so far.

In other words, particularly in *The Lost Child*, the storylines and the figures of the intertext, Emily Brontë's unique masterpiece, are extricated, 'exhumed', from their fictional unity and weaved into a construct where they are revived in an attempt to connect collective amnesia and cultural and personal memory into a fluid new fictional creation. However, and this is my further point, the very frame and texture of this novel proclaims not only the fragmentation, the occlusion and dispersal of memory – as in the case of Monica's lost half-blood children and of her own descent into madness – and not only the ultimate consumption and exhaustion of the hypotext/intertext as a matrix of collective cultural identity, but also its generative and disseminative potential. Although, as Ledent remarks, "Phillips' historical fictions (like *Cambridge*) write to and, in the sense of a palimpsest, over texts from the colonial narrative archive" (Ledent 2017, 6), *The Lost Child* does not gather its main momentum by offering a counter-discursive prequel to the canonical masterpiece, but rather in slowly unfolding its creative blending of storylines and the genealogies they stand for, along the lines of a palimpstestous achievement[8]. It is in this sense, in fact, that the critical

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[7]   This is what a literary work *is*: "an act, an event, of reading, never entirely separable from the act-event (or act-events) of writing that brought it into being as a potentially readable text, never entirely insulated from the contingencies of the history into which it is projected and within which it is read [...]" (Attridge 2017, 59).

[8]   I am using the term and concept of intertextuality as commonly understood, but also in the Kristevian sense of a deeper and more far-reaching complexity of relations that pertain to the geno-text as compared to the pheno-text. However, I think that Phillips' work, and particularly the two novels I have considered, in their creative treatment and relational reading of historical and literary

and revisionist practice of rewriting which also extends to incorporate parts of the canonical writers' biographies becomes what Laura Savu identifies as "a sign of cultural renewal rather than a symptom of exhaustion" (Savu 2009, 242). Or, rather, that exhaustion becomes itself productive.

3. The Nature of Blood, The Lost Child and the Exhaustion of the Intertext: A 'Place of Vulnerability'

Phillips' recurring use of intertextuality and his turning to the canon of both English and Caribbean literature – as in his most recent biofictional treatment of Jean Rhys' life in *A View of the Empire at Sunset* (2018) – address the identitarian dimension of literature in relation to the inevitable ideological limitations of the English canon as failing to foster a sense of identity for his generation and his ethnicity, that of the Black Britons. Ever since his early output, Phillips has always experimented with other intertexts, initially aiming at what Fernando Galvan defined as an attempt to rewrite some aspects of the African diaspora:

> – the middle passage, the difficulties of cultural assimilation etc. – from the perspective of a few canonical works such as Shakespeare's *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice,* and *The Interesting Narrative Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African, Written by Himself* (1780 Ctrl) in *Cambridge* (1991)[9].

He also drew on the historical reports on the Portobuffolè story and Anne Frank's *Diary* in *The Nature of Blood,* on *Wuthering Heights* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and "Let Them Call It Jazz" in *The Lost Child* and, again, on Jean Rhys' life and masterpiece in the most recent novel to date, *A View of the Empire at Sunset* (2018). His fascination with artists' or authors' lives was bound to lead him to engage with forms of biofiction, like other prominent contemporary novelists who have increasingly turned to this genre. Stephen Clingman recently analysed Phillips use of the literary life – fictional or authorial – through the prism of biofiction, putting "the biofictive in conversation with the biopolitical" (Clingman 2018, 2). However, in applying the notion of the "postcolonial biofictive" as "a form

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sources, offer an interesting example of "palimpstestuous" writing, a term first coined by Gerard Genette in *Palimpsestes* (1982) and further developed by Sarah Dillon's *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (2007) in mutual elucidation with other critical concepts, and in its encompassing relation to intertextuality itself, as "a more compelling figurative and theoretical metaphor of the text". Dillon states that, "according to its logic, the concept of palimpsestuousness overwrites Kristeva's 'intertextuality', and palimpsestuous textuality provides a new and more apposite name for that permutation of texts in, on, and as, the space of textuality." (Dillon 2007, 86). Other critics such as Ledent use "palimpsestous" referred to Phillips' work as a current term.

9   Galvan 2005, 245-262, 245 and *passim.*

of epistemology" (Clingman 2018, 5), Clingman seems to use the term as mere combination of the fictional and the biographical, without specifically considering that the biographical in biofiction is always recognizably referred to a specific historical/biographical subject, rather than to human lives which become objects of textual recuperation and reinvention. His idea of the biofictional as a way of understanding the self of figures "who are altogether unknown" (Clingman 2018, 6) is, in fact, not aligned with the current debate on biofiction[10]. This conception of biofiction referred to Phillips' novels should rather be reintegrated in a more encompassing conception of the intertext and intertextuality, where the fictive is indeed composed of both autobiographical and biographical elements (as in the centrality of Emily Brontë's figure). I would then rather opt for a blending and combination of the intertext, the fictive and the biofictional and (and under) the umbrella-term of *life-writing*, in order to probe into the possibility that Phillips should be now, in this mature phase of his career, exploring the possibility of the definitive exhaustion of the intertext along the lines of the conventions of postcolonial rewriting[11]. An exhaustion which can be regenerated through the insertion of different combinations of the fictive and the historical-biographical, and does not conceal the metaliterary quality of its undertaking.

Phillips intertextual strategy and poetics have become increasingly complex over the course of his career, and continue to pay tribute to one of the earliest, foundational postcolonial writers: the half creole-half Welsh novelist Jean Rhys, whose complex relationship with both the Caribbean and Britain is a common concern. (Ledent 2019, 3). Both Buonanno and Ledent have established that there exists an intertextual relationship between Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the novella "Voyage and the Dark" and Phillips' early fiction, a relation "which is of the allusive and affiliative type rather than the derivative or counter-discursive one" (Ledent 2019, 6). Phillips' homage to Rhys, now further attuned in the biofictional mode in his most recent *A Picture of The Empire at Sunset*, is also confirmed by the intertextual links that Giovanna Buonanno perceptively detected between Monica Johnson and the protagonist of Rhys' short story "Let Them Call It Jazz", Selina Davis.

These two women, who both have been lent an empty flat by a male friend, are ostracised by their priggish English neighbours for their apparently

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[10]   Biofictions should not aim to restore or complete the truth of a life, nor of a biographical intertext, but they can aim to create a possible, alternative and yet not unrelated world. As Michael Lackey, one of its leading theorists, argues, "biographical novelists invent stories that never occurred in order to answer perplexing questions, fill in cultural lacunae, signify human interiors, or picture cultural ideologies" (Lackey 2016, 14). This tension between the supposed and deconstructed truth of facts underscores all accomplished biofictions.

[11]   Phillips himself seems to authorise this readjustment of the biofictional into the other, more encompassing category, in a recent interview. See Ledent, Phillips & Tunca 2019, 3.

unconventional behaviour, which ends up with Selina being imprisoned and Monica drifting even further into loneliness and isolation (see Ledent & O'Callaghan 2017, 6; Buonanno 2017, 101). Phillips draws from Rhys a type of female protagonists who – much like Antoinette Cosway in *Wide Sargasso Sea* as its most famous model – are displaced, lonely, and destitute women, astray in a hostile or unsympathetic environment, and who eventually succumb to mental derangement. This is a fate common to nearly all of Phillips' female protagonists, starting with Leila in *The Final Passage*, his debut novel, Irina in *Higher Ground*, the slave "crazy" woman, Heathcliff's mother, and Monica in *The Lost Child*. The theme of mental derangement and illness, which has long been a pervasive presence in Caribbean literature through "various forms of mental illness, breakdown and psychopathology" as remarked by Ledent, O'Callaghan and Tunca (Ledent, O'Callaghan & Tunca 2018, 2), connects the poetics of identity in *The Lost Child* with Rhys' work. In the novel all the three female protagonists – the slave woman, Emily Brontë and Monica – undergo a form of mental instability and emotional collapse, which the reader is made to follow through an increasingly erratic language, syntax, and style, so that they become not only a suggestive metaphor of the individual's dislocation in relation to the imperial and post-imperial reality, but a highly functional formal device of the novel, which seem to pay tribute to the late modernism of Rhys' work. Clearly, mental derangement stems from the isolation, helplessness, oppression and desperate resistance endured by women in a patriarchal and racist social context related to the Caribbean; the opening section introduces the theme though the slave woman, the most forlorn and abused character, to renew it in the character of Monica, the late twentieth-century, educated and apparently emancipated white woman. Significantly, her precariousness and vulnerability, as a daughter, woman, wife and mother, is induced and caused by her association with the Caribbean Julius, who in his turn grows estranged from her and caught up in his nationalist political obsession. Therefore, this association between insanity and the twentieth-century Caribbean/black Atlantic seems to trace the progress of the insanity trope full circle in the novel, reversing the terms of the late eighteenth century miscgenation between the unnamed slave woman who becomes Mr. Earnshaw's lover and little Heathcliff's mother.

