

Reflections on Paradigms of Philosophizing

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It has become disputable whether humans are still rational beings or whether their production activity in a continually expanding sphere of destructiveness and absurdity must be considered as indicative of their ontologically irrational nature, merely 'biped and featherless' beings as defined by Plato. It is beyond question, however, that they are beings that permanently produce text, i.e. a semiotically, semantically and pragmatically loaded space of their own being in the world.

From ritual body-painting, which inscribed our ancestors into the sacralized segment of the natural world, up to modern sophisticated experiments of conceptual poetry and surrealist prose with articulation: such is the apparent amplitude of the text space. From the babbling of infants, trying to express their internal state and the moment of meeting the world in human protolanguage, up to the mysterious soothing of the Pythian and prophet who join together visible and invisible in their own world and gesture. Everything that attempts to be heard, seen and understood, and waits for a response, is a potential reality of the text. The text is thus the way of crystallization of the world's human content proper, the modus of humankind arriving in the world through and by the word, by hearing and articulation.

The human brain itself works in an ontological mode of internal dialogue, so an internal drive exists towards self-expression, articulation, speech, and eventual writing. The said internal dialogue mechanism of our consciousness is fraught with neurotic, schizophrenic and other psychosomatic breakdowns caused by the inadequacy of the drive's articulation; here, too, is the basis of our unique capacity to sharpen reflection techniques and to sophisticate logical apparatus. 'The dialogue that the soul has with itself' – such was one of Plato's definitions of philosophy.

At the turn of the millennium, humanity has been rediscovering some ancient truths and, burdened with torrents of information, sees once again that *omniscience does not necessarily bring wisdom*. With almost mathematical precision the sphere of what is known extends the horizons of the unknown, bringing the intellectual of today very close to the well-known confession: 'I know that I know nothing.' As

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before, the symbolic formula 'Know Yourself' urgently and insistently invites us to embark on this endless journey.

The human being of today is dealing with serious shifts in the paradigm system of values and ontological orientations. Notwithstanding the flexibility of this system, one should take care to preserve its vital force, which consists of an essential difference between *descending* and *ascending*. Any indifference to this distinction, any insensitivity to it, any forms of ethical and ontological aloofness, lead a person to a crisis of identity, to a total loss of the meaning of his or her own existence, to existential devastation. An extremely attentive and sensitive relation to tradition is needed in order to avert the dangers of the paradigm shift that is happening (in the topos of Being). In this context we may remember the following: 'Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God' (Rev. 3:2).

Today the industry of death is hidden under a certain cultivation of the production of 'rubbish' – ready-made, casual, cheap commercial standards of life, love and death. The intense replacement of deep existential states with their signs turns humankind into simply a case or envelope, the carrier of artificially inserted bits of information which transform human beings into individual variables in the algorithmic system of social existence. Occasional breakdowns in this system are relieved as often as necessary by psychoanalytic, psychedelic or other means. The common result is a feeling of growing internal emptiness.

Today one can hear the following in modern philosophy: *The total simulacrazation of culture and life, the impossibility of distinguishing authentic from inauthentic, existential devastation – all these are more or less evident symptoms of the failure awaiting us. We carefully maintain signs of culture, intensify communication, and with this we are losing more and more of the sense of our own existence. To revive past values is to revive old illusions. Behind us there are no anticipations which have not already been realized ...*

The paradox of the 'final situation' in which modern human beings apparently find themselves requires of them certain 'fatalistic strategies'. The peculiarity of the situation about which we are speaking is that people are essentially pushed out of the space of life into the zone of signs. In this zone the saturation of information makes the reality of an event absolutely indistinguishable from its virtual reality. Here the virtual reality of the mass-media makes equally significant or insignificant any of its messages.

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One of my hypotheses, which I would like to suggest for your consideration, is that, notwithstanding everything mentioned above, the tendency to a new productive and searching synthesis has become vitally important in contemporary culture. Conceiving, explaining and interpreting the intentions of the human mind – getting behind the looking-glass of postmodern discourse – is exhausting. The most intense activation of the sense-making ability of the human being is needed to restore the lost balance between the absurd versus the meaningful, to prevent human beings from perishing in the post-mortal state of their own absence.

The necessity of a productive mental synthesis and sense-making activity emerges

in the growing interaction between religion, philosophy, science and art. Having noted that 'we still have no epistemology that can match the highest spiritual being', Nicolai Berdyaev (1874–1948) highlighted the deep dependence of epistemology on the spiritual growth of humankind. Accepting the immanence of cognition in being and the possibility of creative human growth to the highest states of spirituality not only presupposed a turn to ontological roots of thought, and demanded its existential performance, but filled it with striving to the transcendent, that is, fed it with the energy of infinite self-deepening and openness.

