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Reflections on Onto-theological thought

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Introductory note

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This supplement presents the work of a collective contribution in the context of a seminar dedicated to theo-theology starting from a comparison with some philosophical-theological themes that derive from Judaism and Christianity and from the speculative tradition typical of the Franciscan Augustinism. The seminar intends to show the possibility of this comparison.

Il problema della totalità tra ebraismo e cristianesimo. Rosenzweig e Hegel

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Abstract

Il saggio analizza il problema del rapporto tra ebraismo e cristianesimo come paradigma del nesso tra totalità e infinito. Nella prima parte analizza la critica di Rosenzweig rivolta alla totalità hegeliana, per poi passare all'analisi del concetto del rapporto tra la parte e il tutto nella *Dottrina dell'essenza* della *Scienza della Logica*. Viene così offerta una lettura di concetti essenziali per la comprensione del ripresentarsi del pensiero ebraico nella filosofia del Novecento.

1. «La salvezza viene dai Giudei» (Gv, 4.22).

L'adagio giovanneo, prima di segnare una modalità della salvezza, ne indica una direzione. *Ek israel*: da Israele, ossia dal popolo ebraico è la salvezza¹. Di fronte alla costruzione comunitaria della cristianità, la provenienza della *soteria* sta a ribadire, ad ogni passo della propria vita nel mondo, che essa – la comunità cristiana – sempre *ad* 'altro' deve la propria fondazione, sempre *da* 'altro' deve il proprio incessante sussistere. Il «*mystérion*» (Rm, 11.25) di questa provenienza è la cifra più profonda di una tensione che s'innesterà fin dall'inizio nel cuore stesso del cristianesimo storico, il quale vorrà e non potrà affrancarsi da questo nesso di *dipendenza*, contratto non una volta per tutte – *en arché* del proprio essere comunità – ma rinnovato in ogni istante, in ogni momento che attesta la sussistenza della comunità. Il perdurare della comunità è conferma effettiva del suo dipendere da altro, la sua sussistenza è segno ogni volta della conferma di una promessa e del debito che quella promessa implica: *da* Israele, dunque, *viene* – non è venuta – la salvezza. Il senso di questo dispositivo fu ben scorto da Hegel tanto negli scritti della giovinezza che in una pagina estrema della *Fenomenologia dello Spirito*. La dipendenza da Israele, agli occhi di Hegel, diventa massima infermità non per il cristianesimo, però, ma per lo stesso

¹ Sul tema si veda: L. BLOY, *Dagli ebrei la salvezza*, tr. it. O. Fatica, E. Czerkl, Adelphi, Milano 1994.

ebraismo. Un'inversione, quella operata da Hegel, che non si esaurisce in un mero cambio di segno del rapporto di dipendenza tra ebraismo e cristianesimo, ma che tocca l'aspetto più profondo della sua filosofia: la costruzione dell'orizzonte comunitario come paradigma della *totalità*. Il cristianesimo filosofico di Hegel sarà propriamente l'espressione più compiuta di questa totalità, nella quale il senso del passo giovanneo si compie in maniera definitiva. Ora infatti, agli occhi di Hegel, è Israele a non aver voluto beneficiare di quella salvezza che esso stesso ha recato. La pagina della *Fenomenologia* esprime nella maniera più chiara l'intento e il senso dell'operazione hegeliana. Scrive infatti Hegel:

Similmente del popolo ebraico si può dire ch'esso è ed è stato il più abietto [das verworfenste], proprio perché si trova immediatamente alla porta della salvezza [vor der Pforte des Heils]: esso non è ciò che dovrebbe essere in sé e per sé, ma è a sé questa auto-essenza; anzi la trasferisce al di là di sé; mediante questa alienazione esso si rende possibile un'esistenza superiore qualora possa riprendere in sé il suo oggetto; esistenza superiore a quella ch'esso avrebbe, se fosse rimasto immobile entro l'immediatezza dell'essere. Ché lo spirito è tanto più grande, quanto più grande è l'opposizione dalla quale ritorna in se stesso; una tale opposizione lo spirito si costruisce nel superamento della propria unità immediata e nell'alienazione del suo proprio esser-per-sé. Quando peraltro una tale coscienza non si rifletta, il medio su cui essa poggia è il vuoto senza salvezza, poiché ciò che dovrebbe riempirlo è divenuto un estremo solidificato. E così quest'ultimo gradino della ragione osservativa è il suo gradino peggiore: ma appunto per questo la sua conversione è necessaria [notwendig Umkehrung]².

L'esteriorità alla salvezza nella quale il popolo ebraico si trova, fa il paio con l'esteriorità della propria essenza, della scissione che esso reca in sé e che fa sempre altro da sé il proprio fondamento. La chiusa della pagina hegeliana pesa pertanto come un greve: nella posizione in cui l'ebraismo si trova, non vi è salvezza, poiché è la posizione più prossima, di fronte alla porta della salvezza, ma senza varcarla mai. La sola via che Hegel lascia all'ebraismo è – essenzialmente – una via di abbandono di quella posizione, ossia di abbandono della propria essenza, parola dal suono inquietante per il ricorrere nella storia che essa ha avuto: *Umkehrung*.

Si farà carico del peso immane della *necessità* di quella *conversione*, il gesto filosofico di Franz Rosenzweig. Gesto tanto più radicale, se di quella *conversione* non destituisce semplicemente la *necessarietà*, ma ne sancisce la costitutiva *impossibilità*. In una lettera del 31.10.1913 – ritornando sulla decisione di

² G.W.F. HEGEL, *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807), Werke Bd. 3, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1970; tr. it. a cura di E. De Negri, in II voll., Nuova Italia, Firenze 1960, vol. I, p. 285.

abbracciare la fede cristiana – Rosenzweig così informa del proprio ripensamento suo cugino Rudolf Ehrenberg, il quale si era già da tempo convertito al cristianesimo:

Caro Rudi, devo comunicarti qualcosa che ti rattristerà e, almeno in un primo tempo, ti risulterà inconcepibile: con una lunga e (così almeno penso) profonda riflessione mi sono risolto a ritornare sulla mia decisione. Essa non mi pare più necessaria e pertanto, nel mio caso, non più possibile. Resto dunque ebreo³.

In questo passaggio è contenuta l'istanza più intima del programma filosofico rosenzweighiano, che sarà interamente volto a dare ragione di questo *restare* ebreo, di questa impossibilità della conversione. Ma per fare ciò, Rosenzweig deve farsi carico *anche* della possibilità – per restare nell'immagine hegeliana – di attraversare quella 'porta della salvezza': si prepara a questo passaggio fino a desiderarlo con convinzione e a mostrarne a se stesso e agli altri l'urgenza⁴. Poi, all'ultimo, desiste: *ich bleibe also Jude*. Resta ebreo, resta «*ek israèl*». Ma qual è anzitutto il senso di questo restare, di questa *permanenza*? Nel rifiuto di una conversione che appariva inesorabile, Rosenzweig non ribadisce semplicemente la propria ebraicità, non riconosce semplicemente la propria radice di appartenenza. Questo *bleiben* è tutt'altro che fissità, stabile radicamento identitario – anzi, è radice che sradica, che nega ogni permanere sicuro presso di sé, ma che insieme, pur essendo – come dirà Rosenzweig – sempre un «dato di fatto», un'evidenza, un punto di partenza, è qualcosa che deve essere continuamente recuperato e a cui si deve incessantemente *ritornare*⁵.

³ F. ROSENZWEIG, *Gesammelte Schriften* I.I, Dordrecht 1979, p. 133; tr. it. di G. Bonola in *Appendice: da lettere sul cristianesimo, la missione agli ebrei, e il sionismo*, in F. ROSENZWEIG, *La scrittura*, Città Nuova, Roma 1991, p. 286.

⁴ Già in una lettera del 6 novembre 1909 confessava ai suoi genitori la volontà di abbracciare la fede cristiana, adducendo come ragione la profonda essenza cristiana del mondo che lo circondava. È significativa questa comprensione del 'contesto' in cui Rosenzweig matura la propria decisione, poiché anche quando la decisione della conversione verrà meno, mai Rosenzweig metterà in discussione la 'cristianità' del mondo, o detto in altra forma: la cristianità di Europa. In questo senso, l'esistenza ebraica sarà pensata come ciò che pone in discussione quell'unica forma di abitare il mondo che la cristianità – nella proprio forma in toto mondanizzata – esprime nello stato. Scrive Rosenzweig: «Noi siamo cristiani in ogni cosa. Viviamo in uno Stato cristiano, frequentiamo scuole cristiane, leggiamo libri cristiani, tutta la nostra cultura è fondamentalmente cristiana. Sarebbe stato del tutto fuori questione che Hans [Ehrenberg, N.d.A.] diventasse ebreo; un cristiano invece può diventarlo. Sono seriamente convinto di questo, io stesso ho decisamente consigliato Hans in questa direzione» (*Gesammelte Schriften* I, *Briefe und Tagebücher*, op.cit., pp. 94-95; la traduzione è citata da M. MORSELLI, *I passi del Messia*, op. cit., p. 77-78 n.2).

⁵ Del resto, in ebraico il termine *teshuvà*, con cui si indica l'idea di conversione, significa anzitutto ritorno. Non un cambio di direzione, insomma, ma un riportarsi verso la 'propria' radice. Si comprende, in tal senso, anche la difficile questione della conversione all'ebraismo. Ma si tornerà sulla questione. Sul tema si veda: A. NEHER, *Hanno ritrovato la loro anima. Percorsi di Teshuvah*, tr. it a cura di R. Cuomo, Marietti, Genova 2006.

2. La sfida del pensiero ebraico alla totalità

Una *sfida*, s'è detto, la cui posta in gioco è ormai chiara. Meno chiaro è il suo significato, che è da subito duplice: sfida del Rosenzweig pensatore e del pensiero di Rosenzweig in quanto tale, poiché essa rappresenta un evento che non può essere semplicemente circoscritto alla sola riflessione rosenzweighiana, ma del quale essa costituisce l'origine e il *topos* di accadimento. Indichiamo questo evento come il *ripresentarsi* dell'ebraismo nel dibattito filosofico; un 'evento' *del* pensiero, dunque, che riguarda l'intera tradizione filosofica dell'Occidente, e che inaugurato dall'opera filosofica di Franz Rosenzweig, prosegue e si articola in un nutrito gruppo di pensatori di cui Emmanuel Lévinas è senz'altro l'espressione più significativa, come lo sono – in maniera certo più complessa, ma non per questo meno decisiva – esperienze filosofiche come quella di Martin Buber, Walter Benjamin o di Jacques Derrida⁶. Non è questo il luogo per discutere le peculiarità di questo evento nelle differenti articolazioni ch'esso assume in ciascuna delle esperienze filosofiche richiamate (alle quali andrebbero aggiunti molti altri nomi rispetto ai 'soli' poc'anzi evocati). Ciò che preme però indicare è il senso che questo evento assume nell'articolazione del *logos* dell'Occidente e nella sua costitutiva significazione così come esso si presenta nel pensiero di Rosenzweig. L'insistenza sul carattere *in toto* filosofico di questo evento, non è affatto scontata poiché costituisce il carattere essenziale, senza il quale è pressoché impossibile pensarne la profondità e la portata dirompente. La *querelle* sull'esistenza o meno di un 'pensiero' o di una 'filosofia' ebraica nell'annosa scissione tra Atene e Gerusalemme, non permette di cogliere fino in fondo la portata di quell'*evento*, poiché in essa, per lo più, si è soliti assumere *filosofia* ed *ebraismo* come due poli pre-determinati di un'opposizione, dei quali si tenta di operare una conciliazione o di mostrare che tale conciliazione sia impossibile⁷. Problematica che tocca e riguarda certamente esperienze filosofiche come, per fare solo un nome, quella di Hermann Cohen il quale tentò di indicare nella simbiosi ebraico-tedesca la massima risoluzione a tale dissidio. Quello di Cohen fu il tentativo di pensare un *filosofia dell'ebraismo*, una filosofia che mettesse a

⁶ Un testo particolarmente significativo sull'indicazione di questo *topos* – poiché lo presente sotto diverse angolature, filosofiche ma non meno che letterarie – è senza dubbio il testo di S. MOSÈS, *Un retour au judaïsme. Entretiens avec Victor Malka*, Edition du Seuil, Paris 2008; tr. it. di O. Di Grazia, *Un ritorno all'ebraismo. Colloquio con Victor Malka*, Claudiana, Torino 2009. Sulla possibilità e sul significato di una filosofia ebraica, si vedano i seguenti volumi collettanei che offrono molteplici posizioni sulla questione: O. OMBROSI (a cura di), *Tra Torah e Sophia. Orizzonti e frontiere della filosofia ebraica*, Genova-Milano, Marietti, 2011; M. GIULIANI, *La filosofia ebraica, oggi. Orizzonti, percorsi e problemi*, Esedra, Padova 2013; A.W. HUGHES – E.R. WOLFSON (edited by), *New Directions in Jewish Philosophy*, Indiana University Press, 2009; M.L. MORGAN – P.E. GORDON, (edited by), *The Cambridge companion to Modern Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press 2007.

⁷ Una delle più celebri espressioni di questa tendenza, che ha fatto scuola per generazioni di studiosi e che merita di essere oggetto di dura critica, è senz'altro il libro pubblicato nel 1938 da L. ŠESTOV, *Atene e Gerusalemme*, tr. it. con testo francese e russo a fronte a cura di A. Paris, Bompiani, Milano 2005.

proprio tema e avesse come proprio contenuto le questioni centrali della riflessione ebraica mutuando dalla tradizione – nella fattispecie quella neo-kantiana – la forma logico-concettuale con cui assumere quei contenuti. In questo modo d'intendere il problema Rosenzweig costituisce una *frattura* netta, poiché proprio di quella struttura filosofica costituisce la messa in questione e – insieme – ne individua la *crisi*: della totalità, anzitutto, di cui il riproporsi della componente ebraica marca la radicale messa in questione di quel *logos* dell'Occidente che «dalla Ionia a Jena» ha deciso la forma teologico-politica con cui *Europa* ha abitato il mondo. Messa in questione che segna immediatamente la critica strutturale contro quel *logos*. Critica – e ciò va tenuto ben presente – che porta con sé anche la *pretesa* di cambiare, di trasformare 'internamente' quel *logos*: non a caso Rosenzweig parlerà di un *Neue Denken*, ossia un 'nuovo pensiero', una nuova forma di 'abitare' il mondo⁸. Rimandando ad altra sede ogni approfondimento sul significato di questo *novum*, va però tenuto fermo il punto centrale su cui verte sia la critica rosenzweighiana che poi, sebbene con modalità e approcci differenti, quella levinassiana: ossia, il problema della *totalità* (hegeliana) e il suo tramonto. Il Tutto, infatti, secondo il grande *incipit* de *La Stella della redenzione*, è il frutto della pretesa filosofica di neutralizzare, per così dire, e di «estirpare» quella paura della morte, 'principio' di ogni «possibilità di conoscere il Tutto». Questa *rimozione* di un'alterità inconoscibile, di un'alterità più *altra* di ogni alterità, segna il punto decisivo della critica di Rosenzweig alla totalità. Rimozione – e qui la grande intuizione di Rosenzweig – che non consiste nella semplice eliminazione di quell'*alterità*, ma nella fondazione della totalità su quello stesso togliamento. La totalità hegeliana si costituisce e sorge proprio come togliamento di ogni *eccedenza* dal proprio *nòmos*, di ogni *alterità* che – in quanto tale – non testimoni già la propria appartenenza all'orizzonte della *mediazione*. S'intenda: Hegel non toglie l'*alterità*, ma la 'riduce' al potere onninclusivo della relazione, della mediazione, della totalità. In questa operazione, in questa *onninclusività* della riflessione sta, per Rosenzweig, la pretesa massima del *logos* dell'Occidente e la sua massima *violenza*⁹. Contro questa violenza, contro l'assunzione 'univoca' di quell'*alterità*, l'ebraismo costituisce il lato *irriducibile*, l'*eccedenza* al potere onninclusivo della mediazione, e non perché uti-

⁸ Insistiamo sull'accezione di 'abitare', poiché il *logos* dell'Occidente si costituisce fin dalla sua origine come *ethos* essenzialmente 'politico' cioè rivolto alla fondazione della *polis*, così come nello Hegel della *Fenomenologia dello Spirito* – il grande erede della tradizione filosofica dell'Occidente – il pensiero è tale, se sa farsi mondo, se sa farsi *in toto* 'storia', *in toto* orizzonte comunitario del politico. In questo senso, la filosofia nasce come *teologia politica*.