Overall, then these 'meta' – critical and partly biofictive – intertextual politics that revolve around the authorial figures of Emily Brontë, Jean Rhys, and, through Rhys, indirectly to Charlotte Brontë, ultimately do not aim at rewriting the source text/s through the format of the prequel, sequel and coquel (or better, make use of these forms to supplement it), but rather incorporate them into a prismatic narrative structure where the text and its characters reverberate though other, *different* stories, in their turn narrated through interrelated but

discrete units. The metacritical quality of this novelistic construction thus emerges from the reiterated impossibility of closure, and through the partial disavowal of that 'revoicing', the act of restorative ventriloquizing that is present in both *The Nature of Blood* and *The Lost Child,* best exemplified in the story of Tom, the killed, silenced lost child of the Moors*.* None of these characters, who, as seen, are narrated through multiple voices and points of view (third omniscient person, first or, notably the second person in *The Nature of Blood*) are ultimately granted "redemption" or "reconciliation"[12]. Their voices are testimonies of sort, incomplete, unanswered, inconclusive, erratic, often disoriented, as are their vulnerable, precarious lives. This is a constant of Phillips' literary agenda: Phillips asks readers to acknowledge the vulnerability of his characters, and hence creates the premise for an ethical encounter, practicing what Jean Michel Ganteau has named a (literary) "ethics of vulnerability"[13]. Thus, as Bénédicte Ledent remarked, Phillips turns his gaze to "the pathologized human products of racial and cultural contact, those creolized and miscegenated, often illegitimate, children of empire, in most cases unwanted and unacknowledged, who are still wandering in search of a textual home" (Ledent 2019, 7). I would argue, however, that the idea of a textual 'home' is profoundly and intentionally problematic at this stage of Phillips' artistic maturity. Unbelonging, the impossibility to belong, the perennial condition of displacement of the precarious lives that people his works is, in fact, claiming it but impossible to accommodate in a textual home, or, at least to find a definitive, restorative settling.

4. A Creative and Intentional Failure: *The Lost Child* and Narrative Hospitality

Phillips' creative work has always been centred on the dimension of failure: failed integration, failure in achieving belonging and rootedness. *The Lost Child* is also, in a way, a novel about failure, as it contains interlacing narratives of defeat, which is the common lot of all the protagonists, with the exception of the autobiographical Ben, who makes it to Oxford. Moreover, the sadness of tone, the gloominess of the domestic interiors, the material and inner squalor and contextual drabness of its sections at times seem intentionally to underplay – and hence to undermine – its literary and novelistic charm. This is a novel which almost seems to lay emphasis on its sombreness of tones and its hopelessness,

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[12]   Bénedicte Ledent uses these terms in relation to the elegiac quality of *The Empire at Sunset* (Ledent 2019, 11 (author's version), 66).

[13]   See Ganteau 2015, 3.

and which does not valorise its rich literary allusiveness through the often rewarding apparatus of textual allusiveness that is proper of literary rewrites. Rather, it posits the two references to the main source and to the biographical figure of the Brontës' family as a conduit, an introductory and functional part of the overall narrative in its orchestrated interpolations.

The figure of the lost child is a significant development of the idea of the orphan figure, almost a foil to it, and has figured prominently in contemporary fictions, but it is also a functional component of Phillips' literary allusiveness in dealing with the issue of unbelonging and displaced identity. It also renews Phillips' abiding ethical concern with the experience of the loss of the self in the encounter with the other that he had already explored in *The Nature of Blood*, as Ledent perceptively observed nearly two decades ago: "Losing oneself to find the other is what Phillips' fictions, not just *The Nature of Blood,* engage the reader to do" (Ledent 2001, 194).

The Lost Child ideally joins the little seven year old boy born of a liberated slave to Mr Earnshaw and taken by him to Wuthering Heights to the younger son of a depressed middle class, educated young Englishwoman, who disappears in the Moors in the late 1960s Midlands. But it is also, significantly, Emily Brontë's lost brother, Branwell, who prematurely died after years of dissipation, as the reader can infer when the dying Emily pines over "the boy who came from the moors, [...] the boy who went back to the moors" (*LC* 109), conflating in her reverie the imaginary little Heathcliff with the real beloved and straying brother. This expansion and conflation of the lost child figure, however, takes place in this section in coexistence and contiguity between intertextual metafiction and biographical fiction, as Stephen Cligman remarks, so that "the lost children of the novel are linked in metonymic connection" (Clingman 2018, 12). Clingman perceptively points to how Emily's delirious coalescing of her family's dramatic story and her own creative fiction in *Wuthering Heights* is revealing of Phillips' use of the biofictive (Clingman 2018, 2), although, as remarked, I would not use the term so freely. The intertextual echoes of the lost child figure are not limited to the literary, but actually stretch out to the 1960's chronicles and pop culture, as they evoke the actual children murders in the Moors/Leeds in the late 1960s and the Who's musical "Tommy", which tells the story of a disabled child abused by his uncle[14].

The richness of this trope, moreover, blends the historical and the literary in relation to the Caribbean and the Black Atlantic. As Ledent and O'Callaghan have remarked:

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[14]   See Clingman 2018, 9, who points that in the musical "Tommy", the character of "Uncle Ernie" is the correspondent of "Uncle Derek" in the novel.

> from its opening, *The Lost Child* calls attention to the lost children of the first encounter of eighteenth-century northern England and the Black Atlantic, meaning formerly enslaved Caribbean people who, for various reasons, found themselves in Britain; it also tells the story of their lost children and their children's children. (Ledent & O'Callaghan 2017, 2)

The novel thus retrieves an imaginary genealogy of non-normative lost identities which were occluded with the guilty complicity of Britain in that history of the slave trade so long displaced from the literary imagination. It achieves this aim weaving literary threads that comprise the Victorian era through Brontë's masterpiece, late British and Caribbean Modernism through allusions to Jean Rhys and Marisé Condé's engaging with Charlotte Brontë's novels (in *La Migration des coeurs/Windward Heights*), and contemporary postcolonial and postmodernist poetry. In particular, the novel offers interesting echoes from the imagery of David Dabydeen's narrative poem *Turner* (1994) an example of what Gilroy defines as the "slave sublime" – where the main poetic voice and consciousness is that of another lost, orphaned child of British eighteenth-century slave trade, who himself saves and fathers a shipwrecked stillborn child. The forced "coming home" of the little boy in the closing image of the novel disrupts the possibility of closure suggested by the circular narrative pattern which inaugurates and closes the novel with a prequel-like revisiting of *Wuthering Heights*. On the diegetic level, the lonely, desperate orphan knows he is not "going home" in the rough, inhospitable landscape of the Moors, as the one and only home he had was his mother, whose wasting body has left him forever. This occurs while the reader is made to project onto him Heathcliff's progress, from his condition of beloved foster son to hated usurper, vengeful outsider and irreducible other of presumed colonial origin in Brontë's intertext. The distance and difference of this rewriting from Brontë's masterpiece, a resisting text *par excellence*, is here almost underplayed through the coincidence of the three boy figures of the novel, all of mixed blood, all doubly orphaned by the ill-fated union of their parents, all fostered by other families, all lacking any true belonging in the conflictual social environment where they are growing up. On the other hand, the ailing, desperate and abandoned slave woman of the opening chapter, Heathcliff's mother, who relentlessly slips into a wasteful consumption, foreshadows Monica Johnson's descent to hell, her mental derangement ensuing the loss of her junior son, and her final suicide. She is herself a lost child to her father (Buonanno 2017, 102), whom she tries to rebel against by marrying the Caribbean student Julius Wilson, and whom she never forgives nor reapproaches later in life.

Thus, I would argue that the haunting figure of the lost child finally bodies forth not only the impossible integrity, the unrestorable wholeness of the post-

imperial, post-colonial subject,[15] despite the role played by an advanced but inadequate welfare system, but, less predictably and more interestingly, the impossibility of restoring a historical and cultural integrity to the canonical intertext through the literary creativeness and imagination of the "post/s", the available perspectives of cultural revision that are inherent to contemporary literary culture. Phillips' literary politics today engage with intertextuality and the writers of the British canon in a transnational and transhistorical perspective that knowingly disseminates the text though multiple chronological and cultural levels, and by so doing it intentionally questions the centrality of the canonical referent and forces the reader to reposition it in a web of cultural and, above all, emotional connections. This emotional, affective potential of the intertext is actually quite powerful, especially in the opening and closing pages of *The Lost Child*, where the reinvention of both Brontë's last moments and Heathcliff's painful 'homecoming', once he has lost his mother and is forced to follow his father through the rough landscape of the Moors, are among the most vibrant pages of the novel:

> The stranger opened the door to his cottage and looked at the uneven apparition of man and boy that greeted him. The flustered man's dripping clothes suggested some status in this world, but the ill-dressed child seemed adrift and lost. It occurred to the stranger that this boy might have been discovered upon the moors, a runway of some sort, and perhaps the connection between the two had been forged in the adversity of this calamitous unrest [...] The man looked at the shivering boy; then he travelled back in his mind to his first encounter with the child's mother. Despite her headstrong nature, it was evident to him that the woman was ill-suited to be a mother. It wasn't her fault, but life had ushered her down a perilous course and delivered her to a place of vulnerability. At the outset, he had felt a kinship with her, although he could never be sure what her feelings were towards him, but it didn't matter now she was woefully distracted, that much was clear, and it was his responsibility to step forward and act. It was his duty to take the scruffy lad into his care and protect him. (*LC* 256-257)

In the closing scene Phillip recreates the beginning of one lost child's new life through an act of unconditional hospitality, when father and son, who have been marching in dire weather across the inhospitable landscape, are hosted by an unknown man in his house on the Moors and helped to reach home, the home the reader knows to be Wuthering Heights. Mr. Earnshaw and the little black Heathcliff are here the *arrivant,* the presence who demands and re-enacts the encounter with the other. It is thus tempting to see this allusion to the trope of hospitality through a metacritical lens which may refract the

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[15]   In *The Lost Child* all the characters, Ronald, Monica, the parents and the two brothers experience family disruption and abandonment.

prismatic possibilities of the many intertextual and palimpsestuous layers of this novel. *The Lost Child*, as *The Nature of Blood* and Phillips' fiction to date, responds to that idea of literature as enacting a form of narrative hospitality, and involving "that particular kind of experience that, although taking a host of different forms, can be characterised summarily as an openness to otherness" (Attridge 2015, 16).