Philosophical thought was supposed not only to overcome 'the low forms of communication'; it appeared to be not only a right, but a duty of everybody to have a will to another being, a task of individuality to 'creative increasing life'. Here, establishing the personality as the foundation of any being presupposed first of all the discovery of individuality in its freedom to affirm its striving to universalism. Here is the aim of philosophy, 'not creating a system, but as a creative cognition act in the world' (Berdyaev, 1916: 47).

It is more difficult to take upon oneself the execution of philosophy as the production of spiritual activity in which the inner integrity of humankind is not only realized but also restored. Only then will philosophy see itself as the liberation of human beings from any depression so that they can play their own role in the *cosmos*, where they are able to express the meaningfulness of their own spiritual lives. Philosophy expects communication to be carried out on the basis of primary and ultimate intuitions and not on the basis of the intermediate proofs of discursive thought. It is important to recognize the essential difference between some averaged logical forms of philosophical knowledge (which often functions in society by solving purely didactic problems) and philosophy in the process of its birth and life in culture.

For Bakhtin, to understand an object is 'to understand my duty toward it (my due attitude), to understand it in its relation to me in the unique being-event, which presupposes not abstraction from myself, but my responsible participation', this means 'to grasp the truth of interrelations' (Bakhtin, *Philosophy of the Act*). The striving of philosophical reflection to understand (and thus to overcome) the 'crisis of the act' (the division of the subjective world into the vital world of depth and the objectively posited world of abstract meanings) is inside this crisis. Thus, the vital test for philosophical gnosis is whether or not it is able to be the praxis of a 'spiritual act'.

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Wittgenstein's aphorism 'always try to speak truthfully and, above all, clearly' and his assertion 'to have told a lie means to have made the first step to the truth, if only told in a distinct and clear manner' was no doubt not all the truth about Wittgenstein himself. After all, he had confessed in a letter that his teaching as expressed in the *Treatise on Logic and Philosophy* consists of two parts, of which one had been written while the other had not, the latter being more important. The second part is the domain of the ethical, which is not to be said. Here silence and deed are important. Informational multi-dimensionality of the text turns out total deformation if taken without ethical dimension. And no stylistic and aesthetic perfection can save the

situation. We have to learn anew how to work with faint and obscure signs that only hint at deep senses concealed in the silence, with the signs that remain out of 'text-books', with primary signs of death and life.

'A child said: what is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands; how could I answer the child? I do not know what it is anymore.' In these unpretentious lines by Whitman, the naiveté of a child's question addressed to the poet in fact conceals all the seriousness of the world which expects not only its articulation but comprehension as well. Another poet once remarked, though, that if a bird realized what it sings about, why it sings and what it is inside the bird that sings, it would never sing.

Human beings are said to have entered the world quietly. While making themselves at home in this silent and frightening space which due to its vastness had magnetizing power as well, they tried to tame and master it by means of the word. Humans 'built a nest' in the word, in its sacral depths, outlining the 'circles' of his being as well as the inevitability of perpetual return to its 'circuit'. The profane level of language, with its splitting into 'denotatum' and 'significate' is, undoubtedly, the result of subsequent augmentation. The initial language *ontos* is closely linked with the word 'saviour', 'healer', as well as with the ritual word capable of protecting humans from misfortunes and fear, of making the impossible possible. This language stratum is probably very close to the speech of an ancient shaman, classical Pythia, or medieval Russian *yurodivy*. With all the difference in these speech experiences and the functional peculiarities of each of them, there is something that makes them similar in some ways. This is a certain mysterious experience of pronouncing these secret, unpredictable words possessing the energy of utmost importance. This principally non-reflexive speech, while reserving for itself the right to immediate syntactical and semantic 'non-sense', the right to exceed the bounds, at the same time delineates space, a certain locus of possible meaning indirectness, reflexive untwining and infinitive interpretations. It would be advisable to remember, though, that the 'space' delineated by our non-reflexive ontic tradition may prove to be rather miserable. Such was the case with the well-known religious cult of the so-called 'hole-drillers' or *dyromolyaev* described by Vladimir Solovyev in 1900, who after drilling a hole in some dark corner of a log hut, would press their lips to it and say many times: 'my log hut, my hole, save me!' Presumably this primitive and almost tragicomic verbal ritual conceals a metaphysical fear of 'falling out of the nest', lest you should find yourself in an unfamiliar space, where there is no escape, no 'home', where you feel desolate and lonely.