⁹ Violenza che vede, per Rosenzweig, la sua declinazione teologico-politica più chiara nello *stato*. Sul tema si vedano: G. BENSUSSAN, *Rosenzweig and War. A Question of "Point of View". Between Creation, Revelation, and Redemption*, *The New Centennial Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2013, 115–136; ID, *Hegel et Rosenzweig: le franchissement de l'horizon*, in F. ROSENZWEIG, *Hegel et l'Etat*, tr. fr. par G. Bensussan, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1991, pp. 19-43.

lizzi categorie 'altre', categorie non greche, ma proprio perché quelle categorie esso pone in discussione, *dall'interno*. Si è visto come il giovane Hegel avesse ben avvertito e compreso la portata 'dirompente' dell'ebraismo nei confronti della propria *dialettica* cristiana, l'*insecuritas* che quel Dio *qanna'*, quel Dio ir-rivelato, 'sempre di spalle', avrebbe significato per la propria operazione filosofica. E alla trascendenza del Dio d'Israele, all'erranza del popolo che nega ogni vincolo terreno, ogni rapporto politico per l'esclusiva sottomissione al patto con il proprio Dio, Hegel oppone la luminosità del Dio *incarnato*, la forza *disvelante* del Dio cristiano. Lo si è visto: la stanza vuota di fronte alla quale, con sommo stupore, Pompeo si trovò una volta entrato nel *sancta sanctorum* del tempio di Gerusalemme, indica per Hegel la pura *negatività* dell'ebraismo, la 'vuotezza' di ogni contenuto, negazione di ogni relazione con il mondo, profonda estromissione dall'orizzonte del politico. Una vuotezza, una *negatività* – quella ebraica – che per Hegel, non si limita al solo popolo, ma coinvolge anche l'essenza profonda del Dio d'Israele, costitutivamente chiuso nella propria ritrosia. Con il ripresentarsi della componente ebraica proprio in seno al 'tramonto' della totalità hegeliana, quell'*alterità*, quella *distanza* assume, però, un significato *radicalmente* diverso. Ne dà testimonianza – forse più eloquente di molte trattazioni – la parola poetante di Edmond Jabès poiché di quel *destino* di cui parlava Hegel dà una versione completamente diversa. *Diversa* – ma non opposta: ché ciò che a questo punto del discorso ci si deve precludere, sono le mere inversioni di segno, la più sicura delle vittorie hegeliane. Così Jabès:

L'ebraismo è presente ovunque l'uomo è calpestato, perseguitato: ma l'ebreo è solo di fronte al proprio destino. Non condivide le gioie dei suoi simili che per un momento; così è colui che per esistere sempre si allontana; perché la lontananza è la sua migliore tutela. I rapporti con lui si inscrivono in questa lontananza imposta, dove egli si muove, parla e muore, come se la strada percorsa generasse sempre altra strada; come se un rotolo di pergamena, da solo, immagine materiale della sua erranza, potesse contenerne la legge, e srotolandosi indefinitamente, si facesse rappresentazione di quell'incalcolabile distanza, punteggiata di comandamenti, che l'ebreo è chiamato a percorrere¹⁰.

Così il problema dell'ebraismo, 'nel' pensiero di Rosenzweig, diventa il problema del rapporto tra totalità e infinito, il problema del rapporto tra la totalità – il *logos* – e la propria eccedenza (per ora, qualsiasi essa sia, sebbene sia già chiaro che la difficoltà e lo sforzo sarà ruoti intorno all'indicazione e al significato di questa eccedenza). Che questo problema risenta in Rosenzweig di mol-

¹⁰ E. JABÈS, *Le livre des ressemblances*, Gallimard, Paris 1976; tr. it. di A. Folin, *Il libro delle somiglianze*, Moretti e Vitali, Bergamo 2001, p. 42.

teplici influenze filosofiche (*in primis* di Schelling¹¹) non toglie l'urgenza e l'originalità' con la quale esso si pone. Poiché quell'operazione non intende ricavare uno spazio per l'ebraismo a partire dal discorso filosofico, ma punta al cuore del discorso filosofico e ne costituisce la radicale messa in questione. Si potrebbe obiettare che questo non sia l'intento primario di Rosenzweig, o – in maniera più sfumata – che vi siano altre direttive sulle quali si muove la riflessione rosenzweighiana. Il che potrebbe anche essere corretto se ci si attiene a una considerazione meramente storico-critica del suo pensiero e della sua produzione. Ma non è ciò che in questo scritto si tenterà di fare, né ciò che – a nostro avviso – rende significativa la riflessione rosenzweighiana ché, più dei suoi esiti, conta l'istanza problematica che essa pone. Il ripresentarsi dell'ebraismo segna pertanto uno scacco su quella totalità, ne attesta – s'è detto – il tramonto. E qui si tratta di essere molto cauti e di procedere con estrema cautela cercando di esplicitare con chiarezza, ben prima dell'esito di questo 'fatto', la portata problematica ch'esso implica. Poiché, se il ripresentarsi dell'ebraismo diventa l'accertamento del tramonto della *totalità* hegeliana, ovvero, il tramonto della forma con cui *Europa* ha abitato il mondo, il Novecento ha mostrato nella forma più tragica e drammaticamente inedita, quale sia stato il prezzo ingentissimo pagato dall'ebraismo per questo 'accertamento'¹².

3. La critica alla totalità nella Stella della redenzione

Der Stern der Erlösung si apre con un grido di dolore. È il dolore della creatura, il dolore del mortale, di colui che è «indefettibilmente votato alla morte». Questo grido che è forse più che altro un rantolo, un lamento sordo – è ciò che si oppone alla pretesa totalizzante della filosofia: *in philosophos*, appunto. Così il celebre incipit del testo rosenzweighiano:

Dalla morte (*Vom Tode*), dal timore della morte prende inizio e si eleva ogni

¹¹ Sul rapporto tra Rosenzweig e Schelling, si veda: M. CACCIARI *Sul presupposto. Schelling e Rosenzweig*, in «Aut Aut», n. 211-213, 1986, pp. 43-65; F. POPOLLA, "Nuovo pensiero" e "Filosofia narrante". *Rosenzweig interprete di Schelling*, «Annuario filosofico», n. 14 (1998), Mursia, Milano, pp. 253-280; X. TILLIETTE, *Philosophie et révélation. L'Etoile de la Rédemption de Franz Rosenzweig*, «Axes» 3 (1982), pp. 21-28; X. TILLIETTE, *Rosenzweig et Schelling*, «Archivio di filosofia» 53 (1985), pp. 141-152; C. BELLONI, *Filosofia e rivelazione. Rosenzweig nella scia dell'ultimo Schelling*, Marsilio, Venezia 2002; L. BERTOLINO, *Il nulla e la filosofia. Idealismo critico e esperienza religiosa in Rosenzweig*, Trauben, Torino 2005.

¹² Inutile dire che di questo 'accertamento' che per l'ebraismo è costitutivo, ossia, che rappresenta il proprio stesso esistere, il proprio essere 'popolo d'Israele', questo lavoro considererà solo alcuni aspetti; sebbene il significato di quell'accertamento ha evidentemente una portata e un'ampiezza di gran lunga maggiore dell'assunzione che ne è fatta in queste pagine, al complesso tentativo di indicarne il significato mirano anche queste pagine. Basti, del resto, solo ricordare che *La stella della redenzione* venne pubblicato nel 1921.

conoscenza circa il Tutto. Rigettare la paura che attanaglia ciò ch'è terrestre, strappare alla morte il suo aculeo velenoso, togliere all'Ade il suo miasma pestilente, di questo si pretende capace la filosofia¹³.

Per quanto 'esistenziale' sia questo timore della morte esso non è mera apprensione emotiva, tantomeno l'indicazione di una connotazione meramente esistenzialistica che contraddistingue il pensiero di Rosenzweig. Perché la pretesa della filosofia non è semplicemente di consolare, di lenire il dolore e il timore che la dipartita e la sempre possibile morte incutono nel singolo individuo. L'incipit di *Der Stern der Erlösung* va letto con estrema attenzione, ché duplici sono i fronti sui quali Rosenzweig opera. Dalla morte e dalla paura per la morte: l'uno e l'altro. Qui a scrivere – non lo si dimentichi – è pur sempre l'attento conoscitore di Hegel. Poiché più originario è quel conoscere che sorge non semplicemente dalla paura per la morte, ma *dalla* morte stessa¹⁴. Tanto radicale è pertanto l'assunzione del problema, poiché altrettanto radicale è la risposta della filosofia: la critica di Rosenzweig si situa nel gesto stesso del pensiero filosofico, nel cuore della 'tradizione'. Il togliimento della paura della morte è, per Rosenzweig, il senso dell'incondizionatezza del pensiero filosofico. Da nulla dipende la filosofia, nessun presupposto essa pone dietro di sé, neppure quel «*Vom Tode*» dal quale Rosenzweig fa dipendere la possibilità di ogni conoscenza circa il Tutto. Contro questa pretesa auto-fondativa del pensiero si scaglia la critica di Rosenzweig: sta in ciò il grande inganno – ma non solo, la grande *violenza* della pretesa filosofica. Ed è su questo punto che si tratterà ora di soffermarsi. Se una prima critica all'incondizionatezza del pensiero filosofico e alla pretesa totalizzante della filosofia è quella che s'incontra nell'*incipit* dell'opera rosenzweighiana, una critica ben più profonda – anche per estensione argomentativa – è quella che Rosenzweig conduce qualche pagina più avanti, ricostruendo il significato che il concetto di totalità ha assunto nei diversi momenti della storia del pensiero. Una critica più profonda dell'altra, poiché in essa Rosenzweig mira diritto al cuore del significato dell'onninclusività del *logos* e al rapporto tra essere e pensiero. Il passaggio denso e, proprio per questo come capita spesso in Rosenzweig, decisamente complesso, presenta una prima argomentazione volta a indicare il carattere intrinsecamente molteplice dell'identità tra essere e pensiero. A questo livello, è bene riconoscerlo senza particolari indugi, la pretesa critica di Rosenzweig si risolve poco più che in una constatazione tutta interna all'orizzonte di comprensione hegeliano. Scrive Rosenzweig:

¹³ F. ROSENZWEIG, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, in *Gesammelte Schriften II*, a cura di R. Mayer, Den Haag 1976, p. 3; tr. it. di G. Bonola, Marietti, Genova 1985, p. 3.

¹⁴ Basti pensare al sorgere dell'autocoscienza nella *Fenomenologia dello Spirito* nella lotta per la vita e la morte. Sul tema due 'differenti' letture: E. LEVINAS, *Dio, la morte e il tempo*, tr. it. a cura di S. Petrosino, Jaca Book, Milano 1996, pp. 127-136.

Ammesso che il pensiero sia la forma unica ed universale dell'essere, il pensiero stesso allora ha a sua volta un contenuto, un così-e-non-altrimenti [*Sound-nichtanders*] che non è meno tale per il fatto di essere solo pensato. Proprio questa sua «specificazione», questa sua ramificazione gli dà la forza di *identificarsi* con l'essere, altrettanto ramificato. L'identità di pensiero ed essere presuppone quindi una interna non-identità. Il pensiero, che certo è riferito totalmente all'essere, proprio perché contemporaneamente è riferito anche a se stesso, è immediatamente in sé molteplicità. Ma così l'unità del pensiero, in quanto immediatamente si riferisce solo al pensiero e non all'essere, viene a cader fuori dal cosmo essere = pensiero¹⁵.

L'interna ramificazione di essere e pensiero nell'esposizione che ne dà Rosenzweig, altro non è che l'originaria implicanza di identità e differenza: intanto è perché il pensiero è molteplice rispetto a se stesso che può anche diversificarsi – ossia: porsi in relazione con l'essere. Non v'è un'identità che non sia, in quanto tale, già differenza, come – del resto – quella stessa immediatezza dell'essere e del pensiero, non è mai quell'immediatezza che dice di essere, se fonda – insieme alla propria identità con sé – anche il rapporto all'altro; e lo fa – come giustamente sottolinea Rosenzweig – in quanto *molteplicità*¹⁶. Insomma, tutto include la totalità, nel proprio incessante gioco di inclusione. Inclusione, non solo degli inclusi – ossia, dei termini della relazione –, ma anche della *relazione* stessa, se in fondo essa altro non è che quell'*includere*. Il punto sta nel comprendere come questa inclusione venga inclusa, ossia come un *incluso*, come pur sempre un termine della *relazione*¹⁷. E Rosenzweig incalza: «Dunque il pensiero, che in sé è unità della propria molteplicità interna, fonda pure l'unità dell'essere, e non lo fa in quanto è unità, bensì in quanto è molteplicità»¹⁸. La critica di Rosenzweig a questo punto subisce un vero e proprio cambiamento del proprio 'obiettivo' critico: in questione, a bene vedere, non è semplicemente l'*inclusione* del pensiero, il suo carattere di mediazione di qualsivoglia mediato, ma la condizione per cui questa *inclusività* è possibile, ossia: il mediare stesso, in quanto mediazione-inclusione della propria *inclusività*. Se volessimo restare nei termi-

¹⁵ F. ROSENZWEIG, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, op.cit. p. 14; tr. it. p. 13.

¹⁶ Sul tema: V. VITIELLO, *La differenza in Hegel e Heidegger*, in ID., *Dialettica ed ermeneutica: Hegel e Heidegger*, Guida, Napoli 1979, pp. 45-110;

¹⁷ La constatazione di Rosenzweig dimostra la sua profonda comprensione di Hegel, a differenza di molte altre critiche sulla medesima questione che all'epoca erano già circolate – come ad esempio la critica alla prima triade della *Scienza della Logica* mossa da Trendelenburg, che ebbe grande eco e fu ripresa in varie forme in molte critiche successive, tutte però fondate sul profondo equivoco di una separazione, di fatto, tra identità e differenza. (F. A. TRENDELENBURG, *Logische Untersuchungen*, Leipzig 1840 e successive ed. del 1862 e del 1870; del III capitolo dell'ed. del 1870; la traduzione italiana del III capitolo si trova in: ID., *Il metodo dialettico*, a cura di M. Morselli, Il Mulino, Bologna 1990).

¹⁸ F. ROSENZWEIG, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, op.cit. p. 14; tr. it. p. 13.

ni – in parte traslati dal linguaggio rosenzweighiano – dovremmo chiederci: l'includere è esso stesso incluso? Certo, tutto include la totalità, tutto media, ma su cosa si fonda l'inclusione stessa della totalità non in quanto molteplice – ché sarebbe un mediato tra i molti – ma come propria «unità interna»? Ossia: non chi include l'inclusione intesa come uno dei tanti inclusi, ma chi include l'includere stesso, ché – per Hegel – l'includere per essere tale, deve sempre farsi un altro *incluso*, deve sempre essere assunto dalla propria inclusione come un *incluso* e mai come un *includere*. Così Rosenzweig:

Questo stesso cosmo poi, nel suo essere un intreccio di due molteplicità, possiede adesso una unità totalmente al di là di sé. In sé esso non è unità, bensì molteplicità, non è un Tutto onnincludente bensì un uno incluso, il quale in sé è infinito, ma non concluso. Quindi un Tutto, mi si passi l'espressione, che esclude¹⁹.

La mossa rosenzweighiana, che si consuma in queste poche righe, è della massima importanza: la totalità in quanto tale, ossia, in quanto Unità onnincludente, non dà ragione della propria *inclusione* – propria, ossia della totalità. La può includere solo come un termine (un uno incluso) ma non in quanto totalità. Il passaggio è dunque della massima importanza poiché pone in questione, dal profondo, il gesto hegeliano. Un rapido rimando a Hegel non sarà pertanto superfluo per comprendere meglio il significato della critica rosenzweighiana.

4. Hegel e la costruzione della totalità

Un significato immediatamente rinvenibile di questa struttura autoincludente che opera al fondo dell'intero movimento logico hegeliano, lo si può scorgere nel rapporto tra il tutto e le parti nella *Dottrina dell'essenza* della *Scienza della Logica* di Hegel²⁰. Si potrebbe tuttavia obiettare che questa struttura, così come essa si presenta in questa determinata sezione della Logica hegeliana, non consenta di parlare ancora di *circolarità* logica nella stessa forma con cui sarebbe possibile fare nella *Dottrina del concetto*. Ovvero: ciò che qui 'manca' è propriamente l'obiettività, l'esteriorità che il *concetto* mostrerà essergli più propria. E tuttavia, proprio questo luogo della logica, consente di mostrare il sorgere di quella struttura che sarà portata nel *concetto* alla massima completezza. Ciò si-

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ Nella sterminata bibliografia sul tema, si veda: F. CHIERIGHIN, *La genesi della logica hegeliana*, in P. Rossi (a cura di), in Hegel. Guida storica e critica, Laterza, Roma-bari 1992, pp.27-63; E. FLEISCHMANN, *La logica di Hegel*, a cura di A. Solmi, Einaudi, Torino 1975, p. X; D. HENRICH (a cura di), *Die Wissenschaft del Logik: Formation und Rekonstruktion*, Klett-Cotta, Stoccarda 1986.

gnifica: la riflessione nel rapporto tra il tutto e la parti si mostra ancora interna al rapporto di cui discute, non innalzandosi mai alla totalità. Ovvero: se per totalità si intende il rapporto tra tutto e parti, in queste pagine questa totalità è posta, pur sempre, parzialmente, se quel rapporto viene di volta in volta considerato sempre nella sua unilateralità (o dal tutto, o dalle parti). Considerazione senz'altro vera, ma è altrettanto significativo considerare che l'articolazione interna di questo rapporto prepara già il passaggio al concetto, e lo fa proprio a partire dalla struttura logica che si presenta nel rapporto tra tutto e parti. Ossia: quella struttura che si exteriorizza qui è già in atto, o meglio: sorge proprio in questo luogo. Ma si proceda con ordine.