Thus, the intertext has probably been exhausted, but it is still *en route*, striving to find other textual homes.

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The Role of Symbolisation
in the Shaping of Reality and Identity:
Tales of Woundedness and Healing[*]

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1. Mimetic Cognition, Symbolisation and Dissociation

In a path-breaking study on the *Origins of the Modern Mind* (1991), cognitive neuroscientist Merlin Donald argued that the central function that distinguishes human beings from apes and hominoids is the development of "the mimetic mind", that is, the exclusively human "ability to mime, or re-enact, events" (Donald 1991, 16) after they have taken place. First developed by *Homo erectus*, mimetic cognition allowed our evolutionary predecessors to share emotional knowledge by means of gestures, mime, dance, athletic and constructional skills, and to participate in reciprocal mimetic games. This skill, still evident in modern society, culminated in the development of language by *Homo sapiens* and, with it, of narrative thought. In a second stage, the symbolic knowledge provided by the mimetic mind would develop into ever more complex systems – from ritual, myth and religion to art and literature. While the mimetic mind allowed human beings to share vital information about past events imaginatively and to strengthen

the cohesion of the group, the more complex systems of symbolisation evolved primarily as mechanisms for modelling reality. As Robert Nadeau explains in *Readings from the New Book on Nature*:

> As the symbol-making animal fragmented his world into discreet identities, he needed mythological thinking to pull the jumble of particulars into some meaningful pattern. Myths made connections, bespoke causes and origins, and, in general imparted to the world of his creation the sense that it was his world indeed. (Nadeau 1981, 5)

Myth-making fulfils, then, the vitalising role of ordering the world and unifying particular phenomena into a contextualised situation that makes sense, thus allowing for the creation of finalised strategies and successful practices which we can understand. The symbolic knowledge and/or pseudo-knowledge thus gathered would be essential not only for the representation and transmission of useful knowledge and the strengthening of communal cohesion, but also and most importantly for the shaping of reality and identity. The key factor in this process is that the cultural reality in which each individual participates wholly depends on the acceptance by the community of the efficacy and reliability of this imaginative creation, taken for truth. The symbolic unity with nature and with the members of the social group thus created is essential for the individual and collective well-being and sense of self of the social group. As the Navajo say: "to be sick is to be fragmented. To be healed is to become whole, and to become whole one must be in harmony with family, friends, and nature"[1]. The importance of these symbolic truths would explain the intrinsic difficulty and even traumatic effects of having to substitute them for the new truths arising from a shift of dominant paradigm[2].

In an article entitled "Bridging the Black Hole of Trauma: The Evolutionary Significance of the Arts", psychoanalyst Sandra L. Bloom points to the close connection between trauma and human evolution when she argues that, for millennia, human beings were not predators but prey, so that our original trauma was "the trauma of being hunted by animals and eaten" (Bloom 2010, 200). According to Bloom, it was this fact that determined the development of some specifically human adaptive skills such as learning to fight together, to communicate information mimetically, to connect events by means of associations and, most crucially, "to alter reality by entering different states of consciousness that allow us to maintain separate – and often contradictory – bodies of knowledge" (Bloom 2010, 200). In other words, our archaic ancestors developed the capacity to dissociate knowledge as a form of resilience against the traumatic awareness of imminent death. As Bloom explains, human beings share with other mammals and birds the need to orient ourselves in the world by ordering and classifying it, but this "cognitive imperative" is constantly curtailed

by our capacity for self-knowledge, which includes the shattering perception of our own mortality. By allowing us to take distance from ordinary experience and maintain simultaneously separate and contradictory bodies of knowledge, dissociation provides human beings with the possibility of perceiving the environment selectively and, consequently, of limiting the traumatic impact of its most threatening aspects without ignoring them. In Bloom's own words:

> Through dissociation, we can deny important aspects of reality that are too disorganizing, too threatening to our own internal stability either individually or as a group. And yet, survival demands that we keep both sides of the contradictory information available just in case we should need it. In that way we know without knowing. (Bloom 2010, 202)

Bloom's expression, to "know without knowing" perfectly synthesises the positive and negative aspects of dissociation[3]. The positive aspects are well known: carrying out various tasks simultaneously, such as driving or ironing while listening to music, or talking about something else are among the most common forms of dissociation. Employed as a primary response to "the overwhelming awareness of self, other, life, and death"[4], "dissociation allows us to reorder reality in a more palatable way, separate our emotions from our experience, and even separate our sense of self from the reality of what is happening"[5]. Transition rituals and artistic performances aimed at creating trance states are secular forms of achieving this positive form of dissociation aimed at attenuating the traumatic impact of reality and enhance the social cohesion of the group[6].

In *Useless Knowledge*, the second of her three-volume Holocaust memoir, *Auschwitz and After* (first published in 1970), the French activist Charlotte Delbo offers a telling example of communal artistic performance to foster dissociation as a form of resilience in the teeth of terror (Delbo 1995). In 1942, Delbo and other Communist women who had been interned in the fort of Romanville, in France, before deportation to Auschwitz, decided to mitigate the suffering of the men awaiting execution in the male quarter of the prison by assuming an exaggerated carefree air, singing, dancing, and performing a theatrical piece every Sunday in the yard where the men could watch them from the other side of the barbed-wire fence separating them. Commenting on this episode, Michael Rothberg remarks that Delbo's narrator recognises that these performances were "preposterous" but "she also notes that they succeed[ed]

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[3]   See Herrero & Baelo-Allué 2011 for an in-depth analysis of the literary representation of this essential aspect of dissociation in Holocaust trauma narratives in English.

[4]   *Ivi*, 203.

[5]   *Ibid.*

[6]   *Ivi*, 201.

at times in arousing a theatrical suspension of disbelief and a 'liveliness [that] occasionally seemed real'" (Rothberg 2000, 147). Her description of the effect produced by their performances as "a theatrical suspension of disbelief" points to the women's capacity to alter reality by creating a collective state of dissociation from the awful knowledge of impending death that provided both the women performers and the men watching them with an extraordinary source of resilience and communal cohesion. Delbo's participation in these activities was fostered by her expert knowledge of the performing arts, as she had worked as an assistant to the theatre director Louis Jouvet during a theatrical tour of South America in 1939, shortly before she decided to return to occupied France in order to join the resistance. But this sort of expertise is not a prerequisite for participation in artistic activities under life-threatening conditions. On the contrary, engagement in ephemeral forms of artistic expression such as singing, drawing, or creating and transmitting from mouth to mouth a politically-charged poem or a joke are well-documented activities not only in Nazi transition camps like Romanville or Terezín[7] but also in extermination camps like Auschwitz-Birkenau[8]. The counterpart to this positive use of art was the Nazis' atrocious habit of encouraging the prisoners to create, organise and participate in more elaborate performances for their own entertainment. This was part of a general strategy of random privileging and punishing, meant to secure the prisoners' total subservience and destroy their received notions of good and evil[9]. As these diametrically opposed examples suggest, having recourse to artistic expression in life-threatening conditions is a common form of modifying the perception of self and world both for victims and perpetrators. Yet another, more recent example that comes to mind is Mark Falkoff's *Poems from Guantánamo* (2007), a book containing a selection of the verses "scratched into Styrofoam cups, shared at meals, and passed cell to cell before ending up in the trash" (Richardson 2016, 66) that had been composed by detainees held in the US prison camp on Cuba as a form of resilience against the atrocious physical and psychological tortures to which they were submitted by the Bush administration under the pretext of the "war on terror".

The fact that, for all their cultural differences, the Guantánamo prisoners and the inmates of Nazi camps made a similar use of artistic expression in the face of excruciating fear and pain, points to the power of the creative imagination to manage the overwhelming awareness of our own vulnerability and finitude by

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[7]   See Peschel 2014.

[8]   See Rovit 2001. On the way Delbo and other women in Birkenau made their voices heard, see Rosario Arias's "The "Other" Voice in Survivor Narratives: A Gender-Based Approach to the Holocaust" in this volume.

[9]   See Onega 2017a, 287; Rothberg 2000, 147.

transfiguring external reality. Still, as Bloom notes (Bloom 2010, 200), staying in a prolonged state of dissociation or negative relation with our empirical consciousness without the backing of the community has the high cost of self-fragmentation:

> The main difference between culturally accepted alterations of reality commonly noted in religious ceremonies and political events, and the common forms of twisted reality noted as the symptoms of psychopathology, is that in the former people agree together to ignore and deny the distortions and contradictions that exist, while in individual pathology no one else agrees with the view of reality shared by that individual. (Bloom 2010, 202)

In other words, it seems that the positive effect of creating an alternative reality can only be sustained if this reality is accepted and shared by the social group.