The silent chaos of the unknown seems to be subdued by an intellect capable of converting it into the order of the known. At the same time, even the notification of the world of the inevitability of its entropy and death, when the very possibility of the emergence of 'regulation islets' is dissolved in the necessity of universal equilibrium and similarity, and the possibility of differentiation disappears in the stream of chaos, cannot provoke a feeling of the tragic nature of the word. Everything happens in accordance with the well-known laws: being absorbed by chaos, 'order' seems to prevail as if it itself predicted such a decrease. This may be regarded as a peculiar culmination point of the scientific approach to the world: by revealing something which is absolutely independent of me, that established order of things which declares the indisputability of the disappearance of the very possibility of my

existence, I find myself in a position of utter resignation and imperturbability, I find myself a hardly noticeable particle in a powerful stream of universality. Now my pretensions are to be subdued, I am to be only the ears and eyes of something that is happening without my knowledge, my own involvement being restricted to knowing the course of events immanent to the world. Any kind of ego should become silent. Here the world appears before humankind in the light of universal repetition and science as a most diligent pupil 'reads' the ontology of repetitions. The humbleness of the learner and the perfidy of the cognizant seem to co-exist in scientific reason: while submitting itself to the logic of a subject, the scientific idea seeks to subjugate the world to its own logic.

In truth, from time to time the voices can be heard of the 'admirers of spiritual hooliganism' (as Leo Shestov called himself) who are eager to remind us that the order the philosophers never stop dreaming about may exist only in class-rooms and that sooner or later the ground will slip from under our feet. 'And here, perhaps, Shakespeare will prove useful. He will tell you what the unknown is which by no means can and must be reduced to the known.'

But even assuming that our primary duty in this world actually consists in establishing 'the arbitrary islets of order and regulation' (Viner), i.e. in, as we say, the extraction of the root of regulation from any uncertainty (ignoring at the same time the remainder as an error of irrational qualities), will it all mean that we may find ourselves on the verge of gnoseological arbitrariness? Not in the sense that our knowledge may be under a delusion and may be carried away by the false and veritable notions of the world, but in the sense of the very quality and orientation of our cognitive efforts. If we live in a world which probably does not care for us, no defeat will be able to deprive us of the satisfaction of having existed in this world for a certain period of time. Human beings in the space of ontological 'unreciprocation' in effect find themselves in a position of resolute and consistent opposition to their own efforts to adjust the world so as to find most satisfaction in their existence in it, to the total objectivity of the world. 'Satisfaction' itself may change here into 'agony' – a spiritual indifference to everything, this terrible and corrupting force of secret despair.

Nevertheless, when facing the inevitable question 'why do we exist?' (surely not for the sake of more or less 'successful' augmentation of functionally calculated conditions of one's own comfort, the more so as the calculation itself may result in 'the census of final resources'), human beings involuntarily come into contact with their own silent experience.

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External dialogue is only the starter that initiates independent functioning and development of an individuality, his or her active attitude toward the world and God. True dialogue has an emphatically creative intention. It is known that creative activity is always dialogical. But the reverse is true, too: not only is creation dialogue, but also dialogue is always creation: readiness to break away from stereotypes, to launch into improvisation, etc. Creativity of dialogue is not toward the creation of things, but toward the creation of relations: creation of love and friend-

ship is the central motif of the ontology of dialogue. Improvisation, fundamental non-mechanistic means, are characteristics of a live dialogue and, on the contrary, systematic presentation is always strictly monological and represents a degenerated, straightened monologue, in which the thinker brings out his or her ratiocinations without welcoming (even without regarding) any opinions not included in his or her system of notions.

The ultimate alienation between knowledge and values, science and morality, utility and beauty is recognized as a great menace to culture, to humankind, and even to the very existence of life on earth; this stimulates both theoretical and practical searches for ways of managing these schisms by use of these same dialogical means: humankind did not invent any other in all its history.

