



Book Reviews / Buchbesprechungen / Comptes rendus de lecture

Alain Badiou

Second manifeste pour la philosophie

Fayard, 2009

Vingt ans après son premier *Manifeste pour la philosophie*, où il dénonçait le discours sur la « fin » de la discipline, Alain Badiou se rebelle, cette fois-ci, contre la prolifération et « l'existence artificielle excessive » des nouveaux « philosophes » sur la scène médiatique et leur morale conservatrice, tout en poursuivant sa réflexion sur ce qu'est la philosophie, le philosophe, l'Idée. Qu'est-ce que la vraie vie, qu'est-ce qu'une vie digne de ce nom ? C'est une question à laquelle la philosophie *peut* donner une réponse ou au moins la forme d'une réponse, estime Badiou dans son *Second manifeste pour la philosophie*. Une question qui l'amènera à déclarer, à l'encontre de ce qu'il considère comme idéologie dominante de notre époque, que la vie véritable est la vie selon l'Idée, la vie sous le signe de l'Idée. Puis, de poser la nécessité d'un communisme de l'Idée, un « deuxième geste platonicien ».

La référence à Platon pour Badiou est fondamentale. Elle est le point commun de ses deux manifestes. Le premier (1989), où il affirmait la continuité de la philosophie ainsi que sa certitude qu'il existe des vérités, pas seulement des corps et des langages. « Il y a bel et bien des principes », réaffirme-t-il dès le premier chapitre de son *Second manifeste*. Des « choses » universelles – dans l'amour, l'art, la science et la politique – qui sont des vérités, et non des opinions. L'opinion, elle, est propre au sophiste. En deçà du vrai et du faux, elle est une représentation sans vérité dont la seule fonction est d'être communicable. Badiou en est convaincu : le sophiste, ancien ou moderne, est celui qui réduit la pensée à des règles, des conventions ou des jeux de langage, et qui tente, à l'image de Wittgenstein qui est son incarnation moderne, d'évincer l'idée de vé-

rité au profit de l'idée de règle. « À bien des égards, ce qui se présente comme la philosophie est un puissant sophisme », disait Badiou en 1992 (*Conditions*). Mais de là à penser que le sophiste ne doit pas exister... voilà ce qui serait un dogmatisme qui mènerait au désastre. Au contraire, comme il l'explique dans plusieurs de ses ouvrages, le sophiste est un « partenaire » nécessaire pour le philosophe, son « frère jumeau » qu'il convient de mettre à sa juste place.

Ce sophiste moderne, c'est aussi le « démocrate », rappelle le *Second manifeste*. À travers huit chapitres (*Opinion, Apparition, Différenciation, Existence, Mutation, Incorporation, Subjectivation et Idéation*), Alain Badiou porte la « suspicion platonicienne » contre la « propagande » du capitalo-parlementarisme et le « dogmatisme » de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme ; de manière générale, contre la morale conservatrice omniprésente aujourd'hui dans la sphère médiatique mais aussi dans bien d'autres domaines, sous couvert du mot « philosophie ». « La 'philosophie' est partout », se révolte-t-il. Dans sa ligne de mire :

« (...) quelque chose comme un pauvre dogmatisme via la philosophie analytique, le cognitivisme et l'idéologie de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme. À savoir une sorte de scientisme (il faut naturaliser l'esprit, l'étudier selon les protocoles expérimentaux de la neurologie), doublé, comme toujours, d'un moralisme naïf à teinture religieuse (en substance : il faut être gentil et démocrate plutôt que méchant et totalitaire) ».

Son *Second manifeste* comporte à l'évidence une nuance révolutionnaire le situant à l'opposé du « dogmatisme servile ».

Pour aller au-delà de tout moralisme, Badiou réitère son affirmation de l'existence des vérités, des « choses » intelligibles et utilisables « dans des contextes individuels et symboliques entièrement distants et différents, dans l'espace comme dans le temps ». Ces « choses » sont universelles. Elles unifient les mondes multiples. Et c'est là que se situe le travail du philosophe : « (...) détectant, présentant et associant les vérités de son temps, réactivant des vérités oubliées, fustigeant les

opinions inertes, il est le soudeur des mondes séparés ».

En « platonicien sophistiqué », comme il se qualifie lui-même, Alain Badiou ironise : « Je ne soutiens pas que les vérités préexistent à leur devenir mondain dans un 'lieu intelligible' séparé, et que leur naissance n'est qu'une descente du Ciel vers la Terre ». Elles n'en sont pas moins éternelles, ajoute-t-il un peu plus loin. Leur éternité doit être compatible avec la singularité de leur apparition : c'est pourquoi Badiou s'efforce de « rendre rationnelle » l'apparition de l'éternité dans le temps.

L'occasion pour l'auteur de reprendre sa théorie de l'être et de l'apparaître, exposée dans *L'Être et l'événement* (1988), l'un de ses ouvrages fondateurs, où ses 37 méditations, construites sous forme de déductions et d'axiomes, posaient comme thèse principale l'identité de l'ontologie et des mathématiques. L'objet, le « il y a », réduit à son seul être, est un multiple pur. Si on tente de soustraire d'un objet sa présence et ses déterminations, ce qui reste, c'est la multiplicité des multiplicités, composée encore de multiplicités et ainsi de suite. À la fin, il n'y a pas d'atome ; on ne tombe pas sur Un, mais sur le vide, ou plus précisément sur un ensemble qui ne contient aucun élément. L'un n'est pas. L'être est la multiplicité pure tirée du vide. Et la pensée de l'être, ce n'est pas la poésie, c'est la mathématique ou l'ontologie, c'est-à-dire le discours sur l'être. La pensée de l'apparaître ou de l'être-là, de son côté, se constitue comme logique, pense Badiou. L'être-là a pour essence « non une forme de l'être, mais des formes de la relation », dont la logique est la théorie. Et la métaphysique ? C'est « toute orientation de la pensée qui confond sous la même Idée la mathématique et la logique ». Les chapitres *Existence* puis *Mutation*, pas toujours faciles à décrypter (tout comme les tableaux explicatifs en deuxième et troisième de couverture), recycleront ensuite plus particulièrement les notions d'existence, d'inexistant, d'atome réel d'apparaître et de matérialisme, avant de toucher à une autre pierre angulaire de sa doctrine : l'événement. De l'événement, l'ontologie n'a rien à dire, disait Badiou dans ses précédents ouvrages : il relève de ce qui n'est pas l'être-en-tant-qu'être. C'est notamment dans *Logiques des mondes* (2006) que le philosophe en développa la théorie. Dans son *Second manifeste*, il soulignera le point décisif que représente l'événement pour la vérité : « une vérité ne peut s'originer que d'un événement ». Et de la décrire : « Une vérité, c'est un événement disparu dont le monde fait apparaître peu à peu, dans les matériaux disparates de l'apparaître, l'imprévisible corps ».

L'événement, en tant que création de nouvelles possibilités, perturbe l'ordre du monde. Trois types de positions face à l'ordre du monde existent : enthousiasme, indifférence ou hostilité. Parallèlement, Badiou distingue trois types de sujets : fidèle, réactif ou obscur. Si le sujet fidèle (exemple : la Révolution d'octobre en Russie) incorpore la nouveauté, le sujet réactif vise la conservation des formes politiques et économiques antérieures et de ce fait nie l'événement. Badiou y range, entre autres, le démocrate bourgeois, le travaillisme en Angleterre ou le New Deal américain. Le sujet obscur, lui, veut la mort du corps nouveau. Exemple : le fascisme, qui cherche à substituer à l'événement une substance éternelle (une Nation, une Culture etc.). Le même modèle peut s'appliquer à l'amour : le réactif vise la conjugalité et la famille ; l'obscur ne laisse aucune place à l'erreur ni au hasard. Mais le fidèle incorpore le risque et « oriente l'amour vers la puissance effective du Deux qu'il institue ». Autrement dit : l'amour est le premier degré du passage de l'individu au-delà de lui-même. Il montre que « ce qui s'appelle vivre, n'est pas réductible aux intérêts individuels ».