This consideration brings to mind Freud's move from individual to mass psychology in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). As is well known, at the beginning of this essay, Freud rounded off his conceptualisation of psychic trauma by arguing that there is usually a chronological gap, or period of "latency"[10], separating the traumatic event from the appearance of the first symptoms. He then extended this notion to how new paradigmatic ideas are accepted by the community, giving as examples Darwin's theory of evolution[11] and Jewish monotheism[12]. Though he acknowledged the huge difference between individual traumatic neurosis and the collective acceptance of a new scientific or religious paradigm, Freud saw the process of rejection and denial preceding the definitive acceptance of the new collective truth as evidence of "a special psychological situation" provoked by "affective resistances"[13]. As Freud argued, these affective resistances would explain the difficulty of Jewish historians to write their accounts of monotheism according to "an ideal of objective truth"[14], observable in the difference between the versions of the past created by the historians and those recorded in the popular oral tradition. In Freud's own words:

> At first they [the historians] shaped their accounts according to their needs and tendencies of the moment, as if they had not yet understood what falsification signified. In consequence, a difference began to develop between the written version and the oral report, i.e., the tradition of the same subject-matter[15].

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[10]   Freud 1939, 107 ff.

[11]   *Ivi*, 108.

[12]   *Ivi*, 109.

[13]   *Ivi*, 108.

[14]   *Ivi*, 111.

[15]   *Ibid*.

According to this, the affective resistances to the new religious truth conveyed by Moses' monotheism had a direct influence on the historians' written reports, while the oral tradition was "less subject to distorting influences […] and therefore might be more truthful than the account set down in writing"[16]. At the same time, however, as Freud himself admitted, "[i]ts truthfulness […] was impaired by being vaguer and more fluid than the written text, being exposed to many changes and distortions as it was passed on from one generation to the other by word of mouth"[17]. Freud's thought-provoking conclusion was that the shocking facts that official history had purportedly tried to supress were kept alive in the oral tradition of the Jewish people[18], and that these facts resurfaced in the myths and legends of the Greeks, "which Homer and the great Attic dramatists transformed into immortal works of art"[19]. Leaving aside the question of the verifiability of this intercultural and transgenerational transmission, it seems evident that, to Freud, the main difference between the historian's and the poet's response to a problematic truth was that, while the former, compelled by affective resistance, chose to provide a univocal version of the past that would meet the needs and tendencies of the moment, the latter was "free to fill in the gaps in the memories according to the behests of his imagination and to form after his own purpose the image of the time he has undertaken to reproduce"[20]. Translating this into Bloom's terms, it may be stated that the popular art forms succeeded in transmitting the new traumatic but necessary knowledge through a technique of generalisation and distortion that allowed the Jewish community "to know without knowing".

Freud's interesting suggestion that imaginative freedom allowed the popular tradition to convey problematic truths in a way the historian could not, justifies Bloom's contention that ritual, myth, religion and art in all its manifestations, together with their primary function of ordering the world, have always had the vital function of attenuating the traumatic encounter with the intractable real. As I argued elsewhere (Onega 2017b, 369), J. Hillis Miller reaches a similar conclusion when, discussing Nietzsche's mistrust of world literature, he explains the opposition between the Dionysian and the Apollonian in *The Birth of Tragedy*

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[16]   *Ibid*.

[17]   *Ivi*, 111.

[18]   *Ivi*, 112.

[19]   *Ivi*, 114.

[20]   *Ivi*, 116. Freud's contention is echoed by Zygmunt Bauman in *Hermeneutics and Social Science*, when he argues that, in the case of the Christian world, the proliferation of different and often contradictory and sloppy versions of the New Testament written by a chain of anonymous copyists, led to the Catholic-Protestant debate on the question of authority that "propelled hermeneutics into a central position in the humanities" in the sixteenth century (Bauman 1978, 7).

in the following terms: "'Man' cannot face the Dionysian directly and go on living. It has to be covered over with a veil of beautiful illusion. [...] As T. S. Eliot put this, 'Humankind cannot bear very much reality'" (Ghosh & Miller 2016, 146).

All art forms have, then, the capacity to aestheticise reality and so to provide mechanisms of resilience against the self-awareness of the precariousness and vulnerability of existence. But some forms of art, particularly narrative fiction, also have the capacity to help wounded individuals and groups to work through their traumas and recover from self-fragmentation.

2. The Role of Storytelling in the Assimilation, Transmission and Working through of Trauma

As is well known, in "Remembering, Repeating and Working-through", Freud defined psychic trauma as a memory malfunction caused by the repression of affects, and argued that the symptoms of trauma are made manifest in two stages (Freud 1950). The first stage of "acting out" or "repetition-compulsion" is characterised by total or partial amnesia, temporal disorientation and the compulsion to repeat the traumatic event in the form of intrusive thoughts, nightmarish dreams and hallucinations. The second or healing stage of "working through" begins when the subject manages to fill in the gaps in the traumatic memory of the shocking event by abreacting the repressed affects either in deeds or words. It was this idea that verbalising trauma can act as a substitute for action that had led Freud and Breuer to devise the "talking cure" on which psychoanalysis is based (Freud & Breuer 2001). Its working hypothesis is that the imposition of a coherent narrative pattern on the fragmentary and incomprehensible traumatic memories of the shocking event – or in Bloom's terms, the filling in of the gaps in the "black hole of trauma" – has a healing effect. Still, the efficacy of the process of healing varies with each individual. For example, two children who have undergone the same type of familial and social deprivations and misfortunes will develop into adults in striking different ways according to their different degree of resilience. As Boris Cyrulnik forcefully argues, the difference does not lie in their capacity to address the traumatic event or situation objectively and rationally, but rather in their respective capacity to *imagine* positive alternatives to it. Thus, while verbalisation is a mechanism for overcoming trauma, creativity and the self-addressed telling of stories are intrinsic mechanisms of resilience that human beings have used from the dawn of civilisation in order to avoid the disruptive effects of traumatisation, since, as Cyrulnik argues, "as soon as we put sadness into a story, we give a meaning to our sufferings" (Cyrulnik 2011, 4).

One of the earliest and best-known popular art forms that developed out of this protective function of storytelling is the wondertale. As Anatoly Lieberman, drawing on Vladimir Propp, has pointed out, wondertales in general are stories about initiation and death (Lieberman 1999, lxvii). Given that their original aim was to teach and instruct, not to entertain, the child figures in the earlier eighteenth-century stories behaved like small adults. It was only in the first half of the nineteenth century that children started to be depicted in what was believed to be their natural state, as innocent and perfect. The knowledge acquired by the children in tales such as those of Charles Perrault or the Brothers Grimm, plays a fundamental role in the identity formation and integration of new members into the social group. This would explain why, for all their awfulness, we continue to pass them on generation after generation; and also why, for all their apparent thematic differences, these classical wondertales tell the same awe-inspiring story of a purblind child or youth being mistreated by inadequate custodians and/or being placed in atrocious situations involving the imminent danger of violent death. For example, being forced to marry a serial killer ("Bluebeard"), or a beast ("Beauty and the Beast") in order to save the family from starvation or death; being sent to the forest to be eaten by a wolf ("Little Red Riding Hood"), by an ogre ("Little Thumb"), or by a witch ("Hansel and Gretel"); being enslaved ("Cinderella"), poisoned and sentenced to death ("Snow White"), or even murdered and turned into a mince pie ("The Juniper Tree") by a jealous stepmother. Still, these blood-curdling tales entrance listeners and are kept in the collective memory of successive generations because of their reassuring happy endings: the evil characters are eventually punished or killed while the resourceful children or youths round off their life quests and bring wealth and happiness to their inadequate custodians, even sometimes, as happens to the protagonist of "The Juniper Tree", after being murdered by his stepmother and unwittily eaten by his father. In Germany, the tradition of representing children as pure and innocent was broken by Eta Hoffmann's tales depicting typical child missteps – thumb-sucking, fidgeting, playing with fire, teasing, not eating one's dinner – and suffering the natural consequences of their misbehaviour. In these tales, the wildest and most rebellious children endure gruesome punishments for their relentless flaunting of social norms: "The Dreadful Story of Pauline and the Matches" ends with Pauline burning herself to death; in "The Story of Cruel Frederick", the animal torturer protagonist is bitten by a dog; in "Augustus who refuses to eat his dinner", the child dies of starvation, while Conrad, the naughty protagonist of "Little Suck-a-Thumb", has his two thumbs chopped off by a dreadful big tailor after dismissing her mother's warning.

As these examples suggest, the original function of wondertales was to channel the children's drives and transmit key forms of socialisation through a process

of metaphorisation that allowed for the integration of a skilful acquaintance with awful situations and threatening contexts indirectly, in terms that could be assimilated and kept in the collective memory of the cultural group. The traditional figure of the old crone telling a fairy tale to a group of thrilled children provides an accurate image of their initiatory function. The telling of these tales contributes to the identity formation of the children either by casting a veil of beautiful illusion on the necessary but potentially traumatic truths that grant cohesion to the cultural group, or by enhancing the frightening consequences of unrestrained behaviour, thus making them "know without knowing". This cautionary role of wondertales would explain their rigid formulaic nature and their normative and prescriptive ideology as well as their psychological appeal and power of suggestion across the centuries. In the case of Perrault's, the Brothers Grimms' and Hoffman's tales, the atrocious yet necessary truths transmitted by them indirectly are those that configure the cultural reality of Western patriarchy. It is for this reason that feminist writers like Angela Carter, Margaret Atwood or Jeanette Winterson consider fairy tales "as repository of sexist and patriarchal ideologies" begging for deconstruction and subversion[21].