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The striving of philosophical reflection, increasingly pronounced in the 20th century, to force its way to life-authenticity (or the authentic vitality?) of the 'human-in-the-world' inevitably gives problematic character to the very phenomenon of reflection. As thought discovers for itself the possibility of consciousness broadening equally with life (Bergson) and when the theory of knowledge and the theory of life appear inseparable, then the motif of deep dissatisfaction with the so-called 'logic of solids' increases. The anaemic range of expression of abstract-logical discourse is unable to comply with thought seeking to express all the wealth of shades of meaning. The motion in the space of the clearness and strictness of conceptual-category structures simplifies and fixes the predetermined state of matters. In other words, rate-fixing, regulating, and meaning-explanatory thinking looks for the possibilities of how to overcome and renew itself in the space of meaning-formation (meaning-generation) thinking. Thought demands a dynamic word, which does not hide meaning in the term but opens the possibility of the infinite increase of meaning.

Having come into contact with 'non-authenticity' where the universality of the commonplace eliminates the possibility of individuation, philosophical thought begins to feel the real devaluation of any universality, perceived abstractly and theoretically; it seeks ways of finding, keeping, and expressing the ontological value of the unique.

If we wonder whether it is possible to reduce the development of philosophy to the filiations of purely abstract thought figures, logically complete systems, doctrines and concepts, it is not hard to notice that only part of meanings belonging to the field of philosophy is included in abstract and theoretical constructions. It is more difficult to take upon oneself the execution of philosophy as the production of spiritual activity in which the inner integrity of humankind is not only cleared, but also realized and restored. Only then will philosophy see itself as a liberation of human beings from any depression, so that they can play their part in *the cosmos*, where they are able to express the meaningful space of their own spiritual lives. Strictly speaking, philosophical production comes to be the expression of the measure of humans' inner-world involvement in the ontology of the events of the universe (in the co-existence of being). It has often been observed that 'philosophy expects communication to be carried out on the basis of initial and ultimate intuitions and not the basis

of the intermediate proofs of the discursive thought' (Berdyayev). It is probably important to see the essential difference of some average logical forms of philosophical knowledge, in which it often functions in society, while solving purely didactic problems, from the very origin, i.e. from the philosophy in the process of its birth and life in culture.

We could probably look afresh at the role of intuition in philosophy if we saw that intuition in thought is not an occasional spark, but the primary essence of thought. Thought is not a concept here, but the essence of the thing, reflected in the concept, and participating through the concept in meaningfulness and comprehensibility.

The resultant intention of philosophy is the quest for the meaning of human existence, i.e. the search for something that cannot be found. On the other hand, life itself without the intensity of search turns out to be meaningless.

It is known that 'meaning' can never be thoroughly described or even frozen. The discovery of meaning is by no means the same as its possession, as meaning is impossible to 'possess' in principle, although it points the way to 'being'. The only form of the existence of meaning is its generation, its emergence in the space of inter-subjective relations. 'Meaning' is an atom of comprehension, embracing the universe of human communication. According to Bakhtin, 'meaning' is personalistic in principle: it always contains a question, address, and the anticipation of a reply. Meaning presupposes the presence of two persons in a minimum dialogue. The mode of human existence in the true sense consists in search, finding and giving meaning to everything, including people's own lives. It is quite another matter that human beings, who represent just one possibility of meaning generation, not infrequently find themselves on the verge of oblivion, of renouncing their own abilities. It often happens that a hard road of strivings, full of agonizing spiritual doubts, is replaced by a peaceful valley of self-assurance, the destructive self-sufficiency of a person overpowered by the inertia of impersonal, and universally significant, forces.

The philosophical thematization of silence has presumably become the symptom of the total disastrous cultural devaluation of 'catch' thoughts and phrases, of that powerful verbal and mental cliché which is ready to fill all the space of ideologically preformative communication relations. As more and more abstract ideas gain supremacy, i.e. the ideas prone to assume the form of universality, the kingdom of the commonplace becomes the place of real communication, and gives the commonplace the status and power of universality. Now clichés come into their own, and start to destroy invisibly the very possibility of life and thinking.

The processes whereby thought, seeking to transcend the habitual patterns imposed by logic, challenges not only itself but also the 'recipient' (when it tries to extract thought from non-thought) are sought not only by philosophy and art. The search itself has almost become a commonplace of contemporary culture.

Unexpectedly, thought has met with the growing ability of pragmatically technologized (rationalized?) space to 'talk everything away'; even the protest against all kinds of clichéd thoughts and stereotypes, making individuality its own property, finds itself under the influence of codified paradigm forms. Estimating the reasonableness of people's conduct, these forms strictly determine their functional fitness for the system. The measure of a meditating action itself is placed under the secret control of universal signification, which in the long run neutralizes the individual

character of the action itself. The objectification of thought in language is consistently (as well as invisibly) transferred into the non-finite forms of the linguistic passive voice, those omnipotent linguistic and mental quantifiers, such as 'it is thought', 'it is supposed', 'it is generally accepted', 'it is considered', etc.