Siamo nelle pagine dedicate al *rapporto essenziale* (*das wesentliche Verhältnis*) della *Dottrina dell'essenza*. Nell'approssimarsi a commentare queste pagine, s'impone anzitutto l'esigenza di chiarire il significato di *relazione* (*Beziehung*) o *rapporto* (*Verhältnis*), poiché esso costituisce un elemento costitutivo per l'intera operazione filosofica hegeliana, che a questo punto trova una sua propria consistenza e una specifica tematizzazione. Nell'aggiunta al paragrafo 111 dell'*Enciclopedia*, aggiunta che svolge un ruolo si potrebbe dire 'introduttivo' alla *dottrina dell'essenza*, essendo una *glossa* all'ultimo paragrafo della *dottrina dell'essere*, dopo aver illustrato nuovamente il passaggio tra qualità, quantità e misura, Hegel scrive:

Nell'essenza non avviene più alcun passaggio, ma c'è soltanto la relazione (*Beziehung*). La forma della relazione nell'essere è soltanto come nostra riflessione; invece nell'essenza la relazione è la sua determinazione propria. Se (nella sfera dell'essere) il qualcosa diventa altro, con ciò stesso il qualcosa è scomparso. Nell'essenza invece le cose non stanno così; qui non abbiamo alcun vero altro, ma soltanto diversità, relazione dell'uno al suo altro. Il passare dell'essenza non è dunque un passare, perché nel passare del diverso nel diverso, il diverso non scompare, ma i diversi rimangono nella loro relazione. Se, per es., parliamo dell'*essere* e del *nulla*, l'essere è per sé e il nulla per sé. Le cose stanno in modo del tutto diverso nel caso del *positivo* e del *negativo*. Questi termini hanno sì la determinazione dell'essere e del nulla, ma il positivo per sé non ha alcun senso, bensì è assolutamente in relazione al negativo. Lo stesso vale per il negativo. Nella sfera dell'essere la relazionalità è posta soltanto *in sé*; nell'essenza invece è posta. Questa è in generale la differenza tra la forma dell'essere e dell'essenza. Nell'essere tutto è immediato, nell'essenza tutto è relativo²¹.

Relazione qui indica l'orizzonte all'interno del quale si articola il gesto hegeliano. E, insieme, di questa *relazione* deve esser data ragione. Questa breve

²¹ G.W.F. HEGEL, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), Werke Bd. 10, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1970, pp. 229-230; tr.it. *La scienza della logica*, a cura di V. Verra, Utet, Torino 20103, p. 305.

premessa ci conduce immediatamente alle pagine dedicate al *rapporto essenziale*. Si tratterà anzitutto di comprendere brevemente – e quindi operando una certa semplificazione nei confronti dell’argomentazione hegeliana – come e quale sia il significato del sorgere del rapporto essenziale, ma soprattutto che cosa in esso sia in questione. Al termine della II sezione dedicata all’apparenza, il rapporto essenziale si presenta anzitutto come rapporto d’*opposizione*, quell’opposizione che sussiste tra il mondo in sé e per sé (cioè il mondo delle leggi) e il mondo fenomenico. La relazione che lega i due mondi – scrive Hegel – è una «relazione essenziale dell’opposizione», cioè «il mondo in sé e per sé è il rovescio del mondo che appare»²². «La differenza tra i due mondi, si riduce a un’inversione di segno: ciò che è negativo dell’uno, è positivo dell’altro»²³. Si tratta di comprendere adeguatamente il senso di questa inversione di segno – che richiama chiaramente il tema del mondo invertito della *Fenomenologia dello Spirito* – poiché il suo carattere apparentemente duplice – o peggio ancora: *dualistico* – viene immediatamente posto in questione da Hegel. Ma proprio in questa opposizione dei due mondi è scomparsa «la loro differenza, e quello che doveva essere un mondo in sé e per sé è esso stesso un mondo che appare, mentre viceversa questo è in lui stesso un mondo essenziale»²⁴. Il mondo che appare viene determinato infatti «come riflessione nell’esser altro» – cosicché debba ad un altro la propria sussistenza e il proprio fondamento. Ossia: il mondo del fenomeno, ad esempio, rimanda ad altro – alla legge del fenomeno – la propria ragione, il proprio sussistere. Tuttavia, continua Hegel, «in quanto questo altro è parimenti un tal riflesso in un altro, quelli si riferiscono costì soltanto a un altro che si toglie, e quindi a sé». Proprio in forza dell’opposizione, scompare dunque la distinzione tra l’uno e l’altro mondo: non vi è pertanto un mondo fenomenico e uno delle leggi, ma «il mondo che appare è pertanto in lui stesso una legge uguale a se stessa». Ci si trova pertanto di fronte ad un unico mondo, che può essere considerato sotto due differenti – per così dire – punti di vista. Hegel chiarisce a questo punto il significato di questa duplicità nella quale, con il togliimento della loro distinzione, l’opposizione è andata a fondo, è *sprofondata*. È qui che sorge il rapporto essenziale tra i due mondi, o meglio: è da questo sprofondare che inizia l’indagine sul significato di quel rapporto. Ciascun mondo è «in lui stesso la totalità della riflessione con sé identica e della riflessione in

²² G.W.F. HEGEL, *Wissenschaft der Logik, Werke Bd. 5-6, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1969*, II, p. 161; tr. it. A. Moni, rivista da C. Cesa, in *II voll.*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 1996., II, p. 571.

²³ Per la lettura di queste pagine, imprescindibile il riferimento a: L. LUGARINI, *Orizzonti hegeliani di comprensione dell’essere. Rileggendo la «Scienza della logica»*, Guerini e Associati, Milano 1998, pp. 325-367; H. MARCUSE, *L’ontologia di Hegel e la fondazione di una teoria della storicità*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1969, p. 103 e ss.

²⁴ G.W.F. HEGEL, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, op. cit., II, p. 161; tr. it. p. 571.

altro, ovvero dell'essere in sé e per sé e dell'apparire. Son tutti e due gl'Interi per sé stanti dell'esistenza. L'uno dovrebb'esser soltanto l'esistenza riflessa, l'altro l'esistenza immediata, ma ciascuno si continua nel suo altro ed è quindi in lui stesso l'identità di questi due momenti». Proprio questo continuare, questo implicarsi vicendevolmente, questo coappartenersi dell'uno nell'altro mondo, questo avere in sé «essenzialmente il momento dell'altro», fa sì che ciascuno – sebbene si presenti come un *intero indipendente dell'esistenza*, come separato e autonomo dall'altro, cioè come due totalità l'una come riflessa, l'altra come immediata – fa sì dunque che nonostante ciò, sia invero parte di una stessa totalità che entrambi ricomprende, e solo all'interno della quale è possibile la loro indistinzione. Scrive Hegel:

L'indipendenza distinta di ciascuno di quello che è determinato come immediato, e di quello che è determinato come riflesso, è quindi ormai posta come consistente in ciò che ciascuno sia solo come relazione essenziale all'altro ed abbia il suo star per sé in questa unità dei due²⁵.

Proprio dal loro contrapporsi e dalla loro indistinzione nel mondo invertito, emerge il *rapporto essenziale*, cioè la loro reciproca relazione. E si dovrebbe dire: emerge, ma anche resta, è il residuo dell'esistenza intesa – in queste pagine – come *fenomeno*. Ne scaturisce un risultato insieme anche *negativo*. E proprio rispetto a questo 'risultato', prima di entrare nello specifico della trattazione sul *rapporto*, Hegel compie una sorta di riepilogo del percorso fin qui compiuto, nel quale indica il compito che dovrà essere intrapreso nelle pagine seguenti, ossia – e lo si dica in una forma non direttamente presente nel testo, ma da esso desumibile – questo compito consta nella costruzione della totalità *come* rapporto essenziale²⁶. Scrive Hegel:

La parola *mondo* esprime in generale la totalità informe della molteplicità. Questo mondo, tanto come mondo essenziale, quanto come mondo fenomenico, è andato giù, la molteplicità avendo cessato di essere una molteplicità semplicemente diversa; così esso è ancora totalità o universo, ma come rapporto essenziale²⁷.

Se quindi l'esistenza intesa come fenomeno è ora messa in crisi, poiché andata a fondo sia come mondo fenomenico che come mondo in sé – non per ciò è negato il suo carattere di totalità. Anzi: esso è ancora totalità o universo – ma

²⁵ *Ivi*, p. 162; tr. it. p. 572.

²⁶ È vero, il rapporto essenziale «non è ancora il vero terzo rispetto all'essenza e all'esistenza, ma contiene già la loro determinata unione».

²⁷ *Ivi*, p. 163; tr. it. p. 573.

appunto, proprio come rapporto *essenziale*. Si tratterà dunque di capire come questa totalità si articoli e si strutturi all'interno del rapporto essenziale. Ci soffermeremo esclusivamente sulla prima sezione del rapporto *essenziale*, che è dedicata al «rapporto del tutto e delle parti».

5. *Il tutto e le parti*

Dopo aver dato ragione della relazione reciproca tra quei due 'mondi' e il loro tramonto – che è, in quanto tanto tale, il sorgere della relazione tra tutto e parti – Hegel esemplifica quanto guadagnato in questo modo:

Considerando ciò più in particolare, il tutto è l'unità riflessa, la quale ha una indipendente sussistenza per sé. Ma questa sussistenza dell'unità è insieme anche respinta da lei. Il tutto, come unità relativa, è riferimento negativo a se stesso. Così cotesta unità è fatta esterna a sé; ha la sua sussistenza nel suo opposto, nella molteplice immediatezza, nelle parti²⁸.

Il tutto quindi in quanto tale sussiste per sé, ma l'affermazione di questa sussistenza, in quanto unità riflessa, lo fa già essere relativo riferimento a se stesso, ossia: relazione ad altro, al molteplice. Ma è il tutto come tutto, che è questa relazione alla molteplicità, o meglio: è *molteplicità*. In questo movimento, seppur ad un livello e nella modalità specifica a questa sezione della *Logica*, si comprende chiaramente il senso di quella ramificazione del pensiero, di cui parlava Rosenzweig. Anzi, si comprende meglio come quell'unità negativa, sia in quanto tale, posizione della molteplicità, negativa poiché mai essa è un tutto separato, coglibile fuori dal rapporto con la parte, e dunque: fuori dalla parte stessa. Continua Hegel:

Il tutto consta quindi delle parti, di modo che non è nulla senza di esse. E dunque l'intero rapporto è la totalità per sé stante; ma appunto per la medesima ragione non è che un relativo, perché quello che lo fa esser totalità, è anzi il suo altro, le parti, ed esso ha la sua sussistenza non in sé, ma nel suo altro. Così le parti son anche l'intero rapporto. Esse sono il per sé stare immediato di fronte al riflesso, e non sussistono nel tutto, ma son per sé. Hanno per di più questo tutto in loro come lor momento. Esso costituisce la relazione loro; senza un tutto non vi son parti²⁹.

Il problema per Hegel non è solo quello di dare ragione di come la parte si relazioni al tutto, ma del fatto che la parte sia parte. Ossia: di come la parte si costituisca come *parte*. Certo, l'esser parte della parte è – in quanto tale – la

²⁸ *Ivi*, p. 167; tr. it. p. 576.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

propria relazione al tutto: parte è parte solo di un tutto e «senza un tutto non vi sono parti». Ma questo implica, anzitutto – che un tutto vi sia, certo, ma che vi sia *anche* a prescindere dalla parte? Lo sforzo di Hegel sta propriamente nel negare questa presupposizione dell'intero, questa precedenza del tutto al rapporto *tutto-parti*. Il tutto è propriamente la relazione tra le parti, la relazione – davvero *essenziale* – che pone e che fa sussistere le parti. L'insistenza di Hegel nel definire *totalità* la relazione tra i due, non toglie certo la difficoltà, ma mostra con chiarezza quanto – già a questo livello della *dottrina dell'essenza* – ad essere in discussione sia in quanto tale la costituzione della totalità stessa a partire – e qui la peculiarità e la radicalità dell'operazione hegeliana – dalla propria articolazione 'interna'³⁰. Come questo venga fatto, quale sia cioè l'operazione svolta da Hegel, è ciò su cui si tratta ora di volgere l'attenzione, tenendo comunque ben presente il brano rosenzweighiano precedentemente citato sul quale presto si tornerà. Poco dopo aver presentato il significato del rapporto tra tutto e parti, Hegel riformula nuovamente la questione del loro rapporto, giocando una mossa decisiva nella riconduzione delle parti al tutto: «le parti sono uguali al tutto» – dice Hegel – «ma non eguali a quello come all'unità». Esse sono infatti parti – molteplici – poiché «sono in loro stesse il momento dell'esser altro». Qual è allora il significato di questa identità tra tutto e parti? Quest'eguaglianza del tutto alle parti non va pertanto intesa nel senso dell'unità, «ma nel senso che una delle molteplici determinazioni di esso è devoluta alla parte, o nel senso che le parti sono eguali come a un tutto sparito, ossia come alle parti [dass *eine* seiner mannigfaltigen Bestimmungen auf den Teil kommt oder dass sie *ihm* als *Mannigfaltigen* gleich sind; d.h. sie sind ihm als *geteiltem Ganzen*, d.i. als den *Teilen* gleich]». Proviamo a spiegare: il tutto, in quanto tutto, non può essere uguale alle parti in quanto *unità*, ma come parte – altrimenti verrebbe meno il carattere di parte delle parti. Così, tra le molteplici determinazioni del tutto, *ne* viene 'devoluta' una alla parte; *oder*, oppure – ed è una comparazione di cui si tratta di tenere conto – che le parti sono uguali come un tutto che è sparito, un tutto che si è dissolto. E si è dissolto nel mostrarsi *già* parte, in quell'offrirsi del tutto come parte. Ma cosa ne è del tutto come unità? Del tutto come unità che sussiste alla molteplicità delle parti, se una qualsiasi determinazione di quel tutto si dà come tutto *per* la parte? E non è sufficiente rispondere – come il testo invita a fare – che il tutto resta come quella *unità negativa* immanente alle parti, ché quell'unità negativa è già il tutto come molteplicità, il tutto come riferimento negativo

³⁰ Certo, ma la questione richiederebbe un lavoro a sé ché queste stesse pagine andrebbero lette alla luce del loro rapporto con le pagine sulla *riflessione* nella *Dottrina dell'essenza*, nelle quali è indicata propriamente la struttura logica che è qui in azione. E solo da un simile confronto si potrebbe comprendere l'effettiva o meno consistenza della stessa critica rosenzweighiana; esigenza che questo lavoro disattende. Per uno sviluppo interessante del concetto di totalità alla luce della nozione di stato in Hegel, si veda: J. Such, *Hegel's Category of Totality and His Concept of The State*, Brill 2003.

a se stesso. Ma non aveva forse detto Hegel che quell'unità fosse necessaria alla pensabilità dell'intero rapporto? Nell'intero svolgimento del discorso hegeliano qui mostrato, si tiene ferma questa comprensione dell'unità che – di fatto – mai entra nella relazione. Si badi: non si sta dicendo che Hegel ponga un'unità a prescindere dal rapporto con la differenza, con la molteplicità. Il discorso è ben più complesso, ché quell'unità – la quale sorge in quanto tale nella relazione –, ossia: è già momento della *totalità*, se questa è il rapporto tra tutto e parti – non è ricompresa nella comprensione del tutto *per* le parti. Tanto più, la formulazione è ambigua: se una delle molteplici determinazioni del tutto si desse come parte, non potrebbe mai farlo come unità – cioè nel vero significato di tutto – ché sarebbe proprio ciò che farebbe venire meno la molteplicità delle parti. Nella difficoltà indicata si ripresenta quanto Rosenzweig aveva detto parlando del rapporto tra essere e pensiero come totalità onnincludente: «In sé esso non è unità, bensì molteplicità, non è un Tutto onnincludente bensì un uno incluso, il quale in sé è infinito, ma non concluso. Quindi un Tutto, mi si passi l'espressione, che esclude» (*Ibidem*). L'unità è inclusa, certo, ma mai come tale, mai come unità. O meglio: l'unità inclusa è l'unità per le differenze, l'unità che sussiste come unità della molteplicità. Ma come si è visto in Hegel, l'infinità di questa unità – il suo appartenere alle sue molteplici e infinite determinazioni – non la esaurisce, non la conclude. La totalità, proprio in quanto totalità, trova innanzi a sé la condizione di possibilità del proprio essere totalità che non diventa un momento della propria inclusione. E non perché semplicemente non la includa, ma perché non può portarla a determinatezza se proprio da essa dipende.