The original function of wondertales is, then, to strengthen the resilience of healthy children and youths *before* their actual encounter with the traumas of adult life. However, their capacity to transmit traumatic events or situations wrapped up in the beautiful and illusory veil of literature also makes them excellent vehicles for verbalising and working through traumas. As María Jesús Martínez-Alfaro has pointed out, a significant number of contemporary writers has "adapted the traditional fairy tale in order to deal with social class, ideological conflicts, politics, war, violence, illness and trauma, among other issues" (Martínez-Alfaro 2016, 65). Particularly noteworthy in this respect is the work of writers like Lisa Goldstein, Louise Murphy, Edgar Hilsenrath, Peter Rushford, Jane Yolen, Eliza Granville and Eva Figes, who "have resorted to the fairy tale in order to revisit the Holocaust and its aftermath" (Martínez-Alfaro 2016, 65).

This phenomenon forms part of the plethora of literary, testimonial, theatrical, and filmic works on the Holocaust and other individual and collective traumas of the twentieth century that emerged in what Andrew Gross and Susanne Rohr have termed "the long 1990s – the period extending from the fall of the Berlin Wall on 11–9–1989 to the attack on the World Trade Centre on 7–11–2001" (Gross & Rohr 2010, 12). The appearance of this "art of trauma"[22], together with the emergence of the "memory boom of unprecedented proportions" that

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[21] Carpi 2016, 12. See also Onega 2019.

[22] See Laub & Podell 1995.

took place simultaneously (Huyssen 1995, 5), provides ample evidence that trauma has become the new dominant cultural paradigm (Luckhurst 2008, 5). In this context, the fact that Holocaust writings are characterised by dialogism[23], generic hybridity[24], the montage of realist, modernist and postmodernist elements (Rothberg 2000, 10), and/or the excessiveness of the romance as a mode[25], points to the difficulty of putting the Holocaust into words, while the fact that this boom of Holocaust fictions took place four decades after the end of the Second World War may be interpreted as evidence that the symptoms of this atrocious event has reached the phase of working though after a period of latency and acting out characterised by mutism and denial. In an earlier essay[26], I addressed the question of the intrinsic difficulty and problematic ethicality of representing the Holocaust by comparing Enzo Cormann's *Storm Still* (*Toujours l'orage*, 1997) and Roberto Benigni's *Life Is Beautiful* (*La vita è bella*, 1997), a French play and a Hollywood film released the same year, as representatives of two diametrically opposed forms of assimilating and transmitting the traumatic memory of the Shoah by secondary witnesses. A brief glimpse at the evolution of Eva Figes's writing career can help us understand the complexity of this process in the case of direct survivors of the Nazi genocide.

Eva Figes (born Unger, 1932–2012) is a British writer of German-Jewish origin, often placed under the epigraph of "Feminist British Writers" or "Women Writers", together with Iris Murdoch, A. S. Byatt, Margaret Drabble, Fay Weldon and Anita Brookner (Pellicer-Ortín 2015, 69). She escaped with her parents and younger brother from Nazi Germany in 1939, at the age of six, leaving behind her grandparents and other members of her family. She thus developed a complex sense of deracination and survivor guilt, which she attempted to deal with through dissociation and denial. She began her writing career as a form of sustaining herself and her two children after her divorce from John George Figes in 1962. But she did not attempt to write about the traumatic effects of war and the Holocaust until the late sixties, when she wrote two, heavily experimental novels: *Winter Journey* (1967) and *Konek Landing* (1969). *Winter Journey* is an excellent example of trauma narrative reflecting the acting-out phase of trauma. The reader is granted direct access to the stream of thoughts of Janus, a war veteran suffering from shell shock who is constantly re-enacting his traumatic war memories in the ever-present dimension of trauma time[27]. In this novel, there is no indication

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[23] *Ibid.*

[24] See Gilmore 2001.

[25] See Ganteau & Onega 2013.

[26] See Onega 2017a, 292–305.

[27] See Pellicer-Ortín 2011a.

of the specific war in which Janus fought. It is in only in her third novel, *Konek Landing*, that Figes addressed the horrors of the Holocaust for the first time. Considered by the critics as too complex and experimental, this novel constitutes a prototypical example of "limit-case" Holocaust narrative in Leigh Gilmore's sense of the term, as it combines fictional, historical and autobiographical elements. The protagonist, Stefan Konek, is a German-Jewish man born, like Eva Figes, in 1932. But, unlike her, he was unable to escape from Nazi Germany, witnessed the disappearance first of his father and then of his mother, and survived in atrocious conditions in various hide-outs and institutions for orphaned children during the pre-war period. The narration of this period is followed by an enigmatic blank, covering the war years that, as I suggested elsewhere, may be said to reproduce formally the black hole left by the war in Konek's conscious memory (Onega 2012, 100). The third section shows Konek leading an ever-more brutalised errant life ruled by basic physical drives that culminates in the rape of a teenage orphan in the presence of her sickly little bother (Figes 1972, 99-100). After his release from prison he enrols as a seaman on board the *Christina* (Figes 1972, 107), a ship full of crippled and demented war survivors, which, like the medieval Ship of Fools, cruises around the world in a journey that leads nowhere (Onega 2012, 91). He eventually rounds off his life quest by finding a sacrificial death by water at the hands of a prehistoric tribe, thus performing in succession the roles of victim, perpetrator and redeemer in a world of endemic violence. The fact that Figes set the ordeals of her abject protagonist against the pattern of the mythical hero's quest points both to the writer's need to cast an aesthetic veil on the horrors of the Holocaust and to her refusal to accept the widely spread view of the uniqueness and exceptionality of this atrocious historical event. In Figes's chilling view, Konek's life quest as victim, perpetrator and scapegoat is representative of the human condition at large, while the horrors of the Holocaust form part of the endemic violence that has accompanied human beings from the dawn of civilisation (Figes 1972, 99-100).

Konek Landing represents Figes' most sustained attempt to put the collective trauma of the Holocaust into words, but she did not broach her own Holocaust trauma until 1978, with the publication of *Little Eden: A Child at War*. To do so, she significantly moved from the genre of the novel to the memoir. She wrote in her own adult voice about her childhood experience as a German-Jewish exile in England and cast a veil of normalcy and objectivity on her troubled childhood memories by discussing at length the history of Cirencester, the small country town where she attended boarding school during the Blitz. It was not until 2003, twenty five years after the publication of *Little Eden* and sixty four years after her enforced exile from Germany, that Figes eventually published *Tales of Innocence and Experience: An Exploration*. This is her last-but-one book and the only one

in which she attempted to confront directly the most intractable aspects of her own Holocaust trauma: her sense of deracination and the survivor guilt she felt for the loss of her grandparents, particularly her beloved maternal grandmother. As the allusion in the title to William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* makes clear, the starting point for the working through of her Holocaust trauma is the conviction, reached at the end of *Konek Landing*, that the perpetrators of the Holocaust were not monsters, but human beings like the rest of us, and that we all have the capacity for good an evil. Her conclusion brings to mind Hannah Ahrendt's consideration, after attending Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, of "the banality of evil", an expression she used to explain her shocked discovery that: "Eichmann was not Iago and not Macbeth" (Ahrendt 1963, 135), that his only exceptionality lay in his "incapacity to realise what he was doing" through sheer "lack of imagination" (Ahrendt 1963, 135). Ahrendt attributed "the strange interdependence of thoughtlessness and evil" displayed by Eichmann to the fact that the Nazi genocide was an "administrative massacre", that is, "a sort of killing [that] can be directed against any given group, [because] the principle of selection is dependent only upon circumstantial factors" (Ahrendt 1963, 135). This argumentation, employed by the defence to exonerate Eichmann, has the ethical shortcoming of reducing the responsibility for the atrocities committed by dehumanising the perpetrator: "Eichmann was after all only a 'tiny cog' in the machinery of the Final Solution" (Ahrendt 1963, 135). This dehumanisation is compounded, as Simon Critchley notes, by the application of technological efficiency to mass murder: "What is unique about the Holocaust is the attempt to depersonalize and take the passion out of death and turn it into this industrial process" (Critchely 2012, 102).