At the same time the philosophical thematization of silence has come to be the expression of the increased value, or rather, the invaluable importance of the living word, which declares itself by a number of subtle, sharp, profound and sparkling aphorisms: 'Man is really silent not when he is silent but when he speaks' (Kierkegaard); 'Man has largely become man due to what he keeps silent about and not due to what he speaks about' (Camus); 'The one is silent who is able to say something' (Sartre); 'Silence is the authentic form of the word' (Heidegger). The theme of silence claimed the immersion of language in metaphysics, at the same time seriously testing its own metaphysical language.

'Nobody can speak in earnest about the UNIVERSE any longer,' remarked Valéry. 'This word has lost its original sense, just as the word "Nature" has lost its meaning . . . These words increasingly seem to be just words.' Another poet, Broch, wrote even more resolutely: 'Ever-increasing repugnance to language, disgust at operating with concepts which have become empty, and hostility to positive philosophy, are producing a rigidity at the level of traditional jargon.' Concern for the word, for the vitality of thought which suddenly acquires the intonation of irritated negativism does not make the situation less tense.

Poetical experience proves to be magnetic for philosophical thought in search of its roots, not because the attitude to language or silence is realized in it, but because language and silence themselves are expressed, and meaning remains always alive in its openness to the infinite.

In this connection we may recall Hölderlin's confession: disappointed because his poetry was overloaded with philosophy, he sorrowfully remarked that 'unfortunate poets like himself go into philosophy, as if to hospital'. The ironical intonation of this confession begins to appear more often in the 20th century, with the appeal of philosophy to art as to a certain remedy for its own ailments, one of which is not only the triteness of logical and rational structures, but also the emptiness of language's means. Philosophical reflection struggles to overcome its own narrow-mindedness by means of rational and deductive discourse; it seeks to shake the self-assurance of the objective-rationalistic aims of pragmatically oriented consciousness. It is not only concentrated on the quest for new poetics and textual stylistics, on finding a new language which will connect with reality, but, in the long run, it is prompted by the necessity to protect culture (the culture of thought, feeling, action, of overall consciousness and of the human relations illuminated by it) from the danger of total materialization in the conditions of pragmatically rationalized sociometry.

If we abstract ourselves from the giant Gothic castle of language metaphysics and try to describe metaphorically the acoustic image of the word in which we live, it may be characterized by growing noise – whether the mechanical din of traffic or the articulated assembly of broadcast voices of television, radio and other commentators.

No matter how much the intonational image of a commentator's style varies (from absolute neutrality to the emotionally subtle intonation of a friend in one's home),

the purely outward life of the world (i.e. its total emptiness) will remain invariable. The broadcast word itself turns into a simple refrain serving to measure the conveying of information.

However, I do not intend to become absorbed in the consideration of the fate of humankind and language reflected in the phantasms of the mass media. In the long run, it is possible that the striking colour and sound-track of the videoclip will become a model of new vision, for which everything will be feasible. But it is of the utmost importance that one overwhelming scenario comes to pass: that 'Suffering, love, hope . . . the images linked to these feelings have their power because technological man has no such feelings' (H. Read). Artistic consciousness will turn repeatedly to the above-described life themes and interpret them in its own way. It could be the characters from Robbe-Grillet's books, inhabiting the space-labyrinth of indistinguishable objects, events, people themselves, fused in one physical entity, endlessly duplicating each other's forms, volumes and sounds. It could be poetic perspectives, or the poetics of a stream of consciousness, the poetics of dreams, facts or the absurd – behind all these devices and methods, behind all these artistic programmes so widely manifesting themselves, and their implementation, one can see, despite everything, a living human perception of the world revealing itself in the work of art. There is an ongoing quest for the immediate actuality of the word as the reality where the human resides.

Reduced as it is to the function of a symptomatic line ('the more horrible the world is [and now it is more horrible than ever] the more abstract art becomes', according to Kandinsky), art is swallowed by the world as if it were a mild tranquilizer. Nevertheless, it is art and not science or any other pragmatically rationalized form that (according to Read) 'gives a meaning to life', not merely in the sense of overcoming alienation but in the sense of 'reconciling man to his destiny, which is death', not in the physical sense, but 'that form of death which is indifference, spiritual *accidie*'.