Voilà où on revient à « la question ultime de la philosophie » : qu'est-ce qu'une vie digne de ce nom ? Se prononçant contre une vie sans Idée, qui consiste à vivre uniquement pour sa satisfaction, Badiou tranche : « (...) la philosophie déclare que vivre, c'est agir pour qu'il n'y ait plus de distinction entre la vie et l'Idée ». Une vie véritable, c'est une vie selon l'Idée. L'Idée étant ce qui oriente un individu selon le Vrai. L'« idée du Bien » de Platon devient chez Badiou l'idée du Vrai. « L'idée est vraie d'exposer la chose en vérité, elle est donc toujours idée du Vrai, mais le Vrai n'est pas une idée ». Il n'y a pas d'Idée de l'Idée : c'est précisément cette absence que Badiou nomme « Vérité », cette catégorie centrale de la philosophie et le cœur du travail du philosophe.

Opposant l'universalité et l'éternité des vérités au « culte du particularisme » et de la « démocratie » (car la vraie démocratie, c'est l'égalité devant l'Idée) qui nous fait vivre sans Idée, Badiou insiste sur la nécessité d'un « deuxième geste platonicien » : celui d'un communisme de l'Idée. La question fondamentale, selon Badiou, pourrait être : « capitalo-parlementarisme (...), conduisant à la guerre, ou renouvellement victorieux de l'hypothèse communiste ? ».

L'Hypothèse communiste sera justement le titre de son dernier livre, publié récemment (*Nouvelles Éditions Lignes*). En dernière partie de cet ouvrage, on trouvera le texte présenté à l'occasion d'un colloque, tenu à Londres

à l'Université de Birckbeck du 13 au 15 mars 2009, intitulé « L'Idee du communisme » et dédié au communisme en tant que valeur positive. Badiou y estime que l'échec des tentatives historiques ne permet pas d'écarter l'idée du communisme, mais que de nouvelles solutions doivent être envisagées aujourd'hui. On aurait peut-être aimé l'entendre davantage sur les solutions effectives. Mais son hypothèse communiste reste avant tout générique. Elle fonde toute orientation de l'humanité vers son émancipation.

Le philosophe travaille actuellement sur une nouvelle traduction de la *République* de Platon qui portera le titre : *Du Commun(isme)*.

Alain Badiou, né en 1937 à Rabat, est professeur émérite à l'École normale supérieure. Écrivain et philosophe, platonicien et maoïste, il a publié une trentaine d'ouvrages philosophiques et politiques mais aussi des romans et des drames.

Nataša Laporte

Franz Ungler

Organismus und Selbstbewusstsein

Untersuchungen zur Naturbeobachtenden Vernunft bei Hegel

Hg. von Michael Wladika und
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Peter Lang Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.,
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Diese nun veröffentlichte Studie von Ungler ist dessen Dissertationsschrift, die er 1972 in Wien eingereicht hat. Den „Kern“ dieser Studie bildet die Frage, wie sich bei Hegel die Idee so entzweien und vereinen kann, dass sie Natur und Geist gleichermaßen und dennoch auf ausdifferenzierte Weise ist. Diese Ausdifferenzierung besteht in der Bestimmung des Verhältnisses von Organismus und Selbstbewusstsein und kreist somit um die Frage, wie die Idee gleichermaßen auf eine naturhafte und auf eine geisthafte Weise sein kann (vgl. S. 137). Dieser Problembereich betrifft nach Ungler einerseits die *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807) – dort insbesondere die „beobachtende Vernunft“; hier wird gewinnbringend

auch die Geistphilosophie der *Enzyklopädie* einbezogen – und andererseits die *Begriffslogik* – dort genauer: a) den Übergang von der Objektivität/Teleologie zur Ideenlehre/„Idee des Lebens“ und b) den Übergang bzw. den Entschluss von der Idee in die Natur. Eine angemessen intensive Einbeziehung des dritten Teils der Naturphilosophie aus Hegels *Enzyklopädie*, „Die Organik“, vermisst man jedoch schmerzlich.

Ungler motiviert seine Studie im ersten Kapitel „Naturorganismus und reflektierende Urteilskraft“ (S. 17–47) mit einer aus seiner Sicht berechtigten Kritik Hegels an Kants *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* und an der *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, wo das Verhältnis von biologischem Organismus, Teleologie und Selbstbewusstsein auf eine äußerliche Weise „gelöst“ sei, eben in der berühmten „als ob“-Verbindung, bei der die Zweckmäßigkeit auf die einseitig subjektiven Aspekte der Vernunft verschoben wird und nicht als Wesensprinzip im Objekt selbst erkannt werde. Sofern die Urteilskraft in die biologischen Entitäten nur aus Gründen einer von der Vernunft geforderten Sinndimension Zwecke hinein projiziert, entwerfe dies einerseits die Objektivität der Vernunft sowie andererseits die Zweckdimension im Gegenstand selbst. Kants hierfür zentrale Aussage lautet: „Denn da wir die Zwecke in der Natur als absichtliche eigentlich nicht *beobachten*, sondern nur in der Reflexion über ihre Produkte diesen Begriff als einen Leitfaden der Urteilskraft hinzu denken, so sind sie uns nicht durch das Objekt gegeben.“ (*KdU* § 75) Hier muss man tatsächlich, wie Ungler sehr gut mit Hegel kritisch weiterführend herausstellt, hinterfragen, ob „Beobachtung“ der Natur durch die Vernunft ein letztes, methodisch gesichertes und damit wissenschaftlich akzeptables Kriterium für die interne Bestimmung der Struktur des Gegenstandes, genauer: biologischer Organismen, sein kann. Die Problematik, Beobachtung und Vernunft angemessen zu bestimmen, ist tatsächlich ja auch in der Philosophie der Gegenwart noch immer ein wesentliches Problem, das sich von der Theorie der Beobachtungs- und Protokollsätze des logischen Positivismus und des Wiener Kreises über Wilfrid Sellars und dessen holistische Kritik an der Beobachtung von Gegebenem bis hin zu Davidson kontinuierlich durchhält („Mythos des Gegebenen“). Hier könnte diese Tradition sicherlich eine Menge von Unglers differenzierter Analyse und von Hegels Kritik der Beobachtung lernen. Ungler erzählt diesen Kontext der aufhebenden Dialektik der „beobachtenden Vernunft“ im Verhältnis zum (Natur-)Gesetz aus Hegels *Phänomenologie* zutreffend nach. Dies erstreckt sich über das zweite und dritte

Kapitel der Dissertation: „Vernunft und Organismus“ sowie „Organismus und Vernunft“ (S. 49–107) und bildet das Herzstück der Arbeit. Unglers Rekonstruktion ist zwar völlig korrekt und vermag wesentliche Zusammenhänge auf dem Niveau Hegels darzustellen, enthält jedoch wenig Verweise auf die Forschung oder auf Kritik an Hegel.