In striking contrast to this, Figes moves from the perception of evil in the world to the universalization of evil, that is, to the shattering recognition that good and evil form part of the human condition, what Blake referred to metaphorically as the dialectics between prelapsarian innocence and experience. Her position echoes Primo Levi's view, expressed in *The Drowned and the Saved*, that the Nazi camps made the survivors ashamed of being human (Levi 1988). This is the awful truth that Figes had been denying all her life and that, now that she has become a grandmother, she feels compelled to transmit to her granddaughter in the attenuated form of aesthetic indirection. In accord with this, the book takes the form of the authorial narrator's internal monologue triggered by her telling of a Brothers Grimms' tale to her granddaughter every night, constantly interrupted by the memories of her childhood trauma of deracination and exile prompted by the telling of the tale. Thus, the whole memoir develops around the difference between the "sanitize[d]" tales of innocence she tells her granddaughter, which she compares to "old stories" and "history" (Figes 2003, 22), and the awful "tales

of experience" she can only tell herself. As the narrator reflects, all her life she had tried to come to terms with her traumatic past by rationalising it, reading books, doing research about the Holocaust in order to gain a sense of control over the past and over her life. She had even managed to lead an apparently pleasant life by having recourse to long-term dissociation: "To know, but not to know. Separating the private from the public knowledge. The mind is very clever about knowing everything, and knowing nothing, both at the same time"[28]. However, for all her attempts at rationalisation, she was unable to suppress the ghostly visitations of her beloved dead during the night, as she herself recognises: "reason loses its grip in sleep, and history repeats itself, helplessly. The dead are waving goodbye but will not let go" (Figes 2003, 133). Still, by setting to rewrite the fairy tales she had herself listened to as a child, Figes eventually manages to move from the nightmarish re-enactment of her childhood trauma to the healing phase of verbalisation and temporal relocation of the traumatic events in the past where they belong. Thus, at the end of *Tales of Innocence and Experience*, Figes recognises that, although her life journey has not left her unscathed, she is no longer afraid of being accompanied by her beloved ghosts, "as they so often do in Grimms' stories" (Figes 2003, 182), and she is also ready to break her mutism and tell her granddaughter about them. In her own words: "I have come through the forest, faced its terrors, real and imaginary, and reached the fringe, where sunlight glows on the meadows" (Figes 2003, 183). Though it took her a whole life to work through her survivor trauma, it seems evident that with *Tales of Innocence and Experience* Eva Figes managed at last to heal her wounds and learnt to live with the scar of the awful knowledge and survivor guilt of the Holocaust, thanks to storytelling and the power of her creative and fertile imagination.

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13

The 'Other' Voice in Survivor Narratives: A Gender-Based Approach to the Holocaust[*]

ROSARIO ARIAS

Introductory Remarks

Primo Levi's *If This is a Man* (1947), Tadeusz Borowski's *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentleman* (1946), and Elie Wiesel's *Night* (1960) are often referred to, and quoted as representatives of survivor narratives, and they attracted immediate critical attention when they came out. Undoubtedly, Levi's work greatly contributed to establish the corpus now considered canonical in Holocaust studies, following Stefania Lucamante: "Levi's intellectual legacy is such that, without his work, it would be difficult to study today's writings on the Holocaust" (Lucamante 2003, 88)[1]. An interesting case is Jakob Littner's text, published in 1948, which remained obscure until 1992 when Wolfgang Koeppen published a revision of the text as a fictional work. In 2002 the original text was published under the title *My Way through the Night* and it called the attention of scholars, although it remains a lesser-known text among Holocaust survivor

[1]   I wish to thank Dr. Mario Marino for generously providing me with a copy of this essay.

narratives[2]. Boris Pahor's *Necropolis* (1967), in turn, is an autobiographical account of Trieste-born Pahor's experience at several Nazi concentration camps as a political prisoner, as he was imprisoned "for his involvement with the antifascist Slovenian resistance" (O'Neil 2011)[3]. Originally published in Slovenian in 1967, Pahor's *Necropolis* was neglected until 1995, when it was translated into English. In 2007, Pahor's autobiographical novel was translated into Italian and since has been deemed a key text in Holocaust testimonial literature. Clearly, the narratives and experience of survivors like Levi and Wiesel, among others, have significantly shaped the direction taken by Holocaust studies since its inception. In contrast, women's survivor narratives have sometimes been conspicuously absent from critical study, and have remained peripheral, or rather, they have not often been analysed specifically from a gender approach. However, since the late 1980s and 1990s, several critics have been keen to focus on the perspective of the 'other' voice, not without contestation, by paying attention to the way women are figured in texts by men, to the way women's personal experiences are portrayed in women's narratives, and finally, to the significance of gender in understanding the Holocaust as a whole (Horowitz 1998, 366-67). Therefore, in what follows I will deal with the ways in which the female voice, a vulnerable 'other' within others, is heard, both in "literary testimony" and factual survivor testimonies, as well as voices of Jewish and non-Jewish authors, to broaden the scope of this study. I consider the relevance of a gender-based approach to Holocaust studies a controversial topic among historians and Holocaust critics. In focusing on the 'other' voice, I will demonstrate how women's position has been re-oriented in twenty-first century academic scholarship on the Holocaust.

1. THE DISTINCTIVE DIFFERENCE OF A GENDER APPROACH TO THE HOLOCAUST: A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The 1980s, "the so-called 'second wave' of interest in the Holocaust" (Ubertowska 2013, 27), and 1990s saw the burgeoning interest in the intersection of Holocaust studies and gender studies, always suffused with controversy and suspicion, since some critics proposed that the Holocaust is so incomprehensible, that to undertake a feminist or gender approach would be seen as trivial. Nevertheless, in the 1990s several studies like Carol Rittner and John Roth's *Different Voices: Women and the Holocaust* (1993), a ground-breaking study on gender and the Holocaust, attracted the interest and appealed to academics in both gender

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[2]   I am indebted to Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Pross for this reference to Jakob Littner's story and text.

[3]   My gratitude goes to Prof. Dr. Cinzia Ferrini for drawing my attention to Boris Pahor.

studies and Holocaust studies. It addressed the absent voices of women's survivor testimonies, and included analysis of women's experiences. Other books have significantly contributed to increase the ever-expanding field of gender studies and the Holocaust in the last twenty-five years; nevertheless, "not until recently has Holocaust Studies generally enlisted feminist or gender theory in its analyses, nor have academics shown much, if any, awareness of their own gender assumptions" (Goldenberg & Shapiro 2013, 2). Arguably, gender approaches to the Holocaust are intent on reflecting diverse experiences, both male and female, and on opening up new avenues of research into the relations between men and women and the experiences of women. These approaches complicate the past in unexpected ways as regarding women, gender, and sexuality, which "will result in new questions and new understandings" (Goldenberg & Shapiro 2013, 5). One critic, Judith Tydor Baumel, undertook in-depth study of the situation of scholars at the beginning of the twenty-first century to map out the intersection of Holocaust and gender studies. She identified three attitudes to gender and the Holocaust which ranged from utter rejection to approval and acceptance, but with a cautionary note (Baumel 2002, 198). Most incursions into gender and the Holocaust were prefaced with a justification of the scholars' research, which "accentuate[d] the realization that a gendered perspective on the Holocaust" is far from being fully accepted (Baumel 2002, 201). Since the beginning of the 2010s there have been several attempts to examine these controversies, and to offer research methodologies for a feminist take on women's survivor narratives. One such example is offered by Aleksandra Ubertowska who tries to cast light upon the wealth of material on the Holocaust and the feminist perspective. She argues that the female experience punctuated the structuring of the narrative and the fashioning of the writing subject:

> In case of female authors, a different rule of structuring the concentration camp and Holocaust experience dominates the discourse. The aspect of autonomy, individual strength, loses its significance for the sake of saving the family or loosing [sic] those closest. The female subject involved with testimony (the autobiographical 'I') is also constructed differently. It manifests itself in attempts to depersonalize the narrative, as well as through efforts to accentuate the saving role of community ties, created within the circle of 'foster families', 'sister' relations, and friendships. (Ubertowska 2013, 34)

This critic goes on to explain that metaphorical language is often used in women's narratives to suggest the effects of trauma upon her identity through tropes such as the (muted) female voice, following Carol Ritter and John K. Roth in their introduction to *Different Voices* (Ritter & Roth 1993, 16). One common aspect in women's survivor testimonies is *gender wounding*, defined by Sara R. Horowitz as "a shattering of something innate and important to her sense of her own

womanhood [...] that emerges in literary texts by women – and, differently, in works by men" (Horowitz 1998, 366). Considering the ways in which the atrocity of the Holocaust affected women and men in their specificity reveals how they responded to their trauma and shattered identities. Pregnancy, for example, appears in many testimonial accounts and can be used "a fulcrum upon which to explore moral dilemmas of survival" (Horowitz 1998, 374). In general terms, Sara Horowitz (Horovitz 1998, 371-372) finds in academic treatment of women and the Holocaust a focus on narratives of heroism (emphasis on bravery and agency of women and motherhood), on the one hand, and on narratives of atrocity (emphasis on loss and suffering), on the other. However, this is not a clear-cut division, as both narratives mingle and undercut one another in the reflections of women survivors, as seen in the texts under discussion.

2. FEMALE SELVES' SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AT AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU: MOTHERHOOD AND IDENTITY IN DELBO, LEWIS, MILLU

Charlotte Delbo's trilogy *Auschwitz and After* (1995): *None of Us Will Return* (1946/1965), *Useless Knowledge* (1946-47/1970) and *The Measure of Our Days* (1960s/1971), translated into English by Rosette C. Lamont, has contributed to a more nuanced analysis of survivor narratives, in general, but also of the gender aspects narrated in her text, in particular. When France was invaded and occupied by German troops during the Second World War, Delbo returned to France. Her husband had joined the French Resistance, and Delbo also joined. On 2 March 1942 they were arrested on the "charge of distributing anti-German leaflets in Paris" (Barrows). When her husband was killed in May in 1942, she was transported to Auschwitz, alongside two hundred and thirty other Frenchwomen, most of them members of the Resistance, and who had been arrested not for ethnic or religious reasons, but for political reasons. Delbo stayed in Auschwitz (Birkenau – the female side of Auschwitz), and a satellite camp until January 1944, and then she was sent to Ravensbrück, the all-female concentration camp. The Red Cross released her and moved her to Sweden. Then, she returned to France, when her health had improved. As Lawrence Langer has posed, the trilogy is Delbo's masterpiece. The first volume, *None of Us Will Return*, had been finished in 1946, but "Delbo put it in a drawer and sat there for 20 years" (Langer 1995, xvii). She finally published it in 1965. The second volume, *Useless Knowledge*, was published immediately after the first, and Delbo's last piece, *The Measure of Our Days*, came out in 1985, the year of her death. However, there is some conflicting information regarding the period of her writing and the dates of her publications (Graham 2015, 14). Her trilogy, which can be analysed

from the point of view of an eye-witness account and testimony, is considered Holocaust literature as it combines autobiography (prose) and poetry. However, contradictory as it may seem, the use of 'we' of the text excludes the reader, but it is a "necessary technique", according to Graham, since "it allows Delbo to detail the events of the camps while also reminding the reader of the 'ungraspable' nature of the event of the Holocaust" (Graham 2015, 76).