V'è un infinito, insomma, che non è *sic et simpliciter* 'totalità'. Dove però, e qui sta l'insistenza sull'assunzione del discorso a partire dall'operazione hegeliana, è solo dall'interno della relazione che si 'scorge' questa oltranza, questa *esteriorità*. L'onninclusività del pensiero è sempre *da* altro: *non un Tutto onnincludente, ma un Uno incluso*. Il che significa che il pensiero, anzitutto, *patisce* la propria *onninclusività* – e la patisce come un *altro*, da cui esso stesso dipende. L'espressione – quasi ossimorica di Rosenzweig – è rivolta a indicare questa *esteriorità del Tutto*: un Tutto che esclude. Ma questa esclusione del Tutto è prodotta, è propria dell'includere stesso. Il Tutto 'esclude' proprio includendo, proprio esercitando con forza il suo *nomos*. S'è detto: *esclude* ma questa esclusione ben prima che agita, è patita dal tutto. Resta nel lato 'umbratile', nella zona in ombra della riflessione, quel 'luogo' del tutto in cui la sua onninclusività si mostra nella forma della *passività*. E passività significa che anzitutto – quell'esteriorità – non solo non è conosciuta, ma anche non è 'veduta' dal Tutto, ché come se ne avvede, come la 'determina', le conferisce già un significato, già un volto. Qui si gioca lo scarto che l'esperienza di questa *passività* impone. Lo scarto – o forse meglio: la *distanza*. Distanza tra la totalità e l'altro dalla totalità, tra sé e la propria compiutezza. *Infinita* dunque, ma non-conclusa. Ed è in que-

sto spazio che si ripresenta l'ebraismo. Si presenta anzitutto come *distanza*, paradigma dell'andare che sradica certo, ma sradica anche la sradicatezza. *Non* nega, ma destituisce, *non* recide ma mostra la fallacia di ogni nodo, di ogni catena che assicura a una presa salda.

6. Chiusa

«Mia è la terra» dice il Signore del Nome, ma qual è l'esperienza di questo possesso se di Lui è 'conosciuto' solo il suo non poter essere conosciuto, se il popolo conosce solo l'*oltranza* del proprio Nome rivelato: cosa dirò? Chi mi manda? – chiede Moshé: «'Eheyeh shelachany 'aleykem» (*Es*, 3.13). *Io sarò mi manda a voi...* Il futuro del Nome è anche futuro del possesso, erranza che tiene innanzi e dopo di sé altra erranza, altra *oltranza*: oltraggio stesso del proprio trascendersi. Ovvero: oltraggio è anche la forma che relega la divinità nell'*oltre* estremo – ancora maggiore è la ritrosia del Dio d'Israele poiché svuota, priva di sé anche quella distanza, fa divieto che quella distanza divenga la propria dimora. *Passività* è anzitutto l'accadere di questa *oltranza*, di un *non* – quello stesso '*non*' a cui Hegel aveva inchiodato l'ebraismo – che si ripropone oltre la riduzione operata da Hegel, *al di là* dell'onniinclusività della totalità, e non perché la ecceda, ma perché le si sottrae. E quindi – anche – *la* riduce, la pone in questione: *dall'interno*. A nessun '*non*' può essere inchiodata quell'*oltranza*, poiché essa stessa è quel *non*, quella negazione che toglie forza anche al proprio negare. Puro essere-*per*-altro, senza alcun radicamento, senza alcuna *essenza*. Il problema e la difficoltà per Rosenzweig sarà quella di individuare il senso di questa *sradicatezza* in seno al popolo stesso. E sarà un'operazione duplice come già quel *bleiben* ribadito nella lettera a Ehrenberg. Duplice nel senso che la radicale sradicatezza del popolo non toglierà la valenza di quel *bleiben*, di quel restare, di quell'essere *sempre* popolo. Perciò Rosenzweig dovrà farsi carico di ripensare il senso, anzitutto, di quella sottrazione del popolo ebraico dall'orizzonte del politico, di quella negatività, non solo oltre Hegel, ma anche oltre la stessa ipostatizzazione di cui ogni erranza potrebbe essere fatta oggetto.

Religious experience and personal perspective

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Abstract

In this paper we will look into the issue regarding the relationship between religious experience and benefit (health), from the personal perspective. Under religion it is meant Christianity, and under health we mean primarily spiritual health. Spiritual health can, among other things, include an option in which a person sees God and religion as making their life meaningful, which affects, or can affect their life positively (and even make a previously ill person healthy again). It has been proven for the patients who are believers suffering from certain mental illnesses, that they can benefit in their treatment from various religious practices. However, we will not deal with the medical aspect of the issue, but look into the most commonly used philosophical objection given to those who have had, or think they have had, religious experiences. The objection is that we should not trust them because their justification for the claim that they have had religious experiences (and also for their belief in God) is highly questionable. Therefore, in this work the focus will be put on the person since the person is crucial for critical assessment of religious experiences in the context of the possible influence religion has on the spiritual health. It depends on the person whether we will take religious experiences seriously into account. This is owing to the fact that we must first decide whether we should trust a person who claims they have had a religious experience, and only then can we talk about a possible influence of religion on a person's health.

Therefore, in the first part of this paper we shall look into the problem of people who claim they have had some kind of religious experience. We will analyze what it means to have a religious experience in the first place, what types of religious experiences there are and how individuals interpret them, meaning, what value they usually assign to them. Then, in the second part, we will present main objections and criticisms. In the third part we will discuss the meaning and personal interpretation of religious experience in greater detail, bearing in mind the experience of God. Lastly, in the final part we will show in what ways a person can justify their faith in God (and give a certain guarantee of their experience). In conclusion, we will show that it is possible to believe a person who claims that they have had an experience of God.

Keywords: person – a guarantee of religious experience, religious experience, spirituality, health, difficulties in ascertaining, believing in and justifying religious experience

Introduction

In this paper we will analyze religious experiences through the lens of the person who had them. Generally speaking, many people have objections when it comes to religious experiences, mainly because they are difficult to explain and prove. However, believers often link them to their health. For them, religious experience is a possible source of health, especially spiritual. Many people of different eras have claimed to have had a religious experience or, according to their judgment, an experience of God. Others treated these experiences with either complete dismissal or deep scepticism, insisting that religious experiences were impossible (since God's existence was never proved). Speaking from the perspective of contemporary analytic philosophy of religion it is considered that there is no firm evidence pointing to the possibility of any person having religious experiences.

In this article we will deal with religious experience as one of the possibilities available to humans, which can positively affect our health (primarily our spiritual health, but our bodily health as well, by extension). There are many ways in which people take care of their health. It is usually considered that a healthy body is a prerequisite to any other form of health. Conversely, one could say that a healthy spirituality contributes to bodily health. But, nowadays there are many occurrences which should raise concern. The well-known motto *mens sana in corpore sano* is sometimes wrongly interpreted and can lead people to extremes, which, in turn, can be very detrimental to one's health. In our society body is often subjected to extreme workouts that put our health, the very reason why we started working out in the first place in danger, which surely has negative consequences for the body, which, in turn endangers spiritual health and the entire well being of a person. On the other hand, focusing solely on the spiritual health while neglecting the body can lead to a different negative extreme.

The great religions of the world, predominantly the eastern, but also more and more the western as well, advocate the use of various spiritual exercises aimed at enhancing one's spiritual health. These exercises are usually called meditations. They are gaining prominence, but can also be detrimental to one's health. Humans need balance, both in their minds and bodies and so it follows that both these realms should receive our attention and care. Meditations that we mentioned are primarily the result of a man's search for God or self-fulfillment. But, as we said earlier, here we will focus on the so-called religious,

mystic, (spiritual) experiences³¹ (as they're commonly called) observed from the perspective of the person who experienced them. We will focus on that which affects or which can affect a person's spiritual health. Undoubtedly, if a person had the experience of God, it would affect their health positively in many aspects, spiritual, psychological and even physical³².

Many people claim to have experienced God. By this they mean to say that they've had the experience, or at least think or believe that they, be it directly or indirectly, communicated or entered into relationship with God. From the viewpoint of contemporary analytic philosophy of religion, there are great similarities between religious and mystic experiences, although they are not one and the same. Every religious experience is at the same time a mystic experience, but it does not follow the other way around. Also, there are many different ways to define mysticism, and the definitions often vary greatly from one author to another³³. For this reason, we will in this paper treat religious, mystic and spiritual experiences as synonymous, meaning that all these concepts denote a relationship with (Christian) God or some form of divinity. After the person has had a religious experience, it can be said that their life has changed in some important way³⁴. Many changes occurred in all aspects of their life. Among other things, this experience has helped them to redefine their priorities and start treating both themselves and others differently. This amounts to an altogether novel way of both reasoning about life and living it³⁵. As was mentioned before, a religious experience is different from a person's endeavour to, either through body or spirit, attain the meaning of life or that which we would call happiness.

³¹ A detailed contemporary overview of religious experience can be found in a chapter of an exquisite anthology put together by M. Peterson, W. Hasker, B. Reichenbach, D. Basinger (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion* (fifth edition). Selected Readings, Oxford University Press, New York, 2014., pp. 35-90.

³² First and foremost, because God is, by definition, supposed to be perfect in every way, that is to say, omnipotent, omniscient and perfectly good (possessing of all perfections), so when a human being enters into relationship with such a being, they gain everything (not just the health, but also a unity with God). See: W. JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1990., pp. 36-86.

³³ See: M. WEBB, „Religious Experience“, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/religious-experience/> (accessed: 10.2.2016).

³⁴ W. JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 36: "If we were asked to, in the broadest possible terms describe the main aspects of religious experience, we could say that it consists in a firm belief that there is an invisible order of things, and our well-being lies in the ability to adjust to this order as well as possible. This belief and adjustment are the religious attitudes in one's soul (...) All our attitudes, moral, practical or emotional, as well as religious, come from the objects of our consciousness; what we believe exists, real or ideal, simultaneously with us. Such objects can present to our senses or to our thoughts only. In both cases they will produce a reaction. And it is well-known that a reaction to an imaginary presence is often as strong as that caused by a sensory presence. Or even stronger". All translations from the Croatian language are made by the author.

³⁵ See: W. JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 39.

1. *Person at the center of religious experience*

Because of reasons mentioned earlier, the subject of religious experiences has, on the one hand, always attracted great attention, and on the other, a series of questions, misunderstandings and problems. It is difficult to properly explain or prove such experiences. But, it is also true that there aren't any evidence showing such experiences to be impossible, so the focus of this discussion will be on the person who claims or thinks that they had an experience of God. What must be ascertained is that the experience occurred, which circumstances and conditions led to it, and how it should be interpreted. Therefore, the most important questions that we would try to answer in this paper are – what a person who claims to have experienced God really claims, what sort of experience did they have, how can this experience be ascertained, explained and justified.

Religion, and especially religious experience are the focus of many different fields of study, including theology, sociology³⁶, philosophy and psychology, but in this paper the emphasis will be on the philosophical aspects exclusively (more precisely, from the perspective of contemporary analytic philosophy of religion). It is a very complicated subject, consisting of various aspects that are difficult to integrate in a single discussion. The notion of experience is in itself a highly complex term, for it is possible to talk about experience in a broad or narrow sense. The narrow, everyday sense of the notion of experience denotes primarily various sensory data, while in a broad sense it includes also a cognitive dimension³⁷.

Religious experience is also impossible to define in exact terms³⁸. It presupposes an objective and subjective dimension to itself. Subjective in the sense that it is fully and directly available only to the person having it, and objective in the sense that others can (in certain circumstances) bear witness to it. But, when speaking of religious experience, the important thing is to focus on the person who claims to have had a religious or mystic experience³⁹. In other words, the experience of God. What is this experience really about? When somebody claims that they've had an experience of God, it either means that the experience was

³⁶ See: S. TADIĆ, „Religiozno iskustvo – neistraživana i/ili neistraživa dimenzija religije i religioznosti“ in: *Društvena istraživanja*, 7 (1998), 3 (35), pp. 359-373.

³⁷ It is not possible to go into details here, but it is important to mention that experience, in the broadest sense of the term, includes many elements, like culture, tradition, the so-called background knowledge etc.

³⁸ About different kinds of religious experience, see: R. SWINBURNE, *The Existence of God* (revised edition), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991., pp. 249-251. See also: M. PETERSON, W. HASKER, B. REICHENBACH, D. BASINGER (ed.), *Reason & Religious Belief*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2003., pp. 16-19. See also: S. TADIĆ, „Religiozno iskustvo – neistraživana i/ili neistraživa dimenzija religije i religioznosti“, pp. 362-365.

³⁹ These two terms are not synonyms, they do not overlap in their meaning completely. But, for the requirements of this paper, they will be treated as synonyms. For greater details, see: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER, *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 36-37 (it is a chapter titled „Religious Experience“ – which are the most relied on in this paper because of the overview of all the relevant positions in the domain, that they provide).

direct or indirect⁴⁰. The direct experience refers to some sort of communication with God (for instance, when a person claims that God spoke to them, giving them some kind of information or a request to do something on His behalf), while indirect, as the word itself suggests, means that God is perceived indirectly, through mediation of an object, a thing or an event⁴¹. To put it more precisely, the direct experience of God would be the one where a person has a direct feeling of God or God's presence, when there is a direct encounter or communication with God. In the words of William Alston: „The intuitive idea is that by virtue of my being aware of God as sustaining me in being I can justifiably believe that God is sustaining me in being“⁴². The indirect presupposes a presence mediated by a sign or a symbol. Regardless of whether a person had a direct or an indirect experience, this person will be the first to bear witness and try to explain what has happened to them. There are many examples in which people attempted to describe their experience of God⁴³. There is a well-known example from the Bible, the book of Genesis where God makes contact with Abraham and gives him a task (to sacrifice his son Isaac as a token of love)⁴⁴. A prominent Danish philosopher Kierkegaard wrote a book about this experience entitled *Fear and Trembling*⁴⁵. The title speaks volumes and we can only imagine the depth of agony and anguish suffered by Abraham as this task was put before him. He must have wondered if it was possible that God chose him in particular, or how could he be sure that God really spoke to him, that it was not the devil or someone else⁴⁶.

So, anybody can potentially become the subject of a religious experience, regardless of being theist or atheist. And no matter who it is that finds themselves in such a situation, they are uncertain as to what exactly happened to them and how to interpret it. Bearing this in mind it becomes clear that the person experiencing God will not take the truthfulness of their experience for granted; they will second-guess themselves, and the nature of their experience. It would be very strange, inexplicable even, if the person in question didn't wonder as to what exactly happened to them and how it is to be interpreted. Was it *real* or

⁴⁰ See: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 41.

⁴¹ See: SWINBURNE, *The Existence of God*, pp. 249-251.

⁴² W. ALSTON, *Perceiving God*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1991., p. 1.

⁴³ W. James, in his book *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, describes and analyzes many religious experiences (these experiences are from many different religions, but in this paper the emphasis is put exclusively on the Christian religion). See: James, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 147-175.

⁴⁴ See: Post, 22.

⁴⁵ S. KIERKEGAARD, *Strah i drhtanje*, Verbum, Split, 2000.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 33-70.

not. There will be many such questions and doubts⁴⁷, especially since these kinds of experience typically occur suddenly and unexpectedly, with the person usually losing the ability to react, rendering them passive⁴⁸. As if all their will and agency were suddenly blocked⁴⁹. On the one hand there is great fear, uncertainty and amazement, on the other a very strong sense of God's presence, often through support, power and love⁵⁰. There is a sense of great confusion, a sense of being overwhelmed with emotion the source of which remains unknown⁵¹. For the person the experience is so strong and real that there is no doubt that they experienced something inexplicable (at least for the most part) and magnificent⁵². After having had such an experience, a person usually changes significantly (it amounts almost to a conversion)⁵³. According to some authors, it is precisely this change that proves the experience of God⁵⁴.