Außerordentlich lehrreich sind Unglers Verweise auf eine mögliche Auseinandersetzung naturphilosophischer Gedanken mit der Evolutionstheorie. Erst in der Hegel-Forschung der letzten Jahre wurde diese Thematik intensiv diskutiert. Fraglich ist dort, ob Hegels teleologisches Gattungskonzept mit Darwins Evolutionstheorie *mutatis mutandis* kompatibel ist oder nicht. Ungler entscheidet sich für die Alternative, beides sei inkompatibel und man könne sogar mit Hegel die Falschheit der Evolutionstheorie begründen. Diese gewagte These scheint dem Rezensenten jedoch nicht hinreichend durch einzelne Nebenbemerkungen gerechtfertigt zu sein. Entscheidend hängt der Antidarwinismus mit der Hauptthematik dieser Studie zusammen, nämlich mit der Problematik des Verhältnisses von Organismus und Selbstbewusstsein. Ungler geht so weit, dass er generell der Naturentwicklung abspricht, eben weil ihr Selbstbewusstsein fehlt (vgl. S. 101 f). Hier wird jedoch einfach gesetzt, dass a) Entwicklung Subjektivität impliziert und b) in der Natur als solcher Subjektivität nicht vorhanden ist. Stimmt man beiden Prämissen zu, ist die Evolutionstheorie allerdings nicht haltbar. Infolgedessen sind „Naturalismus“ und jede „nichtphilosophische Psychologie“ – ja sogar die formale Logik – für den gestrengen Hegelianer Ungler bloß „Pseudo-Wissenschaften“ (vgl. S. 103 sowie 104). Ob man aus diesem „Abseits“ heraus noch einen die naturwissenschaftlichen Argumentationspartner aus der Biologie der Gegenwart erreichenden Pass spielen kann, scheint dem Rezensenten fraglich. Ebenso problematisch erscheint, ob die beiden Prämissen korrekt sind. Diskussionswürdig ist es auch, ob sie – falls sie korrekt sein sollten – überhaupt wirklich den Stachel des Darwinismus treffen, denn es ist für den Darwinismus nicht nur zentral, dass sich die Arten entwickeln, sondern ebenso, dass die biologischen Arten sterblich sind, dass es also keine unsterblichen Artentelechien oder Arteide gibt. Diese Sterblichkeit der Arten ist jedoch nicht damit zugleich erledigt, dass es keine Artenentwicklung in der Natur gibt. Selbst wenn sich die eine Art nicht aus der anderen entwickeln sollte, folgt daraus weder logisch noch notwendig, dass diese Arten dann auch unsterblich sein müssten.

Der eigentliche Gedanke, den man mit Hegel hier entfalten kann, besteht eher darin, dass

man sich nicht zu einer solchen Entzweiung mit der Naturwissenschaft treiben lassen sollte, sondern vielmehr zu beleuchten hat, wie man einen hinreichend weiten und zugleich doch bestimmten Begriff von Subjektivität entwickeln kann, der auf organische Lebensformen als notwendige Bedingung bezogen und dennoch nicht einfach mit ihnen – im verfehlten Sinne des gegenwärtigen Naturalismus oder der Leib-Seele-Identitätstheoretiker – identisch ist. Ungler selbst stellt ja in seiner trefflichen Deutung der „Idee des Lebens“ aus der Begriffslehre der *Logik* heraus, dass in der Idee die Vereinigung von Objekt und Subjekt als eine dialektische Leib-Seele-Einheit zu begreifen ist (S. 122 ff.). Wenn in der Idee eine Vereinigung von organischem Leib mit der Seele zu denken ist, kann man aber prinzipiell die Subjektivität nicht mehr losgelöst von ihrer biologisch-organischen Verfassung betrachten. Dann ist es eigentlich ein (fast cartesianischer) Rückfall hinter Hegel, der Natur Subjektivität und (evolutionäre) Entwicklung abzusprechen.

Ein zweiter Argumentationsstrang der Studie (vgl. S. 17–39) besteht darin, dass Ungler mit Hegel bei Kant auch spekulative Aspekte einer inneren, wahren Zweckmäßigkeit, in der produktiven Einbildungskraft (*KrV*, B 150 ff.) sowie im anschauenden Verstand (*KdU*, §§ 75–77) sieht. Dort sei die Dichotomie von zweckmäßiger Vernunftidee und sinnlich-kausaler Welt des Gegebenen überwunden. Hier steht die Vernunft dem Gegenstand nicht mehr äußerlich beobachtend gegenüber, sondern bildet mit dem Organismus vermittels der inneren Zweckmäßigkeit eine spekulative Identität. Beides, Schematismus der Einbildungskraft und intuitiven Verstand, analysiert Ungler brillant, auf selbstständige Weise, nicht zu textnah, sondern sachnah und souverän.

In Konflikt mit Kants Lehre von der Einbildungskraft in der zweiten Auflage der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* tritt nach Ungler jedoch Kants Lehre vom Unterschied zwischen Wahrnehmungs- und Erfahrungsurteil (S. 23 ff.). – Nach Ansicht des Rezensenten vermischt Ungler hier verschiedene Theorieebenen aus Kants Theorie des Urteils, sofern es Erkenntnis konstituierend ist. Die Urteilstheorie der zweiten Auflage der *KrV* kommt ohne die Differenzierung von Wahrnehmungs- und Erfahrungsurteil aus; nur in den *Prolegomena* taucht jener Unterschied auf, und dort hat er eigentlich doch eher eine propädeutisch-pädagogische Funktion. Denn dass alle sinnlichen Anschauungen unter der Einheit der Apperzeption stehen – wie es die zweite Auflage der *KrV* konzipiert – bedeutet, dass sinnliche Anschauungen *für uns* nur insofern sind, als sie sich dem kategorialen Denken

synthetisch einordnen, womit sie eben vermittle von Urteilen auf die Verstandesbegriffe gebracht werden und also keine bloßen Wahrnehmungsurteile mehr sind. Dieser Zusammenhang hebt die Problematik auf, wie es eigenständige Wahrnehmungsurteile geben kann, denn sie sind dann eben nicht mehr eigenständig, sondern höchstens noch unvollkommene Vorphasen innerhalb eines sie umfassenden und ganzheitlich zu sehenden Erkenntnisprozesses, in dem Anschauungen auf Begriffe gebracht werden. Unglers Deutung der Schwächen von Kants Konzeption des anschauenden Verstandes (S. 35–39) ist ein echter Geniestreich, der die Notwendigkeit deutlich macht, über Kant hinauszugehen und mit Hegel einen systematischen und sachlichen Zusammenhang – eben einen im Hegelschen Sinn dialektischen Konnex – von biologischer Entität und sie denkender Vernunft konzipieren.

Fazit: Durchgängig ist bereits in dieser Dissertation von Ungler der spätere Hegelianer zu bemerken, der besonders dort seine großartige Genialität beweist, wo er die Texte Kants und Hegels freier, nicht so textnah, deutet; das zeigt sich besonders im ersten und im letzten Kapitel; die beiden mittleren Kapitel weisen eine sehr große Textnähe zu Hegels *Phänomenologie* auf, die demjenigen, der das Primärwerk kennt, oft die Frage aufdrängen: „Wozu?“ Aufschlussreich ist das durch die Herausgeber angefertigte Verzeichnis der von Ungler abgehaltenen Lehrveranstaltungen (S. 143–157); es zeigt die profunde Breite von Unglers enormer Gelehrtheit von der Antike bis in den deutschen Idealismus. Das Namensverzeichnis lässt etwas zu wünschen übrig; z.B. taucht der mehrfach im Text vorkommende Darwin dort nicht auf; Cohen nur einmal obgleich er öfter im Text präsent ist und interessanterweise wohl Unglers Kant-Bild mitgeprägt hat. Ebenso sucht man Driesch im Namensverzeichnis vergebens, obgleich Ungler eine außerordentlich interessante Argumentation gegen dessen Auffassung der Entelechie (vgl. S. 91) entfaltet. Insgesamt muss man freilich den Herausgebern dankbar sein, denn sie haben einen systematisch wertvollen Beitrag zur Hegelforschung zugänglich gemacht.

Rainer Schäfer

Paul Guyer (ed.)

The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy

Cambridge University Press,
Cambridge 2006

Fourteen years after the publication of *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992), Paul Guyer is again the head of the new project in Kant scholarship: publication of *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*. This volume is not just quantitatively larger, but contains also a few important qualitative novelties. First, every included author has been asked to address both the historical context and the historical impact of the particular topic in Kant. This shows the aim to extend investigations in Kant scholarship, but also to show importance of his thought for almost every topic in modern philosophy. Second, there are many new contributors, who are new rising Kant scholars. This brings many new insights and approaches providing special intellectual freshness in the interpretations of Kant's views. Third, there are few less addressed topics, what gives new proof of constant flourishing of Kant scholarship.

Paul Guyer has almost copy-pasted the whole "Introduction" from previous *Companion*, probably finding that such formulation is most adequate. Its subtitle "The starry heavens and the moral law" shows Guyer's methodological (interpretative) choice: he presents whole Kant's opus through the distinction between his theoretical and practical philosophy ending with intriguing thoughts about his third *Critique*, as his last great work, intended to solve the tension between the theoretical and the practical.