The fact that Delbo wrote the first volume of her trilogy right after she had gone through the harrowing events underlines the imaginative capacity of Delbo as a survivor who resorts to poetry and prose to find a way to deal with the paradox of survival. As Susana Onega has aptly noted in this volume, art forms offer the opportunity for Delbo to restore order to a fragmented self, both individually and for the community. Delbo employs impressions and sense memory to narrate her experience in a style reminiscent of interior monologue, mixed up with descriptions, poems, and several voices and points of view. Ellen Graham has aptly suggested that the ambiguities in Delbo's writing place the reader in closer engagement with the text, more particularly through the poems that abound in the trilogy, to make the reader *see* (Graham 2015, 71). In order for a traumatised survivor to work through his/her trauma and to integrate himself or herself in the community, the most effective way, according to Boris Cyrulnik, is

> [...] to transform the trauma [...] As soon as we can talk about a trauma, draw it, put in on a stage or think it through, we can control the emotions that either overwhelmed us or made us freeze when it occurred. Representing the tragedy allows us to rework the feelings it triggers. (Cyrulnik 2011, 68)

In fact, Delbo asserts in her first volume that her autobiographical writing is a belated process: "[p]resently I am writing this story in a café – it is turning into a story" (Delbo 1995, 27). Seen in this light, resilience depends on individual capacity to imaginatively rework the feelings elicited by trauma. Then, imagination and creativity, art and literature provide mechanisms of resilience. Delbo acknowledges that "[t]he will to resist was doubtlessly buried in some deep, hidden spring which is now broken, I will never know" (Delbo 1995, 64). Clearly, there is a constant tension between two forces at work in Delbo's text: death and survival, history and storytelling, which points out the paradoxical nature of trauma: Delbo and other survivors (Mado, for example) find difficulties healing their wounded selves: "[e]ven those of us who believe they buried the past within their innermost secret depths, even those who added to that past all kinds of new memories [...] piling them up in order to cover the past, it will not disappear [...] I died in Auschwitz but no one knows it" (Delbo 1995, 266-67).

Delbo's trilogy, *Auschwitz and After*, belongs to testimonial literature written by women survivors, in this case, by a French writer, member of the Resistance.

Likewise, another text, *A Time to Speak* (1992), by Helen Lewis, an award-winning dancer and choreographer in Northern Ireland, who died aged 93 (in 2010), lived in the Terezin ghetto, and was later deported to Auschwitz in 1942, testifies to the relevance of the 'other' voice in Holocaust writing. Both Delbo and Lewis resist the main objective of the Nazi project: eradicate physical witnesses to the extermination project – an event without witnesses. This was achieved by depriving victims of their identities by annihilating their selves. In the concentration and extermination camps, "the deported were deprived of their identity, their body, and even their names…[i]n testimonial Holocaust writing, survivors and witnesses attempt to recover the individual identities of which they were deprived and, through first person narrative, once again become subjects with a voice" (Loew 2011, 10). Immersed in contradictions and paradoxes, Holocaust writing offers alternating shifts between muteness and speech, as it oscillates between meaning and meaninglessness, as Sara Horowitz develops in her *Voicing the Void* (1997). In survivor writing, "the trope of muteness functions as an index of trauma, which both compels and disables testimony" (Horowitz 1997, 30). Charlotte Delbo alongside Primo Levi employ muteness to explore the struggle of the survivor to find the adequate vocabulary to express the unspeakable (Horowitz 1997, 30). A very interesting association between 'witness' and to 'bear witness' is made by Horowitz. She argues that muteness and speech are inextricably linked with blindness and sight, because "to witness implies both to see (to be an eyewitness) and to speak (to bear witness)" (Horowitz 1997, 87). Muteness connects also with the author's "search for a credible, authentic voice" (Horowitz 1997, 30). However, as some critics have argued, in women's testimonies of the Holocaust, this act is double: "the double difficulty of affirming an independent subjectivity of these women as witnesses" (Loew 2011, 12). In other words, this means that the female voice has become doubly muted and silenced, both marginal and peripheral, as well, in Holocaust research.

In Delbo's third volume of *Auschwitz and After*, *The Measure of Our Days*, Marceline, a fellow survivor, cannot even think of the possibility of bearing children, after Auschwitz (1995, 334). Charlotte Delbo explores the effect that the Auschwitz experience has had upon her, and upon her friends, thus offering instances of *gender wounding*. The Auschwitz self returns as a revenant and haunts the process of healing, thus threatening Delbo's recuperation and integration into the social group, as reflected in the difficulties the survivors face in healing their wounded selves. In turn, Helen Lewis suffers PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) up to 1949, when her first child is born: "Yet in spite of being safe and feeling secure, I was tormented by a recurring nightmare, from which I always woke screaming in terror. It stopped, never to return again, after the birth of our first child, Michael, in 1949" (Lewis 1992, 131). When looking herself at the mirror, she does not relate

to the face she sees in the mirror, unrecognizable because of her wounded identity: "Would time give me back my face, or would it bear the mark of the camps for life, like the tattoo on my left forearm?" (Lewis 1992, 118). These narrative accounts problematise questions of female identity and motherhood, avoiding simplistic generalisations about women, gender and sex.

Although clearly the Holocaust was not about gender or sex, "acknowledging women as victims of (sexual) violence also asserts that women's lives are as valuable as men's" (Goldenberg 2013, 100). In the face of the Final Solution, rape and other forms of sexual violence against Jewish women had been secondary in academic study until recently. Race mixing was considered a crime, but rape occurred. However, gender perspectives upon the Holocaust should not be restricted to examining women (and men) as objects of particular abuses (Nazi brutality attacked men and women both as Jewish people as Jewish and as men and women), but also as "developers of particular survival strategies", thinkers and agents in re-constructing their shattered existence (Horowitz 1998, 375).

Survival strategies are common in women's accounts, and they feature in both Delbo's and Lewis's texts. Solidarity and bonding stand out as survival strategies in their narratives, and Myrna Goldenberg underlines "the importance of connectedness, nurturance and caregiving in women's memoirs" (Goldenberg 1998, 336), but other critics, like Lawrence Langer, argue that there is no evidence that "mutual support between sisters, when possible, prevailed more than between brothers" (Langer 1998, 362). As stated earlier, the Holocaust was not about gender or sex, but to rescue the voice of women, their experiences and coping strategies undoubtedly broadens the scope of the field of Holocaust studies. Both Delbo and Lewis emphasise the relevance of *bonding*, as seen in Delbo's text when they go to a fellow survivor's funeral after the liberation: "'Everyone of us who returned was lucky,' Jeanne said. 'Lucky to have had the others.'" (Delbo 1995, 341). Then, Lewis states that "one of the unwritten laws of the camp was that survival was possible only as part of a group, never on your own" (Lewis 1992, 100). However important bonding and solidarity are in Delbo's narrative, Delbo's text also provides instances of a less idealised vision where bonding does not always lead to survival or recuperation of the self, after their Auschwitz experience. In addition, it has been noted that more research must be conducted on the mother-daughter bond since "bonds between mothers and daughters function in the accounts of Holocaust victims and survivors as symbols of life, hope, tradition, and continuity, as well as containing a measure of rupture and devastation" (Bergen 2013, 26).

In this sense, special attention should be paid to the Italian-Jewish Liana Millu's collection of stories of women who lived with her at Auschwitz-Birkenau: *Smoke over Birkenau* (1986). Prefaced by Primo Levi, who acknowledges that "[f]

or a variety of reasons, the women's situation was a good deal worse than that of the men" (Millu 1997, 7), this book unfolds six stories of heroism, following Horowitz's distinction between "narratives of brutality" and "narratives of heroism" (Horowitz 1998, 371-372) in the depiction of women bonding together to save the life of a child or a newborn, and the heroism of the pregnant woman to carry to term the child. However, it also portrays the ambiguous responses and the consequences such a heroic act could bring for the survival of others, putting at risk their lives, and thus offering a more complex picture of the situation at Birkenau. This is seen in the story entitled "Under Cover of Darkness":

> "Maria is pregnant, *Frau blockova*," came a voice out of the blue. Erna spun around, every head turned, and Adela found herself the focus of a unanimous and passionate curiosity. She stood surrounded, cool as a cucumber, frowning slightly.
> "Pregnant?" Erna repeated incredulously. "She's pregnant? How do you know? What kind of crazy story is that?" (…)
> "It's true," whispered a girl next to me. "I saw her do it too. I knew she was up to. Remember that night she kept us all up?" (Millu 1997, 75)

Finally, Maria will be helped out by the women in her block only to find death in childbirth. The distinction between narratives of brutality and narratives of heroism becomes blurred, as all the stories end in suffering and death. Another example is Bruna who saves fresh food from the black market for her teenage son, fearing he might be sent to the gas chamber due to his weak condition. Out of desperation, Bruna "calls out to him across the electric fence to which they both rush, their meeting ending in a fatal final embrace" (Kelly 2003, 844), one of the most disturbing scenes in the book. The six vignettes are described by an eyewitness narrator who offers a first-hand account of the women at the extermination camp. The first story narrates a perpetrator's actions against a woman, which underlines how the Holocaust "functioned as a network of atrocity perpetrated by people who did not need to subscribe to Nazi ideas or even to be on the winning side of the genocidal equation to be agents of destruction" (Bergen 2013, 20).