Some people have changed significantly after having had an experience of God, or an experience that they interpreted as such⁵⁵. From that moment on, life had a new meaning for them and thus we can say that the subject of religious experience is closely linked to the question of the meaning of life (and not just to the question of health, although it was proved that religion, and especially some religious practices can have a beneficial effect on the spiritual health of people in general, as well as on the people with mental health issues. In their existence, all that they do becomes focused on God. They describe the presence of God in many different ways: with a sense of support they feel in their lives, sense of protection, warmth, love, forgiveness etc. Many say that at the center of reli-

⁴⁷ JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 259: "The most suitable sign on the basis of which a state of mind can be thought of as mystical, is a negative one. A person who has had a mystical experience will immediately call it indescribable, they will say that its content cannot be adequately put into words. It follows that the quality of such an experience must be directly realized; it cannot be learned or conveyed to others. This quality makes mystical experiences more similar to affective than intellectual ones. If somebody has not experienced a certain feeling, nobody can explain to them what is its particular quality".

⁴⁸ Among four elements characteristic of religious experience, W. JAMES emphasizes passiveness. See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁹ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 45.

⁵⁰ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 196-197.

⁵¹ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 45.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 43.

⁵³ James devotes the ninth and tenth chapter, or lecture, to the subject of conversion. See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 129-175.

⁵⁴ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 147-175.

⁵⁵ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 46-47.

gious experience there is a feeling, but this feeling often gives 'deeper insight into a reality' they live in (so, it cannot be reduced only to a feeling, but to a certain type of cognitive insight into reality)⁵⁶. Feelings do not, generally speaking, guarantee complete rationality, though they are not irrational in themselves, nor do they exclude a cognitive dimension.

But the question is whether people who rely on religious experiences are justified in doing so and whether they really can have an experience of God? It goes almost without saying that a person can be wrong in thinking that they have had an experience of God⁵⁷. There can be a misunderstanding, a mistake, a case of coming under the influence of one's desires, of wishful thinking, etc. A person can also be under the influence of hallucinations, drugs or under social and psychological distress. It can even be a case of a mentally unstable person (who deceives themselves, and who did not really have an experience of God)⁵⁸. But all these mistakes, though they need to be taken into account, do not lead us, or at least do not have to lead us to a conclusion that the experience of God is impossible⁵⁹.

2. Objections

There is a lot of criticism concerning religious experience, but we will try to single out only the most important ones. When talking about religious experience, some authors put forward numerous objections. Others immediately give up the discussion claiming that religious experience is impossible and that there is nothing to discuss. They think that it does not make sense to talk about religious experience primarily because God is not a part of reality in the same way in which sensory objects are, since sensory objects are available to us in a direct way, and we can ascertain their existence using our senses. It is also important that other people can ascertain their existence too, which is not the case with God. God is not a sensory object in the same way and in the same sense as everyday objects are, and so there is no way in which we could ascertain or prove that somebody has really had an experience of God⁶⁰. But, on the other hand, not everything that is available in our direct reality can be proved either⁶¹. There are difficulties connected to ascertaining the nature of religious experiences (as well as explaining and proving them), but before we even get to doing that, it is important to see which conditions and criteria need to be fulfilled in order to at

⁵⁶ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 45.

⁵⁷ See: B. DAVIES, *Uvod u filozofiju religije*, Scopus, Zagreb, 1998., p. 108.

⁵⁸ See: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 63. This is Proudfoot's position.

⁵⁹ *Ivi*, p. 53.

⁶⁰ See Alston's position in: *Ivi*, p. 53.

⁶¹ See: A. PLANTINGA, „Reason and Belief in God“, in: A. PLANTINGA, N. WOLTERSTORFF (eds.), *Faith and Rationality. Reason and Belief in God*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1983, pp. 16-94.

least attempt at justifying the claim that religious experience is possible. While doing that it is necessary to differentiate between the conditions pertaining to the content of experience and conditions pertaining to the person claiming that they had an experience of God. As we said earlier, here the focus will be on the person.

3. The Meaning and description of religious experience from personal perspective

Many authors have written about religious experience⁶². Among these the classics are certainly Rudolf Otto with his book *The Idea of Holy*⁶³, William James with his work *The Varieties of Religious Experience*⁶⁴, Richard Swinburne with his work *The Existence of God*⁶⁵, and William Alston with his famous book *Perceiving God*⁶⁶. All of these authors tried to detect key features of religious experience and single out those elements that most people who think that they had a religious experience find important. The discussion is usually primarily concerned with the question whether religious experience is just a feeling or it is something more than a feeling (in the sense of asking ourselves whether it includes a cognitive dimension as well)?

William James, for instance, discerns four main characteristics that are usually present in every religious experience⁶⁷. The first one is *ineffability*⁶⁸. The person who had a religious experience is usually at a loss for words to describe it. Anything they say or could say appears to them pale and inadequate in comparison to what they have experienced. This does not mean that they do not know what happened or that it is impossible to describe the experience they have had but that what they have experienced greatly surpasses anything that can be said about it⁶⁹. The second characteristic is connected with a *cognitive*

⁶² In this paper we are elaborating on the topic from the viewpoint of contemporary Analytic Philosophy of Religion, and therefore we will not give an overview of the contribution of such important authors as Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Calvin, Descartes, Hegel, Feuerbach and others.

⁶³ See: R. OTTO, *Sveto*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo, 1983.

⁶⁴ See: W. JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, Naprijed, Zagreb, 1990. W. James is the only philosopher who offers a clear link between religious experiences and health. Other philosophers dealing with this topic provide this link only implicitly.

⁶⁵ See: R. SWINBURNE, *The Existence of God* (revised edition), Oxford University Press, London, 1991.

⁶⁶ See: W. ALSTON, *Perceiving God*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1991.

⁶⁷ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 259. See also James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 44-45.

⁶⁸ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 259.

⁶⁹ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 44.

*dimension*⁷⁰. If we reduce the experience to just a feeling, as is usually the case, then we have a problem of justification, because it is difficult to rely on just a feeling. This does not seem convincing and it is overly subjective. This is why James says that this feeling has a noetic quality and leads to at least some kind of knowledge or, according to James, gives a deeper insight into reality⁷¹. James believes that it is precisely this feeling that leads to a deeper understanding of what is being perceived. The third characteristic of religious experience is *transience*⁷². It is short-lived in the sense that it happens suddenly and it lasts only for a brief period of time, but the effects it has on a person are very strong⁷³. The fourth characteristic is *passiveness*⁷⁴. The person who has had a religious experience usually feels passive, like everything is happening against their will⁷⁵.

There are authors who think that the religious feeling needs to be separated or even completely differentiated from the cognitive sphere. Rudolf Otto is of the opinion that religious experience does not have a cognitive dimension but that it can be reduced to a feeling, that being the feeling of dependence⁷⁶. In contemporary terms we would say that it is a feeling of belonging and attachment. That being said, William James is still more inclined to think of feelings in a more complex way. In his view, feelings give a deeper insight into reality and they should not be singled out as irrational or noncognitive⁷⁷. Therefore, we can conclude that it is much more likely that there are no 'pure feelings' and that every feeling in itself includes a cognitive dimension.

4. *How to interpret religious experience?*

Some authors, like William Alston, claim that it is possible to have a perception of God and that some people really do have a perception of God⁷⁸. This would mean that the experience of God is a kind of perception⁷⁹. Perception is here understood in its broader and not just its narrow meaning. According to

⁷⁰ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 259.

⁷¹ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 44-45.

⁷² See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 259.

⁷³ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 44-45.

⁷⁴ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 259-260.

⁷⁵ See James' position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 45.

⁷⁶ See: OTTO, *Sveto*, p. 29.

⁷⁷ See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, pp. 288-290.

⁷⁸ See Alston's position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 55.

⁷⁹ *Ivi*, p. 54.

the narrow meaning, perception is usually connected with everyday or sensory experience (although it does not consist of sensory dimension only). Therefore, when we speak of everyday experience then we most often think of experience available to our five basic senses. But, perception can also be given a broader meaning in the sense that when we speak of perceiving something then we usually mean to say that something has appeared in a certain way and with certain qualities which can either be sensory or nonsensory⁸⁰. The fact that something appears to me in a certain way is not to be confused with the fact that I perceive something in a certain way (appearing is not the same as perceiving). Alston himself is aware of the fact that we can perceive things in different ways.

So, it is possible to perceive God's attributes, His qualities like omnipotence, omniscience and supreme moral goodness. This means that God can be perceived on the basis of making comparisons (here we are talking about handling the object in a comparative manner). In Alston's words: „*It seems clear that a non-sensory appearance of a purely spiritual deity has a greater chance of presenting Him as He is than any sensory presentation. If God appears to one, non-sensorily as loving, powerful or good, the appearance, so far as it goes, could correspond fairly closely with the way God is Himself*“⁸¹.

In the same way in which a man can be said to possess certain qualities (an ability to do something, power, love etc.) which, as we can see, are not sensory, so in the same way but to the greatest extent, we expect that the mentioned qualities appear in God⁸². There is a similar situation when we describe and compare our earthly with our heavenly father. Our earthly father (parent) strives to do everything in his power to give only the best to his child. But, as opposed to the heavenly father, he does not succeed in doing that every time because a human father is prone to mistakes, whereas the heavenly father is not.

Alston explained perception through a *Theory of Appearing*, according to which the object appears to the subject or to a person as such and such (as a carrier of certain qualities)⁸³. In Alston's words: „*Thus the Theory of Appearing is a form of „direct“ realism, even „naive“ realism, in that it endorses our spontaneous naive way of taking sense experience as involving the direct awareness of an object that is presented to consciousness, usually an external physical object*“⁸⁴. According to him, for us to be able to talk about perception or about the appearing of objects - there are three conditions that need to be met. First, the object must exist for it to be able to appear. Second, it needs to contribute to our understanding of it. Third, the appearing of the object needs to lead a person to

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁸¹ ALSTON, *Perceiving God*, p. 20.

⁸² See Alston's position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 56.

⁸³ *Ivi*, p. 54.

⁸⁴ ALSTON, *Perceiving God*, p. 55.

formulate some kind of belief about it⁸⁵. If these conditions are met, according to Alston, we can talk about perceiving God (and mystic experience)⁸⁶. Because, if God really exists, then he can be perceived⁸⁷.

The next problem consists in interpreting what was experienced. Alston thinks that there is no way for us to ascertain if somebody has had a religious experience primarily because a person has a privileged access to it⁸⁸. Nobody is able to completely relate what they have experienced to another person. One of the reasons why this is so is connected to the background knowledge an individual has⁸⁹.

Everybody is born in a certain culture or tradition or, in other words, under a specific set of different elements and they will interpret everything that is happening to them in accordance with these different elements. Their interpretation of what they have experienced, their notions, thoughts and beliefs depend precisely on these elements⁹⁰. This means that the person is in a privileged role not just when talking about what they have experienced, but also when interpreting, explaining and justifying it. We can show understanding for the needs of others to re-check or to find evidence for it, but the privileged approach to what was experienced rests exclusively with the person who has had the experience. If the said experience includes a cognitive level, and it is possible and even probable that it does, then it is possible for the person who experienced it to explain it as an inference to the best explanation. So, of all possible explanations or theories that are available, the person will accept the one for which there is the most evidence as the most probable one⁹¹. This also means that we should rely on the assessment of the person who has had the experience (of course, on the condition that all the basic epistemic conditions are met and that the person in question is mentally stable).

Richard Swinburne agrees with the aforementioned interpretation. He has put forward two theories to further substantiate it. These theories are the *Theory of Credulity* and *Theory of Testimony*⁹². According to the first theory, we need to have trust in what the subject claims because it is most often the case that the subject is right. Or in his words:

⁸⁵ See Alston's position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 56.

⁸⁶ *Ivi*, p. 55.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁸ *Ivi*, p. 56.

⁸⁹ See: ALSTON, *Perceiving God*, pp. 289-290.

⁹⁰ See Alston's position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 57.

⁹¹ *Ivi*, p. 58.

⁹² See Swinburne position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 74-77.

The Principle of Credulity is concerned with a subject's grounds for believing that things are as they seem to him. Clearly in ordinary life we use a wider principle, for we usually believe to have occurred what other people tell us that they perceived occurring. Other things being equal, we think that what others tell us that they perceived, probably happened⁹³.

The second theory points to the principle of testimony, but we will not deal with it in greater detail here⁹⁴. William Alston cites another difficulty. Generally speaking, he is concerned more with the issue of justification. He wonders in what way can a person give a satisfactory justification for a claim that they had a religious experience. He also wonders whether somebody's experience of God can be a reason for believing in God or even for justifying the belief in God? To the person who has had such an experience it surely can. They see this encounter as a contact with the authority and it is not in their power to ignore or be set free from this authority⁹⁵. Also, if God appears to man, then he appears as a carrier of certain qualities. These qualities can be phenomenal but also comparative (dispositional), as we saw earlier. Comparative qualities describe to us the way in which an object appears, thus providing us with noetic insight⁹⁶. In turn, the noetic insight affects the formation of our beliefs and so we can say that perception leads to gaining insight, and to the formation of our beliefs.

The concluding remark in this discussion was made by Alvin Plantinga and his reformed epistemology⁹⁷. Since there is no need to go into details of epistemological discussions here, it can be said in short that he claims that our basic beliefs (such as our inductive beliefs, beliefs concerning our past or concerning other people's mind) do not satisfy the conditions of evidentialism, in which it is said that nothing should be accepted as true without evidence or argument. But since we can accept God's existence as true even without evidence or argument, it follows that the belief in God can be accepted as *a properly basic belief*⁹⁸. Apart from that, it is precisely on the belief in God that the believer

⁹³ SWINBURNE, *The Existence of God*, p. 271. See in more detail *The Principle of Credulity*, pp. 254-260.

⁹⁴ See: SWINBURNE, *The Existence of God*, pp. 271-274.

⁹⁵ William James speaks about three possible ways of understanding authority. He claims that the person who has had a religious experience feels that they have come into contact with a remarkable authority. At the same time, they are aware that they themselves are not this authority, but that this authority is external and does not rest on a non-mystical or rational foundation. See: JAMES, *Raznolikosti religioznog iskustva*, p. 288.

⁹⁶ See Alston's position in: PETERSON, HASKER, REICHENBACH, BASINGER (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 54.

⁹⁷ It is not necessary to go into greater details of the discussion which Plantinga has thoroughly analyzed and interpreted. What is important is to bear in mind that many insights from our everyday experience do not meet the demands of evidentialism, but they are still not brought into question. See: A. PLANTINGA, „Reason and Belief in God“, in: A. PLANTINGA, N. WOLTERSTORFF (eds.), *Faith and Rationality. Reason and Belief in God*, pp. 90-91.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*.

builds his 'knowledge pyramid' concerning the domain of God⁹⁹. These epistemological discussions will probably not end there, but regardless of that, the believer has the right to accept the belief in God as properly basic belief.

Conclusion

In this paper we looked into the philosophical aspect of the debate concerning the link between religion, or religious experiences, and benefit (health). In order to be able to do that, we deemed it necessary to find out what the people who claim to have had a religious experience think happened to them, and how they interpret it. Only after this is ascertained could we proceed with the medical aspect of the debate. In other words, the interpretation of the person who had the experience is crucial. The person's health, as well as that of people with mental health issues can be connected to positive effects of certain religious practices. There is evidence about this coming from medical practice, although we have not dealt with the medical aspect in this paper. From the philosophical viewpoint, however, it is necessary to bear this in mind: Those who claim to have had an experience of God do not differentiate this experience from everyday sensory experiences. This experience, as we have seen, leads to the formation of beliefs (which means that it implies a cognitive sphere). William James and William Alston, as perhaps the most prominent philosophers dealing with this issue, claim that in addition to the feeling, there is also present a cognitive level of knowledge or at least some sort of knowledge on the level of intuition. What is the content of this knowledge? It is the knowledge that God is there for the person, that He protects and guides them.

At any rate, the person is at the centre of both experiencing and interpreting the religious experience. They are the ones who experience, interpret and explain what happened to them. They ask questions about it, they are perhaps doubtful about it, but they are, at the end of the day, the only ones who can say what has really happened to them. Religious experience is more than just experience (to the believer it represents the most important truth and guideline in their life), and it also includes a noetic level which means that it provides a deeper insight into reality, and additionally motivates believers to enter their new life. As we have seen, the person is led by this experience to the formation of their belief in God. The person judges, interprets, assigns value to their religious experience and tries to make an inference to the best explanation. And it is precisely the religious experience that leads the person to conclude that it is an experience of God. How does this affect their health? Since it has been said that the mentioned experience leads to a significant improvement in the person's life in every aspect - there is no rational reason or evidence that would dissuade them from their belief that they are on the right path, and that it is precisely a life led in accordance with God's instructions that will lead them to self-fulfillment, or more precisely, to the union with God. The person puts this truth to the test every day, which has a positive influence on their spiritual, psychological

⁹⁹ *Ibidem.*

and physical health, as we clearly saw in William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Do we need better evidence?