There are eighteen essays included in this volume. The first nine chapters deal with Kant's theoretical philosophy and the next six chapters concern Kant's practical philosophy. The last three chapters are devoted to more specific subjects: Kant's theory of aesthetics and teleology, his philosophy of religion and the immediate reception of his *Critique of Pure Reason*.

In the first essay, entitled "A Priori" after a short sketch of historical background, Philip Kitcher analyses Kant's own conception of *a priori* knowledge. In the light of contemporary epistemological distinctions he sheds some light on initial formulation in the *Cri-*

tique of Pure Reason: Kant is concerned with justificationist approach, strong conception and synthetic kind of *a priori* knowledge. The analysis of Kant's view of "marks" of *a priori* knowledge (necessity and universality) gives Kitcher a basis for reinterpreting Kant's initial formulation and providing an account of *a priori* knowledge as tacit knowledge. He offers few possibilities of interpretative mending those views and finds them all unsatisfactory. He concludes with brief account of Kant's legacies the postkantian discussions of *a priori* knowledge.

Gary Hatfield is the author of second essay: "Kant on the Perception of Space (and Time)". He provides the background of Kant's work and then he analyses the concept of space and spatial cognition in his earlier writings, where Kant defends a modified Leibnizian (relational) view of space. After the presentation of his mature, critical theory of space (as *a priori* pure form of intuition), presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Hatfield stresses the fact that Kant made clear that synthesis by the understanding is necessary for cognition of spatial structures. Finally, he presents a part of reception of Kant's critical theory of space through few main lines of objections or defences of Kant.

Lisa Shabel is one of the new raising potential in Kant scholarship and this is confirmed by her essay "Kant's Philosophy of Mathematics". She starts with a historical background discussing rationalist philosophy of mathematics that dominated before Kant and then articulates his philosophy of mathematics, contained in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. First, she examines thoroughly his arguments for syntheticity of mathematics. Second, she rehearses the same arguments but focusing on philosophical proofs for apriority of mathematics. After the illumination of Kant's central thesis (all mathematical cognition is synthetic *a priori*) Shabel gives an insightful interpretation of importance of Kant's philosophy of mathematics for his entire critical project. Finally, she discusses briefly the vast influence of Kant's view on postkantian philosophy of mathematics.

In essay "Kant on *A Priori* concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories" Béatrice Longuissime provides systematic presentation of Kant's project of metaphysical deduction of basic *a priori* elements of our cognition – pure concepts of understanding (categories). She presents the stages in Kant's philosophical development before his mature solution in the first *Critique*, examining views in his earlier writings and lectures. Then she provides a brief sketch on Kant's view on logic by presenting his main distinc-

tions. She elucidates the concept of function of judging, and the concept of capacity to judge from which Kant derives all four logical forms of judgment (quantity, quality, relation, modality). She continues elaborating how Kant derives the table of categories from the table of judgments stressing the scope of this deduction. Finally, she provides an extensive presentation of impact of Kant's views on his successors.

At the beginning of fifth essay, "Kant's Philosophy of the Cognitive Mind", Patricia Kitcher sketches in short theories of mind of Kant's predecessors and gives brief general comment of rational and empirical psychology before Kant. Then she shows that even though Kant criticizes Leibniz and Wolff, in his earlier writings and lectures he addresses rationalist account of mind. Before (re)constructing Kant's theory of mind, based on his first *Critique*, she sketches briefly his theory of cognition and, then, she provides analysis of Kant's vision of subject of cognition, identifying the concept of transcendental apperception as a crucial concept. She differentiates four usages of this concept in both editions of first *Critique*. In the final section she presents some issues emerging from Kant's theory, giving also a short comment on every of them.

In "Kant's Proof of Substance and Causation", Arthur Melnick first gives preliminary remarks concerning rationalist's and empiricist's accounts of causation and substance. Then he analyses Kant's proof of causation in first *Critique*, stressing that it is based on partial causal theory of time, which gives him plausible answer to many objections of his critics on this point. Then he tries to solve the possible incoherence of mentioned theory of time with constructionist theory of time. He stresses that interrelation between causality and substance clarifies Kant's proof of substance, which is based on the vision of time as a form of intuition, but in the course of permanent constructive temporising procedure. In this light, he elaborates the connection between causation and substance, but he also embraces important relation of both of them to the transcendental deduction of categories. Finally he compares Kant's views with modern developments regarding causation and substance.

In the seventh chapter, "Kant and Transcendental Arguments", Ralph C. S. Walker first provides general conception of what should be 'Transcendental Argument' both for Kant and his followers, but also what is exactly its function meant to be. Then he gives an account of Kant's theory of cognition, but merely focusing on detection and examina-

tion of what could stand for transcendental argument: justification of pure forms of intuition, categories of understanding and ideas of reason. He continues with the examination of strengthness of transcendental arguments presenting various objections of postkantian philosophers, and giving a comment to each of them. He concludes, following Strawson's line of thought, that transcendental arguments do not impel us towards idealism, and argues that there is another way of looking at them, contrary to those present in philosophical literature.

Karl Ameriks is the author of the eight chapter, which is named "The Critique of Metaphysics: The Destruction and Fate of Kant's Dialectic". At the beginning of his essay he explains the need for systematic examination of all ideas of reason which resulted in so large part of *Critique of Pure Reason*, called "Transcendental Dialectic". Then he gives an overview of Kant's critical examination, followed by extensive commentary concerning the scope of such critique. Ameriks elucidates the concept of 'unconditioned', which is deeply present in Kant's critique and leaves a kind of suspicious metaphysical residue which pulls many postkantian philosophers back in the metaphysical speculations which are presented at the end of this essay.

In his essay "Philosophy of Natural Science", Michael Friedman deals with Kant's engagement with natural science which occupied him during his whole intellectual career. First, he sketches the background of Kant's critical writings on the subject, presenting Cartesian, Leibnizian and Newtonian views on "natural philosophy", but also his own pre-critical views in his earlier writings. Friedman presents Kant's mature view by considering his central work on the subject – *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, especially relating to *Critique of Pure Reason* and the significance of pure natural science for whole critical project. He concludes his essay with extensive and insightful observation of Kant's legacies in philosophical treatment of natural sciences after him.

In the "Supreme Principle of Morality" Allen W. Wood first examines what could exactly be such a principle, and what is the true nature and grounding of it in Kant's ethical thought. Then he provides a thorough analysis of *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals*, differentiating a five (or even six) formulation of Kant's "supreme principle of morality". He continues with short observation on possible connection between *Groundwork* and Cicero's *On Obligation*, concluding that there is almost nothing to learn about the first on the reading of the second. Finally, he presents

Kant's criticism of his predecessors' attempts to ground morality and also examines the force of this critique.

"Kant on Freedom of the Will" by Henry Allison is the eleventh chapter. He sketches views on freedom of the will by Kant's predecessors, finding this necessary for understanding his own conception. Then he articulates Kant's conception of rational agency, explaining the key term – spontaneity – in both epistemic and practical way. This provides him a basis for elaborating, further, Kant's derivation of autonomy (as positive concept of freedom) and practical spontaneity (as negative concept of freedom). Kant's mature view of freedom has been elaborated through Allison's presentation of his solution of the third antinomy of reason in *Critique of Pure Reason*, which tries to reconcile two apparently conflicting principles: determinism of natural laws and freedom of our will. He concludes with insightful presentation of conception of free will, in relation with Kant, in some of his successors (Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer).

Chapter twelve is Robert B. Pipin's essay, entitled "Mine and Thine? The Kantian State". He first sketches Kant's conception of right and his definition of state, stressing two main issues: the possibility of our external freedom and its relation to the private property. Then he elaborates Kant's demand for the exit from the state of nature which results in constitution of civil state, but he points out that the problem of what sort of normative claims is exactly a claim of right still remains, showing three possible ways of reading Kant on this point. Trying to shed some light on this point, he analyses part of *Metaphysics of Morals*, where Kant tries to defend the state as the only condition for possibility of justice. He concludes with some suggestions on possible problems in Kant's account, but also on possible reading Kant as proto-Fichtian or proto-Hegelian.