The word of the artist and the word of the philosopher meet on the boundary of the ultimate responsibility of humanity (for its own individuality, the peculiarity of being) before the universe. This is the encounter of thought and word in the spiritual space of deep feelings, experienced by an individual who is aware of his or her unity with the infinity of the word formation. It is here that the possibility of the knowledge of the fullness of life is acquired; the possibility of that inner principle of cognition, imbued with the energy of spiritual growth, where we observe not the opposition of the inner and outer worlds but their reciprocal relation. The inward acceptance of the philosophical thought of the opportunity to be realized in moral and artistic meaning represents, in the first place, the opportunity of overcoming self-contained theoretical nature, realized in the form of abstract-conceptual discourse, the removal of the 'logocentrist' canon, and the outlet to a new, constantly renewing vision.

This is how the necessity of the spiritually growing gnosis declares itself: the movement of thought in the space of the entirety of life, where the human as an emotional-practical-comprehending being is taken into the ethical-meaning continuum of the ontology of communication. Here, the thought is directed at the horizon of free creative human formation in the world; here, the individuation of thought and word

represents, in effect, the principal universalization of meaning generated in the space of intercourse. The muteness of any objectivity, while being lost in the silence of our attention, acquires the opportunity to be expressed through thought and word. The instability, variation, plurality, colourfulness, and vital power of the world demand a gaze so engaged that the picture does not gradually fade, overcome by the rigidity of the rules.

While revealing the essence of the very rhythm of infinite formation, this demands that thought be free from algorithm, i.e. be vitally creative, the creation of human beings in the completeness of their ability to realize themselves in the world and the world in themselves, that it should approach the world in its integrity and plenitude. Here, abstract and scientifically rationalized thought represents only one of the possible approaches. It is presumably important not to allow its usurpation of the power, because then unexpected changes in the ontology of thought take place and the disease of lifelessness strikes not only philosophy. The authenticity of something which suffers, feels, shares emotional experience, loves, and dreams cannot be replaced by the indifferent neutrality of objective universality. Furthermore, an approach where logicity rather than the authenticity of a feeling seeks to be revealed cannot actually be comprehended within the framework of a discursive-prudent reason guarding its own purity. Only here does humankind appear as both chaos and harmony, as self-destruction and self-creation, and any order is imbued with the unexpectedness and unpredictability of fortuity. Humankind and word seem to be anticipating the 'casualness' of real encounter.

It is easy to see that the conflict has largely exceeded the framework of epistemology, and has entered the sphere of the ontology of thought. The split is not between different cognitive abilities in terms of already obsolete echoes of trivial contaminations of emptiness of reason and blindness of experience, but inside the thought itself, in the very act of its fulfilment. Philosophical reflection has often grasped this split, trying to find a *modus vivendi* between the logical and the creative mind, seeing in the latter an opportunity for the vital plenitude of thought. Logical truth of the thought, irreproachable evidence of its theoretical constructions, the measure of correspondence between the world of ideas and the world of things which allows one to speak about the relevance of thought to the processes (connections, relations) reflected by it, displays its own division into two when faced with the living world. We often enthuse: 'Wisdom, faith, justice, patience, goodness are one part of the story, and mathematics are the other; there is no abstract truth in philosophy, no truth for everybody, and nobody would stake his soul on it' (Unamuno, 1981: 1.21).

The same logical rigour might consider that world-contemplating philosophy should not be mixed with scientific philosophy: 'Science is impersonal. A scientist needs not wisdom, but a theoretician's gift.' And, if we are free of prejudices, it must be all the same if this or another judgment comes from Kant or Thomas Aquinas, Darwin or Aristotle. Any wisdom or doctrine of wisdom loses the right to existence to the extent that the corresponding theoretical doctrine acquires objectively meaningful ground: 'Science has spoken; from now on wisdom is meant to be taught by the same route' (Husserl, 1911: 53, 56, 49).

We might even note that philosophy has not yet been accepted as a science, and

thus we should strive more enthusiastically to bring into our thought 'decisive clarity, attributes of strict science overlooked or misunderstood by the earlier philosophy'. What, from Husserl's point of view, are these conditions? With 'decisive clarity', the logicist hero of philosophy says: 'The essence of science consists in the unity of foundations, systematic unity, in which not only particular knowledge but the foundations themselves, and along with them the higher complexes of foundations, called "theory", are assembled.' It does not matter how far Husserl went afterwards, from the initial logicism of his own point of view. This starting-point is the effective one, namely, the inexorable limitation of all phenomenological research to the consciousness itself. Indeed, for logic, the question concerning the reality of being is irrelevant. The being of the world can always be replaced here with a quantifiable variable.