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The educational path of Ideomorphism. From theory of knowledge to philosophy

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Abstract

The metaphysical determination of philosophical thinking has progressively led to a more evident problematization of the question of the origin (*Ursprung*), put at the centre of mature platonic speculation in many authors, as a topic to which was given a wide space in the philosophical logic which had become the main guideline for the critical analysis of the notion of existence. The etymological root of the word (*ursprunc; ursprung*), translated as beginning, *matrix*, serves also as prerequisite for a theoretical interpretation of its meaning, reason why the use we make of this word proves to be also an in-depth analysis of its more generic etymological derivation. The hermeneutic painter captures that contemplative moment of self-consciousness in his own artwork silencing the expressive-conceptual language and entrusting his testimony to the artistic communication. Thus the artwork becomes the figure through which silence is translated into those ideomorphic forms that make speak that silence where the painter has arrived through a personal experience of the borderline between the immanent and what it recalls.

Keywords: theoretical philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, anthropology

¹⁰⁰ MARCO MOSCHINI è l'autore dell'*Introduzione* e della prima parte (*Philosophical presuppositions of Ideomorphism*), mentre PAVAO ŽITKO ha scritto la seconda parte ("*Chiffer*" as the main theoretical concept of hermeneutical painting), la terza parte (*Dialectics and the creation of philosophical works in hermeneutical understanding of reality*) e la conclusione.

Introduction

The reason of the progressive increase for the interest in metaphysical theory of knowledge, comes from its speculative scope, as it is understood as the origin and condition of any concrete presence. The speculative development of this word remains compliant to its etymological root, even though within the theoretical framework of the philosophy of existence, and it assumes a twofold meaning: as «what, in relation to the being, passes first and, raising it from insignificance, gives each being their meaning»¹⁰¹. The being is at the basis of existence, while existence, in turn, represents, another origin, starting from which the individual's thinking manifests itself.

In front of the theoretical scope of what is a necessary condition for the being to manifest itself, existence is determined within the relation with the primary condition of its possibilities. This boundless content, to which existence constitutively refers, becomes thus the prerequisite for the infinite expansion of the knowledge, focused on the particular giving itself of the being. The conscious philosophising (*bewußte Philosophieren*) though, does not absolutize a particular empirical knowledge and thus preserves itself from whatever objectification of the primary origin, which does not seem to be derived but, instead, it is understood as an absolute, original beginning¹⁰².

The adequate comprehension of being there as all-encompassing, requires a preliminary distinction between the more general meaning of being there that indicates specific determinations – thus it is category specific – of the being as thinkable, and the more specific meaning of this word that fits with its philosophical and existential understanding. The hermeneutical painting, founded by Pier Augusto Breccia, becomes thus the way for the interpretation of reality that

¹⁰¹ K. JASPERS, *Von der Wahrheit*, Piper, München 1958; trad. it. (parziale) *Sulla Verità*, U. Galimberti (ed.), La Scuola, Brescia 1970., pp. 160/20n.

¹⁰² v. G. BREA, *Wahrheit in Kommunikation. Zum Ursprung der Existenzphilosophie bei Karl Jaspers*, Ergon, Würzburg 2004.; Y. ITO, *Zur Möglichkeit des Philosophierens aus selbständigem Ursprung bei Karl Jaspers*, diss., Basel 1989.; E. M. MANASSE, «Karl Jaspers und der Ursprung des Philosophierens», in *Merkur*, XXII, 121, 1958, pp. 278-284.; M. A. PRESAS, «Kantischer Ursprung und existentielles Ziel der Philosophie Jaspers», in Akt. Des 4. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses. Mainz, W. De Gruyter, Berlin-NewYork 1974, pp. 782-788.; R. SCHULZ, «Die verschiedene Bedeutung von Paradoxien für den Ursprung der Erkenntnis bei Jaspers und Luhmann», in *Karl Jaspers' Philosophie: Gegenwartigkeit und Zukunft. Rooted in the Present, Paradigm for the Future*, R. Wisser, L. H. Ehrlich (eds.), pp. 179-192.

in the context of the philosophy that seeks in the Platonic tradition its source of inspiration, becomes a concrete testimony of Truth¹⁰³.

In a particular harmony with the path of the founder of the philosophy of existence, between 1967 and 1983, year of his leaving the medical profession, Breccia performs over a thousand heart operations, achieves three surgical specializations and the designation as Associate Professor. A few steps from the chair in cardiac surgery, in September 1977 happened something that would have radically changed the direction of his life path. In that time, indeed, Breccia discovers a talent in drawing that he neither knew nor believed to have. Over the next two years, for mere and simple pleasure, but with truly amazing results, he exercises this new talent by doing portraits and drawings from life in his spare times. But it is only in December 1979, a year after his father's death, that his skills in drawing suddenly turn into an amazing and overwhelming creative activity.

1. *Philosophical presuppositions of Ideomorphism*

In 1981 Cesare Vivaldi – at the time Director of the Fine Arts Academy in Rome – comes into contact with the early works of Breccia and promotes his first exhibition, presenting it through an authoritatively close examination as preface to his first book *Oltreomega* (1981). Recalling that period, Breccia writes, many years later:

It was the first and most significant phase of my intensive activity as painter, suddenly began in December 1979 and continued without interruption until the present time. That phase was the ontological foundation of the entire search. In two years of frantic work, stealing every possible space to my surgical profession and to the rest of my personal life, I had produced almost two hundred images (between sketches and finished works). Until then I had performed hundreds of heart surgeries, I had studied thousands of pages of medical books and read a large number of humanistic texts. I had had the opportunity to converse with a lot of people about human being, as well as to live countless experiences in contact with real life and death. So that in 1979, if someone had asked me "who are you?" I would not have hesitated to answer: "I'm a heart surgeon".¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Pier Augusto Breccia was born in Trento on April 12, 1943, but already in the immediate post war (1948) his family moved to Rome. In the capital, where he still lives, he performs the entire path of his educational and academical training. Even before his graduation at Julius Caesar (secondary school focusing on humanities), he published (1960) a translation in loose iambic pentameters of Sophocles' *Antigone*, and Eschilo's "Bound Prometheus" (Publisher Signorelli-Rome). His interest and his instinctive predestination for humanistic studies are somehow suffocated by his father's figure, an important and renowned surgeon. This leads him to join the Faculty of Medicine of the Catholic University in 1961. His commitment and skills in the University studies are crowned with a special recognition; in July 1961, in fact, he is chosen for the award of the first graduation in Medicine of the newly established Faculty of Rome. The mentoring of prof. V. O. Björk at the Department of Cardiovascular Surgery of Karolinska Sjukhuset (Stockholm University), marks the first years of his medical career. Then he devotes himself full time to the development and to the practice of his profession as a heart surgeon at Policlinico A. Gemelli (Catholic University) in Rome.

¹⁰⁴ P.A. BRECCIA, *Animus-anima. La cifra pittorica dell'ideomorfismo*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 1992, p. 50.

After the positive welcoming from both visitors and art critics, the following year Breccia holds two more exhibitions in Rome and Milan, after which it begins a series of one-man-shows in Italy and abroad, whose growing demand for commitment induces him, in 1983, to suspend (even though temporarily and not yet finally) his academic career:

So that if someone had asked me "who are you?" at that point of my life I could have only answered: "I am". With those many drawings I had opened the door to the enigma of Delphi, triggering a chain reaction of death - rebirth out of rational intelligibility. None of those many drawings was able to suggest me a precise way of being because those drawings revealed me the mode itself of the Being. My "philosophical" response to the revelation of that mode was the antithetical axiom "morior ergo sum" (I die, therefore I am), on which I founded all the search of that initial period.¹⁰⁵

This axiom finds its fullest expression in the book *The eternal mortal* and it may be said it is one of the earliest conceptualizations of Breccia's artistic and philosophical thought. On that occasion the artist begins to propose his painting with the term Ideomorphism, where this term represents both the ideal and the spiritual foundation of his creative language. But that book already contains the core of what only in 2004, with the publication of his manifesto, Breccia will propose as hermeneutic painting. Thus the transition from Ideomorphism to hermeneutic painting – which happened twenty years later – is essentially a transfer of terminological nature. The subtitle of the book – Words and images devoted to the next Renaissance man – also suggests that the answer to the last question, "who are you?" is strongly rooted in the experience of that *morior ergo sum* personally experienced by the surgeon-painter. In that word – *Renaissance* – we might read the painter's resurrection after the burial of the man of science and the removal of that envelope, or crust, where the creative urgency had risked to dye. *The Eternal-Mortal*¹⁰⁶ is an artistic-philosophical text which identifies the metaphysical and post-metaphysical nihilism (already denounced by Nietzsche) as a moment of deep and seemingly unbridgeable cultural crisis of the West, whose warning, and subsequent solution, might be seen in the recovery of an irrational logic as a really critical tool, an alternative to the sterile and unproductive proposals of formal logic. And here Breccia introduces his notion of the concrete forms of the non-existent by which he believes he may challenge the logic through the testimony of art, referring in particular to his works as witness signs of Mystery.

2. *Chiffer* as the main theoretical concept of hermeneutical painting

The definition of his pictorial figure (*cifra*) which Breccia will propose two decades later is fully compatible with these concrete forms of the non-exi-

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁶ P.A.BRECCIA, *L'eterno mortale*, De Luca Editore, Rome 2000.

stent that since then had indicated a common root of Ideomorphism and Jaspersian *Chiffer*. But there is more. We cannot fail to note, in fact, the extraordinary similarity between the biographical academic path of Jaspers and Breccia. I do not think this is a simple, more or less curious, coincidence. Considering the importance of science and its overcoming by both Jaspers's Existentialism and Breccia's Ideomorphism, such a coincidence takes on much more meaning. Their lives are hermeneutically divided into two parts affecting each other: a scientific part which must be necessarily overcome and the humanistic one, which needs the first to keep ever present the limit that only encrypted philosophical and artistic language is able to recognize as the border of transcendence. I mention here the words with which Jaspers analyzes his own path in *My philosophy*:

I began the study of medicine. I was impelled by a desire for knowledge of facts and for an experience of humanity. The decision to choose a methodic and disciplined work tied me to both laboratory and clinic for a long time to come. My aim was the practice of medicine. I had already the secret thought of eventually pursuing an academic career at the university, though actually not in philosophy but in psychiatry or psychology. But philosophy is the thought where I feel close to the Being itself through the inner acting, is the thought in which I become myself. It is, in other words, the thought that prepares the jump toward Transcendence, that reminisces it and even, in some sublime moments, produces it, since it is the activity of the whole man in his own thinking¹⁰⁷.

An interesting coincidence of Jaspers's thought with Breccia's pictorial philosophical language therefore must be noted – I repeat – also in the likeness of their respective curricula. In 1985 Breccia holds his first exhibition in New York at Gucci Galleria and immediately after at Arras Gallery. Two months later, in March 1985, he finally abandons his medical profession and puts an end to his career by deciding to move to the United States. Arras Gallery, with the support of Charles Jourdan, organizes another Breccia's exhibition in Zurich at the end of the same year. This is the starting point of the growing success of Breccia and his work in the United States until 1996, when he decides to return to Italy with the intention of culturally promoting his own painting in Europe, starting with his own country.

We cannot forget, however, that in the meantime Breccia has worked for about two years in the drafting of his monumental volume *Animus-Anima*, while the painter still lives, works and exhibits primarily in the United States (New York, Houston, Columbus, Santa Fe, Miami). *Animus-Anima* reveals with great lucidity the theoretical postulates of *Ideomorphism* through a philosophical analysis made by the artist himself on the over five hundred works created until then; and on this book is based the research of this thesis. Made up of five sections - *The Being*, *The Being-in-the-world*, *The Being-in-the-world as will*, *The Being-in-the-world as intellect* and *The-Being-in-the-world as figure (cifra) of mystery* – the volume systematizes the theoretical setting of Breccia's thought in tune with the philosophical position of Heidegger and Jaspers. It also con-

¹⁰⁷ K. JASPERS, *La mia filosofia*, Einaudi, Turin 1981, p. 4

tains an extensive introduction by Rosario Assunto, in which he describes the absolutely casual event of his first meeting with the painter and outlines, anticipating and implicitly confirming it, the philosophical definition of Ideomorphism. It is precisely here that the particular harmony of Breccia's art with the Jaspersian proposal of the figure (*Chiffer*) is read by Assunto as the exemplary moment of a perfect and common application of Fichte's *schaffende einbildungskraft* (Creative imagination). This legitimates our thesis that the pictorial ideomorphic figure (cifra) represents a kind of artistic transfiguration of Jaspersian chiffer, which, thanks to creative imagination, succeeds in putting us in front of those worlds of otherness which refer to the transcendent sense of our *Realität*.

Immediately after his returning to homeland, the painter is committed to set up his own studio-atelier in Rome with the aim of turning it into the place of a permanent exhibition of his most representative works, open to a cultural meeting for the ones who are interested to confront *Ideomorphism* and *Hermeneutic painting*. All our talks took place in this artistic space, which, with its creative magic, stimulates the thought and where direct contact with the artworks facilitates the perception of Breccia's pictorial message much better than the vision of their photographic reproduction.

Three years after his return and seven years after the publication of *Animus-Anima* (which the author often simply calls *The Book* alluding to his theoretical importance in regards to hermeneutic painting) Breccia writes a new volume entitled *The Other Book*¹⁰⁸, no less significant than its predecessor. There are more than a hundred unpublished images from 1991 to 1999 accompanied by dreamlike tales and other visionary stories, critical self reflections and other reflections on the meaning of art and life.

3. Dialectics and the creation of philosophical works in hermeneutical understanding of reality

The subtitle *The Suspended language of Selfconsciousness* immediately recalls to the indissoluble relationship between the artwork and its philosophical content. It refers to the radical introspection made by the "I" in the most absolute silence of his own individual conscience, when he comes in contact with the language of the transcendent Being, which reveals the universally-personal sense of its being-in-the-world. In this moment the conceptual language ceases, and thus it becomes a suspended language in front of a limit that self-consciousness may reach but not overtake.

But the language of art-poetry - being even and above all the language of aesthetic consciousness - from that silence may still speak, giving a meaning to the mystery itself, or, better, retaining and proposing that meaning as a perennial signifiable figure of the otherness. According to Breccia, mystery is in fact like the horizon on which stands the conscience of the "I" in its sensibly perceptible and intellectually

¹⁰⁸ P.A. BRECCIA, *The Other Book*, Di Renzo, Rome 1999.

knowable limit. It is through this revealing and ineffable language that Breccia leads us, with our consciences, in the suspended space between immanence and otherness, between past and future: a starting point for a summary of our past to root in our being-here-and-now and an anchorage from which to look to the future to responsibly comprehend its encrypted proposals; because their coherent signification, both moral and aesthetic, gives a sense to our present and our past.¹⁰⁹

If silence is the true word – according to Jaspers – it represents the ultimate limit that man can reach in his most authentic thinking. The theme of silence also recalls the work of Heidegger “Walking toward the language” which Galimberti refers to in his analysis of Heideggerian Stille:

The same tension that occurs in the Ereignis or event of the being, in which the being takes possession of the man to dispossess itself in that opening (*da*) in which man consists (*Da-sein*), returns to characterize the silence (*Stille*) that appears as silence only in man's speech (*lautende*). Namely silence needs the physical word of man to be the original silence from which every speech draws its possibilities. If it is true that the language of words is such only if it corresponds to a more original language which is no more word, but rather silence, it is easy to understand why “only where the word fails, is given an “it is”, i.e. a thing.¹¹⁰

Such physical word of human being, needed by the silence to bring out of transcendence what has been communicated by transparency through an encrypted language, finally finds its most accomplished expression in the viewer's interpretation, when the viewer explains and expresses what he sees in the ideomorphic forms of the artwork through which that silence has been captured and in which it has been enclosed. The very moment the viewer rejects his own active role (which makes him interpreter in front of the ideomorphic artwork) and decides to passively observe what stands before him, that silence loses its authenticity and does not communicate anything. The figure (*cifra*) becomes simply an object to be observed and becomes silent. Its silence does no longer speak; each reference to the sense of being¹⁵ is solidified. But let us come back to the biography of Breccia.