Jane Kneller provides probably the greatest novelty in Kantian topics included inside this volume with her essay "Kant on Sex and Marriage Right". Motivated by highly negative reaction of almost all Kant's successors on his view concerning marriage, she tries to examine it closer to see if those charges are reasonable. She sketches Kant's precritical views and then she concentrates her attention to *Metaphysics of Morals*, providing sketch of Kant's theory of rights necessary for truly understanding of his account of marital right. She examines the marriage right in more detail and presents metaphysical assumptions behind his conception of marriage (metaphysics of personhood and marital bond between individuals). Kneller concludes that although

there are some exaggerations in objections to Kant, unfortunately he has at the end locked himself in traditionalism.

After she gives historical context of Kant's discussion, another raising Kant scholar, Pauline Kleingeld, in her "Kant's Theory of Peace", examines three necessary conditions for possibility of true (world) peace: internal republican organisation of states, their external organisation in voluntary league of states and cosmopolitan right in international relations between the states. Contrary to other commentaries, she provides a satisfactory interpretation of Kant's thesis that before "world state" (state of all states) we need a less forceful bound between them in a form of league of states. Then she proceeds with examination of Kant's vision how the process toward perpetual peace could be practically realised. She concludes with presentation of some responses on Kant's theory of perpetual peace by his successors (Rawls, Habermas, Höffe, Fichte).

In chapter fifteen, Lara Denis presents "Kant's conception of virtue". She starts with the presentation of Kant's predecessors' conceptions of virtue ethics (Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, Epicureans, Augustine, Abelard, Aquinas, Grotius, Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Wolff, Crusius). She examines Kant's theory of virtue through several steps. First, she analyses Kant's concepts of virtue, lack of virtue, and vice. Then she elucidates relations between virtue and few important concepts of Kant's ethical thought (good will, human agency, vices, highest good). She continues with Kant's criticism of his predecessors, but she also presents some responses to Kant's theory of virtue (Schiller and Schopenhauer) and its reception in contemporary virtue ethics.

Paul Guyer begins his essay "Kant's ambitions in third *Critique*" by sketching the vast horizon of addressed topics in this far less appreciated work in Kantian scholarship. He decides to provide a reading of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* as a continuation of debate with Hume. Thus, he differentiates three main subjects of this debate: necessity of particular laws of nature, universal validity of judgments of taste, and the moral significance of teleological concept of nature. He first presents Hume's account concerning all three mentioned subjects and then continues with examination of Kant's "answers", especially focusing his attention on evaluating their successfulness. At the end, he provides some intriguing thoughts about influence of Kant's aesthetic and teleology.

Frederick Beiser in "Moral Faith and the Highest Good", in the mere beginning, stresses the problems concerning the interpretation

of Kant's philosophy of religion. He gives a preliminary historical context, necessary for understanding Kant's view, stressing the originality of his thought: religious belief could be justified solely by practical reason. Beiser shows that the starting point of Kant's entire moral theology is fundamentally Christian concept of highest good. After he provides an account of metaphysics which lies behind our morality, namely faith in transcendent being, he proceeds with presentation of Kant's moral proof for the existence of God. Then he explains what Kant means by claiming that the faith can be rational and that it has priority over the knowledge. Answering the two general objections to moral faith, Beiser concludes his essay by trying to place a moral faith in more vital position in Kant's whole philosophy.

The last essay is Manfred Kuehn's "Kant's Critical Philosophy and Its Reception – The First Five Years (1781–1786)". He presents four reviews of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and his first responses, during 1781–1782. Then he tries to show that *Prolegomena* (1783) is motivated by Kant's worry to give an answer to the critiques in one of the mentioned reviews. Kuehn shows that Schulze's *Exposition of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, which is extensive presentation and defence of Kant's view, was a crucial step in reception of Kant's thought. Then, he elucidates Kant's working on *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals* (1783–1784) as related to the intention to criticize the book of his major critic, Christian Garve. After the presentation of Kant's essays published during 1784–1786, Kuehn shows that his *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1785) was intended as an answer to the doubts of some commentators (Ulrich, Schulze). Finally, he concludes with Kant's engagement in "pantheismus dispute".

This volume also includes an extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources for Kant scholarship and detailed index. Considering the various topics of essays included in this volume, given historical context for every topic, organised bibliography by customary broad divisions in discussions of Kant's philosophy, and very useful index, this volume presents a remarkable introduction for everyone who is not particularly familiar with Kant. On the other side, considering the fact that authors of essays are in the top of their fields of work, this volume is without any doubt indispensable material for anyone who enters in the world of Kant scholarship, but also it is in the same time the impressive enrichment of this scholarship itself.

Igor Eterović

**Jan Verplaetse, Jelle De Schrijver,
Sven Vanneste, Johan Braeckman
(eds.)**

The Moral Brain

**Essays on the Evolutionary and
Neuroscientific Aspects of Morality**

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Morality is considered to be one of the most complex and most human qualities, defining and enabling life in community. No wonder, therefore, that the neural underpinning of that “function” has been an interesting aim for scientists all over the time. The Viennese neurologist Moritz Benedikt (1835–1920) situated morality in the occipital lobes, viewing morality as a sense organ. Oskar Vogt (1870–1959) saw morality as a function of the *lamina pyramidalis* of the frontal lobes, while phrenologists disputed about the precise location of morality, but did not doubt about its existence. Since then, many scientists up to modern times, have been either searching for or speculating about the cortical area that might explain (im)moral behaviour, but we have somehow been deprived of a final answer. Particularly worrisome, hereby, sounds that (im)moral acting might be engineered.

The book contains twelve chapters. In the “Introduction”, Jan Verplaetse, Johan Braeckman, and Jelle de Schrijver give a very useful historical overview of the problem, a brain-imaging primer, and the plan of the book. Andrea Glenn and Adrian Raine deal with “The Immoral Brain”, studying specifically psychopathy (using The Prisoner’s Dilemma). Jorge Moll and Ricardo de Oliveira-Souza present their concept of “‘Extended attachment’ and the Human Brain: Internalized Cultural Values and Evolutionary Implications”, subserving cooperation beyond kin and being considered to be uniquely human. “Neuro-Cognitive Systems Involved in Moral Reasoning” is the topic of the paper by James Blair, advocating a multiple morality system (with at least four mechanisms of learning based on emotions: care-based – harm reciprocity; disgust-based – purity; social convention – hierarchy; affect-free morality). Jean Decety and C. Daniel Batson deal with “Empathy and Morality: Integrating Social and Neuroscience Approach”, proving that empathy operates by way of conscious and automatic processes. Kristin Prehn and Hauke R. Heekeren entitled their contribution “Moral Judgement and the

Brain: A Functional Approach to the Question of Emotion and Cognition in Moral Judgement Integrating Psychology, Neuroscience and Evolutionary Biology”, studying, among other, the role of emotions and intuitive feelings in moral judgement. Dirk De Ridder, Berthold Langguth, Mark Plazier, and Tomas Menovsky write about “Moral Dysfunction: Theoretical Model and Potential Neurosurgical Treatments”, in particular about antisocial personality disorders (APD)/psychopathy and paedophilia as well as the treatment of such diseases (electrical stimulation of the nucleus accumbens, anterior cingulate cortex, amygdala, orbitofrontal cortex, and dorsolateral prefrontal cortex). Matthijs van Veelen, from Department of Economics of Amsterdam University, investigates “Does It Pay to Be Good? Competing Evolutionary Explanations of Pro-Social Behaviour”, while Randolph M. Nesse poses the question “How Can Evolution and Neuroscience Help Us Understand Moral Capacities?” and, in a second contribution, writes about “Runaway Social Selection for Displays of Partner Value and Altruism”, insinuating that “our expectation that there is some sharp peak that defines ‘normal’” (in the sense of morality) may be wrong. The object of interest of John Teehan is “The Evolved Brain: Understanding Religious Ethics and Religious Violence”, analyzing the approach to (non)violence in various religions. Finally, Jelle De Schrijver concludes the book with “An Evolutionary and Cognitive Neuroscience Perspective on Moral Modularity”, suggesting that evolutionary biology raises and cognitive neuroscience tests different hypotheses on moral mechanisms.