Pure phenomenology, as its creator stressed over and over again, can be a research into essence, but not existence. But where the research into essence imposes a veto on research into existence, thought, to whatever depth of the eidetic evidence it went, can appear at any moment absolutely insignificant to a human being who keeps on existing. At one such moment, Husserl himself was forced to admit: 'Philosophy as a strict science . . . is a dream from which we have awoken.'

I will not raise the question about the general heuristic potential of phenomenological methodology, about its doubtless significance for the ways of philosophical reflection in general. For me, what is important is just to show some *way of thought* taken to the limit, to the necessity of turning 'into its other'. This drama of the classic mind is played out according to all the rules of high style. The principal character – Logos, supported by trusty foundations – appears in a blaze of self-assurance: 'All the foundations possess a certain "form" . . . Neither arbitrariness nor contingency reigns in the basic links, but reason and order, that is, a normative law', 'and the verity of inferences is guaranteed by its form.' On its side, 'a form, being put in order, makes the existence of sciences possible.' In short, an *order is guaranteed* for Logos. And 'when the simple sense of a judgment is being established', Logos is 'not concerned . . . with the question, if it is supposed to make any distinction whatever between the subjective "good" and the objective one. It suffices to note that something is *considered* as valuable as if it were a value and the good indeed' (Husserl, 1890: 15, 13, 17, 35). Intoxicated by his own might, the hero cannot help exclaiming: 'Maybe, in all of life, there is no idea more powerful, less restrainable, more victorious than that of science . . . If one thinks it in its ideal completeness, it will be reason itself, which could not suffer another authority beside or above it' (Husserl, 1911: 8).

But the cheerful chimes of these loud exclamations should not drown out the growing noise from backstage: an indistinct mixture of voices witnessing that there was 'a struggle between life and the very principles of form itself . . . self-assured life is trying to break free from the oppression of any form whatever' (Simmel). As far as 'in every sphere of life, the revolt against any established form was becoming distinct', classical Reason, determined 'to be under the sign of the form, well-rounded, self-sufficient, assured that being calm and completed, it is the norm of life and creative process', is forced to replay certain scenes performed by its double, Logos, to assure its own right to be the only sense and value of our being, so that all those who hear it would be sure that any 'desire of life' to present itself through an 'informal

force', 'in its bare immediateness out of any forms' is absolutely unreachable, for 'all cognition, all will, all creation can only replace one form with another' (Simmel, 1925: 14, 32, 15, 31, 38).

At this point, form itself, to which Reason has appealed, takes on, so to speak, a more vital, volumetric shape, overcoming the rigid embrace of formal-logical ordering. It should be recalled that 'any person, speaking sincerely, cannot avoid contradicting himself or herself', and one must caution: 'The most deadening thing for the human spirit is adoption of a system' (Stepun, 1910: 186), since 'the will to system is a lack of sincerity' (Nietzsche, 1907: 9). It must be admitted that 'the interest of the aesthetic-philosophical thinking' does not keep to 'the abstract general and naturally necessary . . . but is directed towards a concrete, vital element of all the historical formations of man's cultural activities' (Windelband, 1910: 46). We may note that 'the world understood as an object and reality only, lacks sense'. It is important to call to oneself to order: not to mix, romantic-fashion, 'values of thought' with 'values of subject-matter', and to distinguish 'order of being' from 'interpretation of sense' (Rikkert, 1910: 27, 58). Otherwise, the philosophical logos is endangered by the mixing of theoretical and aesthetic elements, 'staggering endlessly between discursive refinement and artistic creation'.