As his creative activity expands and his philosophical reflection becomes deeper, he begins to increasingly replace the expression “ideomorphic analysis” with “hermeneutic interpretation”. If the viewer must confront with a given pictorial figure in the fullness of his cognitive abilities and in the light of those prejudices that Gadamer considers indispensable elements of the historical context in which the spectator is immersed, then a true hermeneutic circle is established

¹⁰⁹ Taken from the preface written by Francesca di Cesare, manager of the General Direction for the historical, artistic and demo-anthropologic heritage, and Director of the Casanatense Library, Rome, to the text of Breccia, *The Other Book*, p. VII.

¹¹⁰ U. GALIMBERTI, *Language and civilization. Language analysis in Heidegger and Jaspers*, Mursia, Milan 1977, pg. 241. Heidegger also says: «Saying and talking are not the same thing. One may speak, speaking without an end, and all that talking doesn't make any sense. Another one instead is silent; he does not speak and maybe, with his silence, is saying much more. But what does the word “say” mean (sagen)? To fulfill this, it is necessary to stick to what the German language already compels us to think with the word sagen. “Sagen” means: to show, to make sure something appear, to make it visible».

in our relationship with the pictorial figure. Beginning from what characterizes the individuality of the viewer, inevitably placed in the immanent but still potentially open to the genuine silence of the artwork in which he may grasp the transcendent sense of the being, he becomes the main protagonist of hermeneutic communication. This is confirmed by the following words of Jaspers:

As for the language in general it is necessary the support of talking, in the same way to the clarification of our transcendental existence it is necessary to imagine and think the figures (*Chiffer*). The interpretation of the figures may not achieve the truth if not from the source of the interpreter. This source must be similar to that from which the figures arose or where they are heard. The source as such is not directly experienced, but is named in many different ways through concepts, which are signs of existence: spirit, driving idea, absolute consciousness, disposition, decision, choice, genuine acting, love.¹¹¹

And it will be just the concepts of spirit, mind, decision, choice, genuine acting and love to build the nucleus of Breccia's hermeneutic pictorial language making it fully compatible with hermeneutic contemporary philosophy. At the Italian Cultural Institute in Brussels, on the occasion of his exhibition "Figures of the Being", for the first time, in 2004, Breccia officially replaces the term ideomorphic with the word hermeneutic contextualizing his painting in an even clearer philosophical frame. In the same year he publishes the manifesto of his artistic-philosophical conception titling it "Introduction to hermeneutic painting". The editor of the publication - Marisa del Re - analytically develops this conceptual deepening and the consequent terminological passage from ideomorphism to the more specific term "hermeneutic painting".

If in today's world it is still possible to consider art as a language of ontological knowledge and place it with equal dignity and rights in the field of philosophy and science of nature, it is necessary for it to be free from the constraints of traditional and metaphysical nihilism and at the same time from the constraints of the post-nietzschean irrationalistic aestheticism. This may happen if art gets again the sense of a hermeneutic approach to truth and beauty, testifying it in the language of modernity where the being is no longer something objectively provable or fully compliant to the rules of tradition, but shows itself epiphanically as inexhaustible interpretative opening to the absolutely other. In this introduction the author retraces critically, in the light of his own experience as hermeneutic painter, the history of being and the ways of its self-giving in Western art and philosophy. In proposing his ontology as an aesthetics of signifiability, he locates and elucidates, referring to his work, the main elements characterizing the figure of hermeneutic painting and underlines, as in a "manifesto", its formal coherence.¹¹²

Nearly eight years passed since the publication of the Introduction and the contextualization of ideomorphism in the frame of hermeneutic painting; eight years during which the creative energy of the painter has never stopped; indeed, his conceptual development and his increasingly accurate philosophical

¹¹¹ K. JASPERS, *Philosophical faith in front of revelation*, Longanesi & C., Milan 1962, p. 209.

¹¹² M. DEL RE on the cover of the text of P.A. BRECCIA, *Introduction to hermeneutic painting*.

processing have continued to evolve without interruption. In the meantime Breccia's painting has been accepted in always more important public spaces and Museums¹¹³.

Conclusions

This thesis wants to be a further conceptual-philosophical development of Breccia's hermeneutic painting, analyzed, however, with a critical eye. It would be foolish to try to compress all the immense richness and vastness of the pictorial-philosophical production of Pier Augusto Breccia in these few introductory pages. Here we just wanted to pay closer attention to the training and development of the painter, from his first purely scientific vocation until the absolute statement of his identity in the world of contemporary art in relation to the philosophical context in which art is located. The manifesto of hermeneutic painting was born as a result of more than 1,300 paintings, graphics and drawings, 25 publications, fifty one-man shows and many encounters with philosophers and art critics. An entire life dedicated to art and thought: art and thought constantly aiming to grasp the always-ultimate and never-ultimate meaning of human existence.

The relation maintained by existence with the original source of its possibilities, brings about the philosophizing that thinks the encompassing in the third meaning of the word, and thus as what places itself as an "all – absorbing" instance of every single and partial unity of sense. The existential opening to the universal and to the particular other from self, maintains therefore the truthfulness of its own revelation as it asks for the need to transcend beyond the experiential givenness, while the thinking aimed at the primary origin of its possibility understands the fullness of the all-encompassing starting exactly from the single experience and thus from the second existential origin.

Existence is, therefore, a slip (*Abgleitung*) and not a derivation (*Ableitung*); in Jaspers' speculation, indeed, the first meaning of the word – as 'skid' and 'slipping'¹¹⁴, hinting to the relation between the empirical realities (*Realitäten*) and the origin defined as real and truthful (*wirklich*) – is distinguished from the second meaning, referred – in turn – to what of logical is given in the deductive process, enshrined in the immanent categories of the actual showing of the being. Reality in Jaspers is given by the concrete immediacy of perception accordingly to the etymological connection of the word *Wirklichkeit* to the actual, practical carrying out of an action (*wircklich*) of the thinking that manifests itself on what is temporal as an absolute present. However, the manifestation of the being in the given forms that show themselves to an understanding awareness of the single thinking being, cannot be comprehended in the immediacy of its immanent revealing, because the present reveals itself as such only in its elusive nature, so that when it is thought, it is always in the form of the re-

¹¹³ Museo del Vittoriano, Roma 2002 - Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome 2007 - Rocca Paolina, Perugia 2009 - Manege Museum, Saint Petersburg 2011.

¹¹⁴ Cfr. D. D'ANGELO, *Note del curatore*, in K. JASPERS, *Della Verità*, p. 2117.

vealing of the meaning in historically defined categories. Thus, the Authors states, «»in a completely other manner, our thoughts, actions and realities drift from their origin as rejects: we see something that in origin is whole, actually real, true and orderly, while in drifting away from the origin what was initially clear, becomes opaque, what was whole becomes divided and solidified in particular elements, what was full is emptied, and what was orderly gets subverted.¹¹⁵

The being – as secondary in respect to what sets itself as primary¹¹⁶ - can be a decrease (*Verminderung*), a degeneration (*Entartung*), a reject (*Abfall*) or a deviation (*Ableitung*) if the particularity of its appearing is not understood within the limits of its possible giving itself, but rather as its own absolute source, in an isolation that leads to existential self – sufficiency, in the oblivion of the authentic relation of *Existenz* as *Ableitung*. The being, however, maintains the possibility of being an increase (*Steigerung*) of the origin and one of its unfolding (*Entfaltung*) because existence, knowing to be given, understands concreteness in its connection to ulteriority. The absolute way of relating with a particular being, leads to a decline in the truth (*Abfallsprozesse in der Wirklichkeit*) where existence still remains in what is true, since it comes from it, but it is oblivious of its own ontological roots – existence makes the other from the self an absolute only because this very other exists.

¹¹⁵ K. JASPERS, *Della Verità*, p. 995.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem.*, «What we understand as deviation is something of secondary importance if confronted with something primary».

The theoretical, philosophical and moral transformations in the Neoplatonic approach of Frane Petrić (1529-1597). An introduction to themes not previously addressed

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Abstract

The approach implemented in this work and with reference to the theme of the current issue, is that of an invitation to read and further analyze the unexplored fields in the known opposition to Aristotelian principles of an authentic philosophizing in the works of Frane Petrić – a philosopher both Dalmatian and Italian, of Platonic leanings. His life and works can be seen as representative of that Renaissance spirit in which, in favor of a strong highlighting of the rational and logic element, the dissenting voice of a much wider horizon of human feeling and being in relation with the entirety of the real can still be heard with great strength.

Keywords

Renaissance, ontology, metaphysics, ethics

Abstract (it.)

L'approccio che si adopera in questo lavoro e in riferimento al tema dell'attuale numero di questa rivista, è quello di introdurre alla lettura ed invitare ad esplorare ulteriormente i campi rimasti finora inesplorati nella nota opposizione ai principi aristotelici di un autentico filosofare nell'opera di Francesco Patrizi da Cherso - filosofo dalmata ed italiano, di orientamento platonico. La sua vita ed opera possono essere considerate emblematiche di quello spirito rinascimentale in cui, a favore di una forte sottolineatura dell'elemento razionale e logico, continua ad esprimersi ancora con grande forza quella voce dissonante di un orizzonte molto più vasto del sentire ed esistere umani in rapporto con l'interesse del reale.

Parole chiave

Rinascimento, ontologia, metafisica, etica

Within the Renaissance spirit, which is constantly on the quest for the concrete experience of the world, the need to address the existential questions from a religious standpoint, it is transformed into a Neoplatonism defending its own key prerogatives of the philosophical all, while still faithful to its own speculative preconditions in the metaphysical processing of the philosophical contents. The opposition to the Aristotelian principles in the writing of the *Nova de Universis philosophia*, while full of religious elements, evolves into a detailed and laborious explanation of the opposite positions and in an achieved symbiosis of the different fields of knowledge, through a holistic approach.

The purpose of this research is to point out, then, which of these fields have been unexplored by the critique, so to have a complete vision of this particular approach, still very present in a context of logic-scientific leanings, where it was able to defend the prerogatives of an authentic Platonic philosophize. Taking also into account the specificity of the research on Petrić, this paper will also provide a useful bibliography for a further knowledge of other research on the subject: even though completely Italian in its formation, and in the grips of the Croatian nationalism feed by the tragic events of the Balkan peninsula (1990-1995), Petrić's thought from the Nineties onward is further analyzed by Croatian academics with the purpose of reevaluate the Croatian contribution to the history of European culture. Despite the undeniable exaggeration, not to say historical misinterpretation, today we have a remarkable quantity of studies on Petrić written in Croatian language.

The field that shows a lack of research for what concerns the whole of Petrić's philosophizing is the one of aesthetics which, through an ontological standpoint, addresses questions of high speculative value. The primacy in Croatian research on Petrić's philosophy and aesthetics belongs to Franjo Marković¹¹⁷. For the aim of this research, it is of great relevance his inaugural address for the academic year 1881/1882 as dean of the University of Zagreb – an address printed on the University's annals in 1882, in which Marković persists on the needs for studies about the Croatian cultural heritage, putting at the first place Frane Petrić,

as one of the known commentators and opponents of the Aristotelian system [...], one of those who with their aesthetics considerations took part in the very lively discussions between the Italian scholars of the times on the primacy of Tasso or Ariosto epic poetry analyzing, as well, the importance of the Aristotelian rules for modern poetics¹¹⁸.

Closely connected to Marković's project and very relevant for the present one, is the work of Milivoj Šrepel – the first Croatian scholar engaged in the

¹¹⁷ Franjo Marković was Philosophy professor at University of Zagreb from 1874. His most known work, *The development and the system of general aesthetics* greatly influenced the development of Croatian philosophy thanks to the Markovian presentation of the history of aesthetics in Croatian language and to his introduction of new philosophical terms in the Croatian lexicon. Today, he is acknowledged as the initiator of the research on Croatian cultural heritage.

¹¹⁸ F. MARKOVIĆ, *Filozofijske struke pisci hrvatskoga roda onkray Velebita u stoljećih XV. do XVIII.*, in *Prilozi za istraživanje hrvatske kulturne baštine I-II* (1975), p. 257.

systematic and thorough analysis of the importance and the historical perception of Petrić's work. Although his analysis of the Poetics is based only on the Deca Disputata and the Deca Istoriale, what cannot be ignored is Šrepel's judgement on the supremacy of Petrić's Poetics over Scaliger's one – a supremacy due to a certain independence of Petrić's thinking.

While analyzing Petrić's work, Šrepel comes to the conclusion that "in any case, his merit is to have been the first to highlight the narrow boundaries of Aristotle's Poetics". Šrepel, furthermore, points out the topicality of Petrić in the history of receiving the Poetic doctrine of Aristotle, stating that modern studies, still after three hundred years, repeat the same objections to Petrić, appropriating the same inductive method that he used and insists on the comparison of Petrić's and other coeval authors' poetics – many of them (Trissino, Vida, Muzio, Tasso, Minturno, Scaligero, Robortello and Maggi) also commentators of Aristotle. Šrepel concludes that "Petrić's work could not be perfect, since not even today we can say that a given science has completely defined the poetic." The connection Šrepel – Marković is fundamental for understanding the evolution of Croatian research on Petrić's work, since Šrepel research has been encouraged by Marković's inaugural address.

In the first decades of '900, some authors kept analyzing the role and influence of Petrić's poetic in the history of aesthetics. Tin Ujević¹¹⁹ highlights the poor perception of Petrić's work in the Balkans, Isidor Kamalić¹²⁰, in his dissertation discussed in Freiburg, repeats mainly the same positions as Šrepel, insisting, though, on the controversy between Petrić and Tasso (Trimeron) and on the importance of Petrić's opposition against the normativity posed by Aristotle's Poetic; Zenatti is concerned with the literary connection of Ariosto – Petrić – Tasso¹²¹; in his literary Critique of the Renaissance, Trabalza¹²² dedicates some pages to the literary thinking of Petrić in the same way Spingarn¹²³ did almost two decades earlier; Jelašić¹²⁴, on the other hand, focuses on his philosophy of language and keeps analyzing the relations with Tasso; Bertoni¹²⁵ puts him in his critique of *Orlando furioso*, but the place of honor in the research about Petrić's aesthetics belongs clearly to Benedetto Croce's

¹¹⁹ T. UJEVIĆ, *Poslije četiri stoljeća*, in *Jadranska Pošta*, VI (1930), p. 2.

¹²⁰ I. KAMALIĆ, *Francesco Patrizi 1529-1597 nella cultura e soprattutto nella poetica cinquecentesca*, Split 1934.

¹²¹ O. ZENATTI, *Francesco Patrizio, Orazio Ariosto e Torquato Tasso: a proposito di dieci lettere del Patrizio finora inedite*, in *Nozze Mompurgo-Franchetti*, Verona 1895.

¹²² C. TRABALZA, *La critica letteraria del Rinascimento*, Milano 1915, pp. 142-143, 149-151, 191-195.

¹²³ I find Croce's objection to the work of Spingarn particularly suggestive: *Spingarn wrote an essay on 1500's Poetic; but some of it deserves a further examination; for example the Poetic of Petrić and Campanella, and we must not overlook the Rhetoric of the time and thus it should be important to write also a monography on Italian speculations about the language and the philosophical and reasoned Grammars*. Cf. SPINGARN, J. E., *A history of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, New York 1899, tr. it. *La critica letteraria nel Rinascimento*, Bari 1905, pg. 104, 161-162.

¹²⁴ F. JELAŠIĆ, *Franjo Petrić. O 400 - godišnjici njegova rođenja*, in *Hrvatsko Kolo* X (1929), pp. 274-276.

¹²⁵ G. BERTONI, *Orlando furioso e la Rinascenza a Ferrara*, Modena 1919.

objections. Croce analyzes Petrić's contribution to aesthetics keeping it mainly within the scope of rhetoric. In his *Estetica*, Croce highlights Petrić's anti-Aristotelianism, pertaining to the discussions about poetics, and immediately after, he analyzes the multiple meanings of Petrić's *mimesis*. Following, Croce expresses his opinion on his work according to which, some of Petrić's objections are right, some others even sophistic.

Much more complex and detailed is Croce's opinion in his essay completely dedicated to Petrić's aesthetic (especially for what concerns rhetoric), where he states that the content of Petrić's 10 dialogues "Della Retorica" is one of the less known, even though the titles are renown. Croce opposes Guerrini's rather negative judgment, according to which these dialogues are doubtlessly extremely convoluted and it is difficult to find in them the homogeneous thinking of their author.

Croce objects that the dialogues are very clear, with a rich content and far from clichés. Far from being totally positive, somehow Croce's critique reveals its negative connotation without depriving Petrić of his importance for the aesthetic-poetic debates during the Renaissance.