It is positive that some younger authors were invited to contribute to the present book, but it is a pity that Bechara, Damasio, Eslinger, Nichelli, Schultz, and others studying the function of the orbitofrontal cortex, reward/punishment, and related phenomena, were not included among the authors.

Probably the most important conclusion of the present series of articles is that there is no single “moral center”. Several cortical and subcortical structures, like the cingulate cortex, medial and ventromedial prefrontal cortex, hippocampus, amygdala, insula, etc., play certain roles in preparing and executing moral behaviour, and each moral task (processing personal vs. impersonal moral dilemmas; empathy; etc.) seems to have its own neural network. The present book might be regarded as an excellent insight into the *status questionis*, providing us with a precious evolutionary and neuroscientific update for all those interested in the curious interdisciplinary field of morality.

Amir Muzur

Peter Lamarque

Philosophy of Literature

Blackwell, 2009

Peter Lamarque has more than once proved to be the leading expert in the field of philosophy of literature, but his new book goes even beyond the excellence of his previous books (which include, among other, *The Fictional Point of View* (1996) and *Truth, Fiction and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (1994, co-authored with Stein Haugom Olsen). Although *The Philosophy of Literature* is part of the *Foundations of the Philosophy of Arts series* (which includes *The Philosophy of Art* by Stephen Davies, and *The Philosophy of Motion Pictures* by Noël Carroll) and as such it is meant to provide a kind of introduction into the subject of (philosophy of) literature, Lamarque manages to do more than that: by presenting the historical contexts and viewpoints regarding many different topics dealing with literature, he also provides his readers with many valuable information dealing with art and aesthetics generally, and literature and literary criticism in particular. In that sense, at the most general level, his book is an excellent guideline to different philosophical theories about the nature of art and the nature of aesthetic experience, judgment and evaluation. However, Lamarque is primarily interested in the phenomena of literature: its distinct character, which makes it close to, but radically different from all the other arts, the special practice of dealing with and being engaged in literature, and the significance of the institutional background against which the literature is developing. Always adopting the philosophical perspective, Lamarque pays special attention to showing in what way literary critics and theoreticians dealing with literature “handle the issue”. His concern to give credit to those who are in somehow different way concerned with literature is present throughout the work, and it is evident in the fact that more than once Lamarque raises question about the proper task of *philosopher* of literature and the special role he has in tackling these issues, which is in many ways parallel to the role of literary critics (and *vice versa*), but also distinct and incommensurable to it. Always trying to answer the question “what is to view literature as art”, Lamarque goes beyond the approach taken by the literary critics, and tries to give us a philosophical point of view, which, according to him, is based on the following idea:

“The philosopher looks at fundamental principles, conceptual connections, unnoticed consequences

of lines of thought, significance and insignificance, boundaries where these are possible and desirable. In theory-constructing model, he or she might then hope to develop an overarching theory of the phenomena that helps unify, explain, and clarify diffuse elements. The philosophical investigation of literature is a probing into practices and procedures but it does not offer a history of those practices or a sociological analyzes of them. It looks at the underlying conventions and assumptions that give the practices what distinctive identity they have and seeks to find a coherent perspective that makes sense of them.”¹

With that view in mind, Lamarque sees the philosophy of literature as “foundational inquiry into the very nature of the literary, classifying the subject matter, delineating aspects, analyzing concepts, exploring norms, and values, locating the whole practice of writing and reading literary works in its proper place among related but distinct practice.” This quote is a nice illustration of the topics that Lamarques deals with in the book. Chapter one, entitled “Art”, is dedicated to showing what is the place of literature within aesthetics, philosophy and art, but also to see in what ways are all of these connected and entwined. Here we can already notice the thoroughness which characterizes Lamarque’s writing and the precision he uses in tackling the issues. Trying to set the stage for his philosophical study, Lamarque is careful to present different approaches that were taken by different research groups over the years. We can learn a lot about different aspects from which literature has been examined; different literary theories, sociological and historical accounts and attempts taken by aestheticians to explain the nature of aesthetic experience. Already here Lamarque starts to build his theory of what literature is. He rejects reductive account of literature according to which literature can be explained in terms of one literary mode (novel, poem etc.), and the idea of reducing or identifying literary works with its textual qualities, and claims that, in investigating the literature, we should be attentive not of the notion of literature, but of the phenomena of literature. Going back to the idea that was already present in his *Truth, Fiction and Philosophy*, he claims that literature and its different aspects are present in every culture and in every society, and that it includes different linguistic practices: telling stories, making poetry etc. Therefore, he claims, the philosopher of literature should explore the structures that enable the interaction of those who participate in the practice (for example, writers, readers, publishers, critics). In that sense, *philosophy* of literature is rather distinct from sociology of literature, ethnography, psychology or any other inquiry. Another important idea that is presented here and it will remain

important in the whole book is the claim that “to think of literature as art is, minimally, to think of works as artifacts or designs of some kind, exhibiting ‘artistry’ comparable in certain respects with other arts and capable of affording distinct kinds of pleasure”.² What Lamarque wants to show is that literary works are not meant to be just “pleasing pieces of language”, but are deserving of special kind of aesthetic appreciation and attention. In order to reach that kind of view of literature, he claims that philosophy of literature should accept the following six ideas:

1. it must encompass all literary forms without giving precedence to one of them;
2. it must avoid attempts to explain literature in terms of linguistic properties;
3. it must avoid “art for art’s sake” aestheticism;
4. it mustn’t explain aesthetic pleasure in terms of purely hedonistic, sensuous terms;
5. it should not give priority to natural response, but (following Hume’s idea) to learned, trained response;
6. it should recognize the autonomy of literature as human practice.³

In the second chapter, “Literature”, Lamarque examines and analyzes different theories that were put forward by different people in the attempt to define and explain the nature of literature and fiction. At the most general level, there are the essentialist versus the anti-essentialist notions of literature, which argue over the question of whether or not it is possible to define literature in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Following the tread of Wittgenstein and his family resemblance idea, people like Morris Weitz seek to define literature in terms of similarities and connectedness, rather than in terms of shared features. This chapter is very informative regarding the historical development of the attempts to define not just literature but art generally and Lamarque is very detailed in survey of literary theories. He explains cluster theories, advocated by Berys Gaunt, which center around the idea of ten different features which an object should disjunctively satisfy in order to count as art. A similar version of disjunctivist theory is defended by Robert Stecker. Lamarque rejects both of this, showing that they are either too inclusive or too exclusive in assigning the status ‘literary’ to different works. Next, he turns his attention to the work done by the critic M. H. Abrams, who claims that historical development of art and literature shows that there are four features which were at different times the centre of the art. These four “coordinates of art criticism are the universe, the audience, the

artist and the work”. What this means is that there are different things that can be the focus of an artwork, that is, literary work. Mimetic theories were mostly based on the attempt to represent the world as faithfully as possible. Pragmatic theories tried to emphasize the role of the audience and the effect that an artwork has on the audience. Expressive theories are based on the artist and his inner feelings, thoughts, mental states etc. Finally, autonomous theories stress the autonomy of a literary work. Turning his attention to the problem of fiction, Lamarque discusses theories which tried to explain fiction in terms of imaginative literature, speech acts or some other linguistic device. The flaw that they all share can best be described in the claim that not all literature is of that sort. Not all literature is in verses and not all sentences within a literary work can be described as pretended illocutionary act. That’s the main reason for accepting some kind of institutional definition of literature, according to which literature should be observed and analyzed from a wider perspective: we have to look at the existing social practices which underlie the phenomena of literature and enable it. Two ideas emerge in this chapter that Lamarque believes are important in explaining reasons for engaging in reading literature. As he sees, “literary act can be characterized across two dimensions, an imaginative/creative dimension and a content dimension”.⁴ This chapter ends with ontological questions regarding the origin, identity and existence of literary works, the result of which is very important distinction between text, understood in terms of sentences (with all of their linguistic, semantic, syntactical features) and work. Work is not to be identified with its physical realization and although a text can have many valuable elements, such as the sentence structure, rhythm etc.; work is something more and aesthetic appreciation should be focused on trying to grasp the work as a whole.