Let us turn to neo-Kantian 'variations' (with their internally tense dialogue), with the philosophy of life that we need. In neo-Kantianism (meaning the Baden School), there was an open clash between the systematic categories of reason/intellect schooled by the century-old traditions of philosophy, and unrestrained elements of the interior world of the subject. To complete the picture, the need for 'understanding the life lived by people' (Dilthey) not only newly thematized the cultural historical character of human existence, but also evidenced ways of a necessary involvement of, so to speak, personal modality in the field of philosophical study. Seized by this zeal, reason cast doubt on the possibility of 'adjusting an image of relations of things in the world to a well-ordered system of concepts', and asked 'to search for an internal connection of all the knowledge . . . not in the world, but in the person'. However, as 'the individual's life creates its own world', it is a philosopher's duty to explain nothing, to dismember nothing, but just 'describe facts which everybody can observe in him or herself' (Dilthey, 1912: 123, 126, 135). The truly noble character of this properly humanistic intention of reason which was opening a way to deep cultural historical descriptions could not, of course, rise to the same level as philosophical *ratio* with its clear propensity to analytically search for the utmost adaptation, justification, and ordering of all things; whereas the way of 'understanding' and 'description' sounded to it (reason) like a source of subjectivism and chaos. Philosophy, of course, could not put aside the limitless significance of the interior world, which is far from consisting in merely the 'will to cognition', but includes 'an infinite set of shades in the relations of human beings to the world', and shows to a person a strong impression of life from a particular angle, where 'the world is being presented in a new light' (Dilthey, 1912: 131, 132).

The insufficiency of the traditional, though for a long time 'natural', philosophical orientation towards creating an objective explanatory model of the world as the whole appeared at every step towards the human world. The natural plenitude of the latter with the stream of experiences, moods, thoughts, deeds, and feelings

renders unnatural any attempt to analytically conceptualize reflection instead of the process of working-through one's own life and outlook.

Once adopted in philosophy, the struggle to clarify the intellectual act was, at the same time, opening a way to universal intersubjectivity, a route to the seductive heights of transcendence, and established a real anonymity of thought, established reason, as it were, for which any 'personal empirical sphere' dissolves under the pressure of the intellect bound for universality: it is the 'purest' antipode of the 'pure I' in the name of which 'the reasoned individual' can only be a philosopher.

The paradoxes of the fundamentally impersonal 'ethics of intellect' were bound to influence human existence itself. This means not only that 'the reasoned individual' should eventually be reduced to an infinite denial of being anything, dedicating all thought to 'the most general and abstract'; the anonymous universality of thought at its limit knows everything. And then, only the confession of Mr Teste is left: 'I cancel the living. I preserve just what I want. But the difficulty is not here. The difficulty is to preserve what I will want tomorrow.' And thus 'being and seeing himself: seeing himself seeing, and so on', having finally thought of all this, he suddenly discovers that 'one can fall asleep at any thought, sleep continues any idea . . .' Valéry effectively leaves his character not only in the lull of sleep but also assured that: '*Vita Cartesi est simplissima*' [The Cartesian life is the simplest] because he is simply supposed to 'think with all possible exactness of what everybody is assured of'.

We, of course, must never forget that whatever the paths of philosophy might be, they have never been easy. It is important for us to see that, Descartes aside, culture did not beget Pascal's *Pensées* in vain. Alongside the instruction 'to go about only those things of which our intelligence seems capable, of getting reliable and doubtless knowledge' (Descartes, 1950: 81) there is the requirement 'to learn how to evaluate properly land, states, cities, oneself' (Pascal, 1889: 37). Very probably, the plenitude of meaning 'expressed' in one or another philosophical 'system', however strong the arguments in favour of the potentially comprehensive character of any of them, is eventually capable of being discovered (and, maybe, created) only on the boundary, where a intersection of an always incomplete set of spiritual and cognitive positions is being performed. And even if one imagines that 'one cancels what the other establishes', the consequence of this would certainly not be the emptiness of the *cogito*, self-annihilation in the mathematical zero, but the sense of infinity (∞) of the spirit (to use the most exact mathematical symbol, on Kant's advice).

The living history of philosophical thought should not become an archive through the well-worn erudition of professionally emptied intellect, with its unchanging propensity to the genre of botanical classification; the only opportunity for philosophical thought to be filled with sense (that is, to be a thought not only said, but heard as well, to be a meeting-point of subjects united in their difference, and striving towards understanding) is connected with every living person's ability to bear in the self the whole history of humankind, as if it were his or her own past. This is the only place where an opportunity is presented, not to make the movement of thought into some compendium, which would yield a panoramic collection of 'ideas', but to offer an opportunity to record the whole sound, without erasing voices; because not is only an orchestration needed, but so is a space for our own part. And, in order not to play out of tune and, what is more important, not to replace our melody with

noise, there is nothing more important for the thought in its struggle to make the inexpressible sound, than a capacity of hearing and understanding to the full what has already been said. Philosophers must always try to grasp the authentic and full sense of philosophy, its whole horizon of infinity. No line of cognition, no partial truth must be absolutized and isolated. Through this permanent reflection alone can philosophy be a universal cognition.

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