Croce gives Petrić much space in his reflection, highlighting his polemic and speculative character, but he also insists on the shortage of constructive proposals in the demolishing critique that can be found in Petrić's works. And even if, at the end, Croce's analysis of Petrić's work is not completely positive, Croce himself highlights the fact that Petrić's ontological thought is undergoing a renaissance from a poetic viewpoint. For what concerns the negative critiques on Petrić's poetics, I find particularly relevant the historical judgment of Giambattista Vico who, even though expressing quite strong oppositions, bestows Petrić the privileged place amongst the Renaissance commentators of Aristotle and Plato:

And for all the things examined until now, everything that was said of the poetry at the beginning by Plato, then by Aristotle, up to Petrić, Scaligeri and Castelvetri is subverted; being that for a defect of human rationality poetry was born so sublime that for the philosophies that came after, for the arts and poetics and critiques, indeed for these themselves, there was no other similar for importance¹²⁶.

Going back though, to the current of commentators of Petrić in the 1900s, a privileged place belongs clearly to Eugenio Garin who – amongst the many thoughts of Petrić – stresses also the complexity of what we call "Petrić Platonism", pertinent also to his aesthetic production. Garin, furthermore, gives Petrić an overall positive evaluation, proving that Petrić "is a figure in the foreground. Those who would read again the wide and complex work of Petrić, politic and aesthetic-religious and metaphysical, would see how superficial are some schematizations of Aristotelism and Platonism, and how rich were sometimes the themes of this 'Platonic' philosophers." Garin, moreover, compares Petrić's ethic and aesthetic thinking, placing it in a precise historical

¹²⁶ G. Vico, *Scienza nuova*, a cura di N. Abbagnano, Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, Torino 1976, p. 387. Further, I find very significant the following objection by Vico, taken from the same work, p. 613: *The difficulty of Horatio, combined with what we said about the new comedy, should have put within the research the various Petrićs, Scaligeris, Castelvetrus and many more valuable master of poetic arts [emphasis added by me], to investigate the reason of the difference.* Although the apparent provocation and irony of this excerpt from Vico, I think such a definition of Petrić and his followers (note the use of the plural "s") worth of attention.

context of remarkable importance: Petrić, with his ethical-aesthetic works, belongs to a flourishing tradition in Ferrara: from Bartolomeo Ricci da Lugo's golden booklet on imitation, to Lilio Gregorio Giraldi, to Giraldi Cinthio, to Pigna, to Maggi's comment on the "Poetics", to Romei's dialogues and Pocaterra's dialogues; from Equicola's works to the essay on love by Flaminio Nobili from Lucca, commented by Tasso; a whole atmosphere where Tasso's dialogues fit so well.

Scholar H.B. Gerl compares Petrić's philosophy of language with the Renaissance Humanistic theories through the analysis of his project for a scientifically based rhetoric. Gerl, at the same time, recognizes Petrić's merit of noticing for the first time the aporia of the old metaphysic, and stresses the importance of Petrić efforts to "discover, for the first time, the structural laws of rhetoric." Petrić's aesthetic research, starting from this moment, became very sectorial, and this is the problem pointed out by Schiffer when she states the lack of a systematic and uniform monography on the aesthetic thinking of Petrić¹²⁷.

Petrić participation in the debates and discussions about Renaissance theories on love has been further developed in the works of Paljetak and Aguzzi Barbagli (who worked also on the role of Petrić within the tradition of Renaissance music – a theme well explored in the works of Palisca, Županović, Cavallari and Ulfers); the contact points between Petrić's artistic considerations and the Mannerist theory have been newly found in the works of Scrivano and then also of Vasoli; the polemic on the relation Tasso – Petrić has been the object of further research by Schiffler – Premec and Rinaldi; the *Eridano* has been analyzed by Borsetto and Ferlunga – Petronio, Petrić's link with the works of Ariosto has been studied at length always by Rinaldi but also by Moretti and Zatti, while the *Amorosa Filosofia* – published by Nelson in 1962 has been studied in research by Borsetto, Ulfers and Vasoli; the Platonic – Neoplatonic theory of beauty – found in Petrić as the prerogative of his critique of Aristotle – has been the object of interest of Antonaci, Leinhanf and Poppi.

The afore mentioned works of Cesare Vasoli deserve further consideration since the completing bibliography of the present project highlights a remarkable quantity of his essays pertaining Petrić's aesthetic. The name of the philosopher from Cres is repeatedly taken into account in the *Aesthetic of Humanism and Renaissance*, where the Poetic is well analyzed and his figure is placed within the aesthetic – philosophical dynamics of the times (I find particularly significant the fact that Vasoli speaks of – more generally – aesthetic not basing his statements solely on Petrić's poetic thinking). Vasoli's work provided us also with a monography on Petrić, without overlooking, furthermore, the philosopher's references to the epic poem, and his rhetoric and philosophy of language. However, the works that more than the others are pertinent to the present research are fairly recent.

In my opinion, we should take into account the works of Ljerka Schiffler-Premec dedicated not only to the life and works of Petrić but, above all, to his

¹²⁷ Cf. Lj. SCHIFFLER-PREMEC, *Od škole mišljenja do slobode mišljenja. Pregled dosadašnjih istraživanja i budući zadaci proučavanja poetike i estetike F. Petrića*, in *Prilozi za istraživanje hrvatske filozofske baštine*, XXXIX-XL (1994), p. 77.

objection – up until now much cited – to the inexistence of a systematic and all-encompassing study on Petrić's aesthetic. Ljerka Schiffler-Premec's articles on the miraculous as formal and final principle of Petrić's whole poetic project, her translations of the works of Gučetić, Monaldi and the same Petrić pertaining the aesthetic theme, the in-depth and specific studies dedicated exclusively to the aesthetic of the philosopher from Cres, to his philosophy, to his thought on language, to the medieval origin and future studies of Petrić's aesthetic (etc.) prove to be fundamental for the present research.

To these, we can add those of Patrizia Castelli and her analyses on the aesthetic of Renaissance in her eponymous work, together with her research on aesthetic and taste in the works of Petrić and in the essays on 1500s' Art. Castelli also curated a monography on the literary, musical and editorial aspects of Petrić's production. In addition, Lina Bolzoni and her work *L'universo dei poemi possibili. Studi su Francesco Patrizi da Cherso*, which contains, as well, a thorough bibliography that refers back to Cesare Vasoli in her essay on Petrić. This is the written work that comes closer to the present research, considering her analysis of the cultural background of Petrić's poetic production, his science of language (especially in the dialogues *Della historia e Della retorica*), the relation between text and readers for what concerns "il mirabile" and "la meraviglia" until the thoughts on Petrić's Hermeticism and the links with religion in the context of the Counter-Reformation. Such text is pointed out also by Schiffler – Premec in her Croatian essay which has been cited already several times.

Further analysis of Petrić's aesthetic by Bolzoni are mainly concerned with his poetic, while in the work 'La stanza della memoria. Modelli letterari e iconografici nell'età della stampa' Petrić's relation with the Venetian Academia is also analyzed. Remaining though focused on the study by the Croatian expert on Petrić Schiffler – Premec, and after a brief reconstruction of the evolution of the research on the philosopher's aesthetic, we can state that:

even though there is a remarkable wealth of secondary sources on Petrić's philosophical thinking, the same cannot be said for what concerns his aesthetic thinking. The contact points, the perception and influence of many spiritual traditions – for what concerns Petrić's aesthetic – compose a still unexplored and still poorly analyzed material¹²⁸

The additional research on this topic, on the basis of what expressed here, should develop in two methodological approaches where the first would analyze the internal coherence of Petrić's work (his ontological, cosmological and gnoseologic ideas, that condition his aesthetic – poetic theory with which they tend to create a homogeneous system, or, at least, they are not conflicting it), and the other, instead, which would examine the historical and cultural context of Petrić's aesthetic paradigm:

where there are both some commonplaces of Renaissance's aesthetic thinking in the whole vastness and complexity of its sources, models and inspirations, the

¹²⁸ Lj. SCHIFFLER-PREMEC, *Od škole mišljenja do slobode mišljenja. Pregled dosadašnjih istraživanja i budući zadaci proučavanja poetike i estetike F. Petrića*, cit., p. 75.

intertwining of the different traditions and schools of thought (so typical for Renaissance philosophy in its whole), and the particularity of Petrić's philosophemes. These two methodological approaches, which purpose is to clarify the literary-aesthetic and philosophical standpoints of Petrić, open up to now horizons for a still not yet completely addressed set of problems¹²⁹

The first approach should analyze Petrić's aesthetic thinking, so to say, from within, relying on the not so predictable coherence of his philosophical – theoretical thinking. Schiffler – Premec in her paper on Petrić's aesthetic and in her chronological analysis of the evolution of his poetic, states that his early works, published in 1553, show to have a substantially homogeneous foundation¹³⁰. Stressing the coherence of Petrić's philosophy is fundamental for future research on the unitarity of his thinking, since those works which are not strictly on aesthetic are also analyzed, and without those the general picture of the philosopher's aesthetic cannot be considered as complete.

And even though such a monography must necessarily start from the written works pertaining the field of aesthetic, a broadening of the research carried out until now must move towards the analysis of some aspects of these very works which are not listed here, but that are nonetheless important for a complete discourse on Petrić's aesthetic: *Nova de universis philosophia* (next to I would put also *De rerum natura*), *Ten Dialogues on History*, never before taken into account for what concerns the field of aesthetic but that keep within themselves a very interesting vision of poetic "creatio", *Peripatetic Discussions* which show the hermeneutic feature of the philosopher thinking (even though he himself never explicitly mentions this term) – fundamental for understanding the concept of ἀλήθεια and for the right interpretation of the examined topic.

Speaking about six degrees of truth, Petrić addresses the issue of the essence of the things that occupy the important place in the afore mentioned philosophy of nature which, in turns (as I already highlighted a little earlier) is reconnected to the author's aesthetic; and next to the minor works – but still essential for the analysis of Petrić's aesthetic – we must particularly analyze also the *Ten Dialogues on Rhetoric* and the already known intention of Petrić of applying, in the field of poetic, the idea of an "all-encompassing science of the discourse" – previously developed within the rhetoric.

The second approach sets itself, instead, firstly to clarify to what extent Petrić's thinking, as a whole or only in some of its parts, owes to the tradition and the various worlds of thinking that are typical of the past. Within these framework, the following issue must be analyzed with particular attention: next

¹²⁹ *Ivi.*, p. 75.

¹³⁰ Bolzoni' s note contains the bibliographical unity part of the following statement of Aguzzi Barbagli in the introduction to the critical edition of the *Poetic*: *As premise to his investigation on the poetic art, we should be allowed to remember how the Deca istoriale, which contains it, is not the first attempt of the author in the field of aesthetic. Indeed, in his first printed book that came to us, as we can see from the whole title: Di M. Francesco Patrio La città felice. Del medesimo dialogo dell'honore, il Barignano. Del medesimo Discorso della diversità de' furori poetici. Lettura sopra il sonetto del Petrarca La gola, il sonno, e l'ociose piume. In Venetia, per Giovanni Griffio, MDLIII, one of its part is dedicated to the study of a problem of aesthetic. We thought appropriate to include in the appendix of the present edition the Discorso della diversità dei furori poetici, to facilitate the readers to a more complete vision of the development of Petrić's thinking on poetic" translation of Srepel's paragraph.*

to the acknowledged Platonism of Petrić, it is fundamental to examine in depth the role of the aesthetic doctrine of Plotinus, not only for the metaphysical, cosmological and gnoseological thinking of Petrić, but also for his philosophy of beauty about which only some rather incomplete study exists; furthermore, for what concerns the influence of the philosophy of beauty and love in the works of the author, Pitagoric and Platonic style influences deserve a further analysis, but also those of Proclus, Longinus, Dante and Augustin – the ideas that much influenced the creation of Petrić's aesthetic point of view without overlooking the thoughts of Leone Ebreo and Mario Equicola put within the context of the theoretic discussions pertaining this issue in the second half of the 16th Century.

We should take also notice of Petrić's defense of Dante against Castelvetro accusations and the use that Petrić makes of the poetic elements in Dante (the role of the genius, of the muses as those who possess knowledge, the already mentioned doctrine of beauty and of the light of the universe) – this topic has never been taken into account not only by research about Petrić's aesthetic but it has not been considered also in the research about his philosophy of nature (in depth examinations of the contact points between the philosophy in Dante's work and Petrić's ideas on universe and man as a whole are still lacking); the meaning of Petrić's Petrarcology and the importance of Petrarca's work for the philosopher's education, for his getting back to the study of Platonic – Plotinus and hermetic concepts, for his opposition to the concept of a "school of thought" with the purpose of complete free thinking (petrićian antiaristotelism); his idea of the poetic creation and his sources from the ancient times to Humanist and Renaissance poets (Plato, Aristotle, Horatio, Cicero, the already mentioned Petrarca, but also Boccaccio, Bruni, Ficinus, Bruno and Scaligero). In addition, we should explore Petrić's relation with the prophetic tradition and the place it occupies in his teachings within the debates on the origins and nature of artistic creation (the relation between the natural origin of creativity and talent; the development of concepts such as the ecstatic – prophetic fury, madness and poetic mania, "creatio", imagination, fantasy and the phenomenon of the "miraculous"); it is important thus to pay great attention to the fact that the domain of artistic invention it is not concluded only with the "discovery" of the new, of the unexplored or of the "never seen", but it includes within itself also the semantic sense of philosophical – theological nature with the purpose of setting clear bounds to man's spiritual freedom. The relation between fantasy and rationality in a poetic act; the connection between artistic creation, philosophical thinking and the scientific progress. The sources of such a comparison must be searched within the classic theories on inspiration and artistic genius starting from Plato, Cicero (*De oratore*, *De divinatione*), Horation e Seneca (*De tranquillitate animi*), and in Petrić's idea derived from Petrarca of creative madness (*De secreto conflictu curarum mearum*), partly also in the speculative and technical – practical ideas of artists, painters, poets and architects from 1200s onward, for example in Ristoro d'Arezzo, Giotto, in the scientific principles of Leonardo, in Francesco di Giorgio meaning of artistic creativity, in the artists of the miraculous: Brunelleschi, Donatello and Masaccio, in the effort aimed at assimilating the imaginary and the rational in Filareto's work, in the Renaissance theories that highlight imagination within

creativity until getting to the first conceptual essay by C. Pellegrino at the end of the 16th Century and Gracian's formulation which puts the concept in the scope of rational abstraction. Furthermore, we should pay particular attention to the Socratic shape of Petrić's philosophical dialogue, the relation between such a choice when confronted with the classical dialogical structures, the humanist cultural rhetoric and Renaissance philology, analyzing also the dialogical prose of Bruno and Tasso and the (noetic) comparison between myth and allegory within the literary-renaissance framework.

In addition, that which, notwithstanding the progress in research and all the innovative analyses, has not been yet noticed nor developed – the study of the model, sources and meaning of Petrić's new poetic system and his category apparatus (the theory of art, of the poetic act, of the creator's personality, of inspiration, of "miraculous", of fiction, allegory, metaphor, etc.) in the literary, artistic – pictorial, and music context as wide as possible with particular reference to the Croatian poets of the first and mature Renaissance together with the poets – opposite to them – of Mannerism and Baroque, free from the archetypal – normative models. In this context, the following issues should be particularly examined: it should be highlighted the way Petrić's point of view works within the Renaissance and Mannerist – Baroque poetic models, especially for what concerns the case of the mimes, since during Renaissance, the Platonic formulation of imitation is being reinterpreted.

The initial momentum of Petrić's poetic is not mimesis – in other words to discover, in an Aristotelian way how the poetic phenomenon fits an external reality, and within which bounds and under which condition such mimesis can happen; we already pointed out how Petrić had a deep understanding of the poet as sole creator who cannot be bound by the principle of mimesis¹³¹

As final elements that would allow for a complete vision of the many fields of Petrić's philosophy and poetry, we should examine the following elements: the comparison of Petrić's thinking with that of Nikola Vitov Gučetić (Nicola Vito di Gozze) – his contemporary, protagonist of the debates on beauty and love – and that of Marin Držić (Marino Dorsa), his contemporary as well, poet and author of comedies within which the writer's point of view is the speculative basis; the use Petrić does of the "concept", which is significantly different from the phenomenon of Conceptism of 17th Century and from the idea of an imaginary- metaphorical of the soul's inner reality and the statement according to which Arcimboldo's pictorial poetic represents the artistic evolution of Petrić's philosophical – theoretical postulates develops in details in his works on the poetic decades. Completing such research would mean having a whole vision of Petrić's production, and with this a chance to act in our contemporary context, where the challenges of logic and of the calculating thinking ask for help to historical figures who have found a way to answer to crushing and stifling forces, directed towards paths that are far from the authentic philosophizing of Platonic style.

¹³¹ LJ. SCHIFFLER-PREMEC, *Od škole mišljenja do slobode mišljenja. Pregled dosadašnjih istraživanja i budući zadaci proučavanja poetike i estetike F. Petrića*, cit., p. 75.