Chapter number three, “Authors”, opens up different questions regarding the ‘author’. Some of the most famous problems concerning that role of the author are examined here, like the intentionalist vs. anti-intentionalist debate, the problem of interpretation and the meaning of a literary work. This chapter also offers a gallery of different “persona” of the author, from “the poet as sage” conception, which is characteristic of romanticism, to the death of the author proclaimed by authors like Barthes and Foucault.

Fourth chapter, “Practice”, is concerned with the other side of the literary interaction, namely the audience, or more concretely, literary critics. Raising again the question of what it is to read a literary work as a work of art,

Lamarque tries to unravel different processes that together constitute the practice of being engaged in literature. In that sense, this chapter is mostly concerned with literary criticism and different tasks that lie ahead in the process of dealing with literature, like exploring formal structure, explication, exploring work's subject and interpretation. Lamarque is very eager to reject the idea of autonomy in the practice of reading, claiming that reading is purposive activity that involves a reader who is aware of the fact what he is reading is a literary work, an art work, and is ready to respond to it in such a way. Reader expects a literary work to be imaginative and creative and to have a special content and to approach to a literary work as a work of art means, among other things, to try to find these values in the text. In that sense, Lamarque claims, the practice of reading shouldn't be primarily concerned with finding the meaning, but with the proper response that work is to elicit in the reader.⁵ So what is relevant to attending to literature as art is the following:

- a heightened awareness of form and structure and the “design” of the whole;
- an expectation of coherence and inner connectedness;
- an expectation that the works presents a subject of some interest, either through narrative content, imagined emotion, or metaphorical illustration;
- an expectation that the work exhibits and develops organizing principles or themes that provide unity and value in the work beyond the immediacy of the subject, inviting reflection on matters of more universal human concern.⁶

So, that is what Lamarque has in mind when he claims that artistic appreciation is a learned response, acquired through experience and training.

In chapter five, “Fiction”, Lamarque sets himself the goal of explaining fiction, as a special and distinct kind of literary works. Many authors have so far tried to do that, but most of them have usually been determined to find solution to only one of the problems of fiction; what is so special about Lamarque is that he tackles down all the questions that are problematic in this area. These include above all the very nature of fiction. Many philosophers, dealing with the semantics and philosophy of language have tried to solve the puzzle of the fictional language. Lamarque examines some of the theories that were put forward in order to explain fiction and fictional utterances, theories which are built upon the idea of pretending (to state something) or pretending (to make an assertion), and he rejects them claiming that what is important for the fiction

is its origin and its content, not the sentences. Moving next to the question of fictional characters, Lamarque contrasts different theories which tried to explain the character and status of fictional characters. The most pressing issue in this area has been to explain the ontology of fictional character: what does it mean to say that Emma Bovary is a fictional character and what are the consequences of that assertion for the story being told by the author? And finally, Lamarque turns his attention to what has become to be known as the paradox of fiction. The problem, in a nutshell, is to explain why we react emotionally to fictional characters, given that they are made up and therefore non-existent. Lamarque concludes: “What the discussion of fiction and emotion serves to emphasize is the importance that human beings attach to engaging imaginatively with fictional characters and situations.”⁷

Chapter six opens up, in my opinion, the most provocative issues concerning literature and fiction. Entitled “Truth”, it tries to explore some epistemological trends that are entwined in the literary and fictional works. Hoping to show that literature can have some epistemological values that make it even more worthy of appreciation, Lamarque adds to the centuries long debate about the cognitive value of fiction, which dates back to at least Plato's idea of the deceptive poetry and oblivious poets and Aristotle's claim that poet knows not just how things are but also how they should be. If, as he has shown in the previous chapter, fiction actually is “similar” enough to the real life, than it certainly makes sense to claim that we can learn from fiction. In fact, Lamarque takes it as obvious that:

“... no one could dispute that readers can learn about the real world from fiction: they pick up facts about history, geography, points of etiquette, clothing and fashion, idiomatic usage, as well as how to perform practical tasks, how people behave in certain situations, what is it like to be in an earthquake, a storm at the sea, or a blazing house. (...) the question is not whether we can learn truths from fiction – that is an inescapable fact – but what value to attach to this learning”.⁸

So, the real task of a philosopher of literature is to see whether truth is a criterion for literary value, whether literature is to be seen as great due to its truth. As before, Lamarque shows us different conceptions regarding this connection, like the idea of a special kind of literary truth, *sui generis conception*, advocated for by I. A. Richards, J. Hospers and I. Murdoch. Lamarque also tries to solve some of the objections that were put forward to the idea that the truth adds up some special value to the fiction, usually called “the triviality problem”,⁹ claiming that “The novel's value resides in the working of the theme, not in the

theme's bare propositional content".¹⁰ That however does not complete his thought on the issue. In fact, Lamarque goes on to claim: "No one who gives primary focus to the discovery of propositional truths in literature, or who mines famous works for stirring quotations, would qualify as a subtle reader"¹¹ and goes on to see what other epistemological values there are in the fiction, apart from the conveyance of true descriptions of things found in the real world. What fiction can do for us is to make us see things from some different angle, to make us come to a moral understanding of complex real life situations, to come to see what is like to be such-and-such. Different philosophers use different labels to explain this idea that fiction can teach us something, Gordon Graham describes it as "enriching human understanding", John Gibson calls it "acknowledgement", Lamarque mentions "eye opening effect".¹² However, in the end, Lamarque claims that none of these values is what makes literature intrinsically valuable, these are but by-product. He concludes this debate claiming:

"The mistake is to suppose that to be serious or reflective a work must in effect teach something. Yet there is no such implication. A work is serious if it treats a serious subject matter. But it can do that without being true and without presenting a view that ought to be endorsed."¹³

Finally, in the last chapter, "Value", Lamarque tries to see what is the real, or as he calls it, core value that is to be found in the literary work.¹⁴ Firstly, he explores theories that are based on the distinction between intrinsic literary value, which are connected to the formal features, and externalist (more commonly used expression is instrumental value) which have to do with the effects of literature. However, Lamarque claims, it is hard to drive the line between the two and the best we can do is to try to determine the intrinsic values in the context of the relevant conception of literature and the practices governing the interaction. This is going back to the social conception of literature, according to which every literary work is not just a text, but "an institutional object, a text located in a network of conventions and actions".¹⁵

This chapter raises another important and highly debated question in the philosophy of literature, and that is the question of the relation between ethics, or ethical value and literary value. This question is often based on the claim that literature is and should be a source of moral edification. Lamarque however doesn't want to accept the claim that this is what makes literature especially valuable. Similarly as with the issue of epistemological values, he claims that we should not be primarily concerned with ethical elucidation within the work, because it would make the process

of engaging in literature too instrumental and would take away of the value of reading and appreciating a literary work.

This is in short what Lamarque's book is all about. It is fascinating for the topics it opens up, as well as for the meticulousness and thoroughness of Lamarque's writing. One can definitely learn so many things about literature, literary criticism, different literary theories and different theories about art and aesthetics. It is hard to do justice to the author and to present all of his arguments, but it is worth noting their brilliance. Always trying to show the importance and value of literature, Lamarque manages to stay always, in all the contexts of inquiry, faithful to the six initial points which, according to him should be the framework of a philosophy of literature. One can of course question them, or maybe their consequences.