3. The 'Other's Other': Women as Perpetrators in Ravensbrück's Nazi Concentration Camp for Women: Helm and Schneider

Delbo, Lewis and Millu represent the Auschwitz-Birkenau experience in their testimonies, and this demonstrates that the extermination camp has been privileged as subject of enquiry in Holocaust studies, also as regards women. Crucially, Ravensbrück, the only all-female camp, has hardly been discussed

in works on gender perspectives on the Holocaust, such as Rittner and Roth's *Different Voices*, which only includes a short paragraph to the all-female camp (Rittner & Roth 1993, 7); or Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman's edited collection, *Women in the Holocaust* (1998), as relevant as *Different Voices* in gender-related perspectives on the Holocaust. In this sense, the recent publication of Sarah Helm's *If This Is a Woman: Inside Ravensbrück: Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (2015), a biography of Ravensbrück, fills in this gap and reveals the stories of death, suffering, horror, hope and survival generated in the camp. Interestingly, this camp has been neglected in the work of historians, according to Sarah Helm, author of *If This Is a Woman*, whose title plays with Levi's well-known *If This Is a Man* (and it is a quotation from Levi's work, which served as inspiration for Helm). In it, Helm attempts to set history right in giving Ravensbrück, as well as the stories produced in the camp, the place it deserves in Holocaust studies. This camp does not feature prominently in the story of the Holocaust, and it deserves a closer attention precisely because its existence has been glossed over by the western communal memory (Laqueur 2015, 2).

Helm's book helps us understand how comprehensive and "thoroughgoing" the Final Solution was, as well as its desire to eradicate those considered 'deviant', unfit, or, simply, "undesirable" (Reich 2015, 1), by portraying life at Ravensbrück, one of the 42.500 sites in Nazi Germany where victims were killed, in this case, solely women, which makes this camp unique. This camp opened in 1939, situated about 50 miles north of Berlin. In the 1950s this camp was placed behind the Iron Curtain, and for several decades Western survivors and historians had no access to the site, and relevant data and evidence disappeared. Even though other books have recorded life at this camp, none is so focused on so many women prisoners as Helm's study: "Ravensbrück was the only Nazi concentration camp built for women" (Helm 2015, xi). Most of the prisoners were Polish, some were Jewish, most were political enemies, prostitutes, members of the resistance, Roma people, physically and mentally disabled, and those who were regarded as "inferior" or "asocials" (lesbians). The camp's most well-known victim was the Jewish Olga Benário, communist, who was the model for "Die Tragende", a statue of a woman carrying a fellow prisoner "which stood over the East German memorial site at Ravensbrück" (Laqueur 2015, 3).

One reviewer of Helm's text notes that its relevance lies, in part, in highlighting Ravensbrück as a training camp for female guards, for other camps (Laqueur 2015, 4). Helm's book acquires added significance when placed alongside Helga Schneider's *Let Me Go: My Mother and the SS* (2001), which sheds light on women's experience at the women's camp. In *Let Me Go* Schneider provides an account of her mother, a concentration guard, who walked out of her daughter's life when she was 4, leaving her and her baby brother who was 19 months old.

Schneider saw her mother again 30 years later when she took her little son to meet his grandmother, and there she was told the truth of the matter, and why she had left leaving them behind: to join the Nazi SS. Her mother had special training to qualify as a concentration-camp guard: after early activism in the National Socialist Party

> then Ravensbrück and finally Auschwitz-Birkenau. In the women's concentration camp at Ravensbrück she had collaborated on certain experiments which were carried out on the prisoners, and then she had undergone the training for future extermination camp guards. (Schneider 2005,15)

Let Me Go traces the trauma the author manifests, having suffered from an absent mother-daughter relationship, from a distorted surrogate mother figure (her stepmother), and from a life without love until she married an Italian boy and settled in Italy. When her mother is in her nineties, she receives a call from an old friend of hers urging Helga Schneider to visit her mother whose health is rapidly deteriorating. *Let Me Go* records the emotional turmoil the visit causes Schneider, but also it provides glimpses into the life of a guard, a perpetrator, which contributes to new ways of dealing with Holocaust memory in the twenty-first century. This has been found lacking in other relevant studies on women and the Holocaust, such as Camila Loew's *The Memory of Pain: Women's Testimonies of the Holocaust* (2011), where it is clear that more research is needed on the subject of women who were complicit with the Nazi regime and its collaborators. In this case *Let Me Go* is a text authored by one child of the perpetrator generation, where aspects related to women, gender, and sexuality are privileged. In so doing, it casts new light upon "three major debates in Holocaust historiography: How did the killers carry out their task? Who collaborated and why? And do we need victims' voice to understand genocide?" (Bergen 2013, 15).

In this line, *If This Is a Woman* relies on the survivors' testimonies, as well as documentation found after the Fall of the Iron Curtain, regarding Nazi medical experiments. Chapter 13 is entitled "Rabbits", the name the victims receive as they are used for medical experiments, conducted by doctors who later justified their actions by claiming that they were following orders, or that these decisions had nothing to do with them:

> [Karl] Gebhardt, and his deputy, Fritz Fischer, would both assert at the Nuremberg doctors' trial in 1947 that the idea of using women as the next guinea pigs was nothing to do with them. Gebhardt even claimed that he was ill in bed when the decision was taken to use women. (Helm 2015, 233).

Further on, Helm provides the accounts of the medical experiments on women's legs, from the point of view of the victims and from the perspective of the

doctors, as recorded in their trial: "...the doctors had taken the decision to insert a larger amount of bacteria into the women's legs, with more dirt, glass and splinters to ensure that infection spread further" (Helm 2015, 238). In turn, Helga Schneider's personal account of a child of a perpetrator gives us an insight into the guard, her mother, who feels no remorse about assisting the doctors in their medical experiments at Ravensbrück:

> 'Didn't you feel any compassion for those human guinea pigs?' I ask my mother. As I do so, I realise the pointlessness of my question.
> She hesitates for a second, lowers her head and stares at her hands.
> Then she raises her eyes and declares with a kind of obtuse arrogance, 'No, I felt no compassion,' and she seems to stumble over the words, 'for "those people", because the operations were being carried out for the good of humanity'. (Schneider 2005, 68)

Doris L. Bergen states that women's roles as perpetrators found legitimation and approval through familial relations, referring to the criminals' wives, but others were "hands-on perpetrators", like Schneider's mother, "practitioners of extreme violence", one of the 4,000 women who worked as guards who exercised power and authority, as well as women prisoners who functioned as *kapos* and heads of blocks. These women offer relevant information "on the social dynamics of extreme violence" (Bergen 2013, 19). *Let Me Go* provides a harrowing account of a perpetrator's perspective upon the extreme violence exercised at the camp, and this is manifested through verbal and non-verbal elements since the perpetrator's body expresses her lived experience and emotions. Since phenomenological perspectives are utilised to analyse the body as narrator in the life stories of Holocaust survivors, Schneider's mother's narrative, that of a perpetrator, lends itself to this kind of analysis. A narrative full of silences and gaps, the former guard shows arousal of emotion and bodily gestures that the daughter has to decipher and decode to see whether her mother had any feelings towards the past, or if the past has left any trace upon her body: "She gets to her feet, apparently in a terrible mood all of a sudden. She takes a few steps through the room: she walks upright, apparently quite steady on her feet" (Schneider 2005, 83); "[t]hen she subsides into floods of tears – too high-pitched, too shrill" (Schneider 2005, 86). The answer is contradictory, as the mother expresses anger, rejection, and sadness, but never shows remorse or repentance. Thus, it remains clear that the daughter's visit shatters the reader's expectations as one expects to find a successful reconciliation between mother and daughter, that never happens. Even though the first-person narrator, the daughter, is traumatised, as secondary witness, and cannot cope with her mother's lack of repentance and mercy, the visit does her good in that she succeeds in tearing herself away from her mother.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the Holocaust was not about gender or sex, but to rescue the voices of women, their experiences and coping strategies, broadens the scope of the field of Holocaust studies. As the genocide was part of everyday life, it is necessary to bear in mind women's experiences, gender and sexuality to understand the historical event in its fullest sense. The texts under study in this essay by Delbo, Lewis, Millu, Helm and Schneider contribute, to varying degrees, to a more thorough understanding of the Holocaust and women, not only as victims, but also as perpetrators. Since the 1990s there has been an upsurge of interest in women and the Holocaust, as developed throughout this essay, yet this means that more research must be carried out in this area. In addition, "recognition of the presence...of sex and sexual violence in the Holocaust has enabled productive comparison with other cases of war and genocide in ways that highlight similar dynamics and particular qualities" (Bergen 2013, 22). All in all, despite the controversies, as I hope to have demonstrated, Holocaust studies benefit from gender-focused analyses, as they expand our knowledge of the inherent complexities that lie in the Holocaust experiences.

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