For example, by claiming that response to fiction should be trained and experienced, Lamarque sets the slippery slope in motion: how much training and how much experience? If not all answers should matter, it seems that the road to relativism is opened (although Lamarque resolutely rejects relativism) and it remains hard for Lamarque to explain whose responses should be acceptable and on what grounds. The issue of trained and experienced "judges" opens up one more epistemological problem, namely the question of experts. Experts can disagree among themselves, can reach different judgments and can respond differently to the same work. In that sense, the notion of institution becomes rather ill formed and unfounded; and this jeopardizes the practices that are to guide our appreciation of literary works. And of course, it remains unanswered what status should be given to the "untrained" readers, that is, what happens with the everyday reader? On the completely different side, it is plausible to claim that the search for that core literary value is also left murky. But, I believe these worries cannot really reduce the brilliance and importance of this book. In that sense, Lamarque is a fascinating author with clear and coherent vision of what literature is, and his style of writing is above all worth of praise. One other thing, so far left unmentioned, is the abundance of examples taken from the literature. Lamarque shows enviable familiarity with the literary works, as well as with works falling in domain of literary criticism. In that sense, this book is extremely valuable source of knowledge for all those who are in any way concerned with literature.

1
Lamarque, 2009, "Preface".

2
Ibid., p. 16.

3

I present these ideas here in a rather bare form. For more details, see *ibid.*, p. 26.

4

Ibid., p. 62. This idea is also taken over from Lamarque & Olsen, 1994, chapter 10.

5

“If literary works are merely undifferentiated texts, or strings of sentences, meaning all that words in them could mean, it is impossible to see why they should have any special value. Only by locating works in a wider ‘institutional’ framework, can we see why literary works should engage readers and be sought after. So rather than stressing autonomy of the individual work, it seems more fruitful to emphasize the autonomy of the practice within which the works are read. What makes literary work distinctive is closely connected to what makes reading practice distinctive when the works are read as literature. Exploring such practice is the key to understanding what gives literary works the value and interest they have” (Lamarque, 2009, p. 132). Later on, he writes: “... those who stress the pursuit of meaning, give the impression that literary works are puzzles to be solved, more than experiences to be undergone. The focus is changed if we think of such work as works of art to be appreciated. Part of what is involved in appreciating a work of art as a work of art is to appreciate it as an artifact designed for a purpose.” (*Ibid.*, p. 136.)

6

Ibid., p. 137.

7

Ibid., p. 218.

8

Ibid., pp. 221–222.

9

See for example Jerome Stolnitz who has claimed that truths implied in the literature are often trivial (“On the Cognitive Triviality of Art”).

10

Lamarque, 2009, p. 239.

11

Ibid.

12

For a more detailed analysis of these, see *ibid.*, chapter 5.

13

Ibid., p. 253.

14

“... *sui generis* literary values associated with constitutive aims of literature shared by all works” (*ibid.*, p. 255).

15

Ibid., p. 267.

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Lars Svendsen

Fashion: A Philosophy

Reaktion Books, London 2006

Dealing with the topic of fashion by using a discourse of philosophy is an adventure worth noticing. What are the questions which can be posed by a philosopher on such a trivial and superficial phenomenon as fashion is? An insight into motivation for philosophizing on fashion is partly given by the author of *Fashion: A Philosophy* Lars Svendsen himself – writing a book on fashion was an idea raised after writing another book *A Philosophy of Boredom*. Not that fashion and boredom are in any direct relation necessarily, but certainly represent non-fashionable topics for a philosopher.

Lars Svendsen, a philosopher from Norway, with a light touch and a playful attitude writes a study on fashion. Critical examination is done in a light-philosophical style with most materials drawn from sociologists. Classics of fashion theory are compiled with thoughts on fashion by some of the most prominent philosophers from Enlightenment to modern times. Product is an articulate study on fashion which will appeal to anyone curious to know what lies beneath what seems to be a global fascination with fashion. *Fashion: A Philosophy* was first published in Norwegian 2004, followed by English translation by John Irons, and published in 2006 by Reaktion Books, London.

Svendsen states one well-known fact: fashion affects attitude of most people towards both themselves and others, though many would deny it. At the same time, fashion seems to be one of the least important things one could imagine (p. 10). In this relatively small book Lars Svendsen is offering a panoramic overview of fashion theories and provides an analysis of fashion as a historical phenomenon. In a critical manner, Svendsen dives into a fashion and considers it as a “mechanism or an ideology that applies to almost every conceivable area of the modern world” (p. 11), which also has an important relevance for the formation of identity. Svendsen points out that identity is no longer provided by a tradition, but it is just as much something we have to choose by virtue of the fact that we are consumers (p. 19). Drawing from numerous authors he discusses fashion as central to an idea of modernity, as a vivid product of a modern age and therefore an important magnifier for analysis of modernity.

The ‘new’ as a principle of fashion, origins and spread of fashion, interrelations between fashion and language, body, art, and consumption are topics discussed in this book. Author also deals with the ongoing dispute on fashion as an art-form using some of the well-known examples from the fashion-art collision. In an interesting twist of usual arguments, it is concluded that, ironically, artists have become increasingly preoccupied with fashion (p. 110). Final parts of the book analyze fashion and consumption, and fashion as an ideal of life. Consumerism is approached through symbol consumption – every product is saturated with meaning, sign value has become central and has gradually come to overshadow all other value. Therefore, author points to a fact that is difficult *not* to be brand-conscious in today’s society (p. 125). The consumer society presupposes irrational individuals, and that is a perfect place for irrationality of fashion consumption to do its best. Searching for the ideal item can be seen as a driving force in the modern fashion cycle – a neverending quest destined to fail.

Challenging the “mantra of the new” both in modernity and fashion as one of its manifestations, Svendsen notices a change in a temporality of fashion – creation of new forms has been replaced with recycling the old ones, e.g. fashion acquired a cyclic temporality. Fashion used to follow a modernist norm by new fashion replacing all previous ones and subsequently making them superfluous. But, as Svendsen claims, logic of fashion has changed – logic of *supplementation* has replaced traditional logic of *replacement*. Recycled change is also a change, and change is an essential characteristic of every fashion. Change for the sake of change, in order not to “improve” the object, or to make it more functional, is pointing to the fashion as highly irrational.

Maybe that is the reason for the lack of interest among philosophers to deal with fashion. In general, philosophers have not been highly fashion-conscious anyway. With an exception of Kant, “the elegant Master of Art” (p. 17/18), philosophers did not bother themselves with practical aspects of fashion. On the other hand, theories on and about fashion have been subjects of interest in a quite a lot of distinguish thinkers. Svendsen is drawing back from a wide range of thinkers as far as Plato, or Thomas Morus and Adam Smith, to the more recent ones like Barthes, Bourdieu, or Baudrillard, and using them for analysis of well-known fashion theories. Most popular one, “trickle-down” theory, provides us with argumentation that fashion is highly interconnected with a society, and that it represents

a way social classes are dealing with their social status. Svendsen tracks origins of that theory in a work of Adam Smith, followed by Kant, Herbert Spencer, Thorstein Veblen, Georg Simmel, and even Bourdieu, with finally accepting some argumentation, but also finding its shortcomings.

Fashion has become more democratic, due to the development of the industry, but it certainly has not become egalitarian. As having money to buy an exclusive piece of clothing, or having privileged access to a certain fashion object are losing importance in creating a style because of a great amount of designers, styles offered, and more accessible copies, some other illusion must have been found. ‘Youth’ is ceasing to be a term for particular age group and tending to be a term for an “attitude” towards life (p. 61). Consumers are fronting the challenge of deciding not about “fashionable” clothes, but rather about style they wish to follow. Underlining characteristic today seems to be a pursuit for youth. That context of everyday experience is pointing to the question of human body and its relations to fashion in forming of self-identity. Quoting work of Anne Hollander, Svendsen argues that our perception of human body is always dependent on the prevailing fashion of the time (p. 77/78) and continues with a question: are there “natural” reasons for men and women dressing differently? Is there a “true nature” which is disguised or promoted by clothes we wear? Do clothes we choose to wear have some characteristic of a language, or does it have a function of a “message” to the outside world? Svendsen answers no, thus opening questions of a different kind.

Narrowly linked with social currents, inseparable from social context, in close relation with the technologic and industrial changes, fashion represents more than an intellectual hobby for individual estheticians and art historians. Svendsen’s book provides a good starting point for further and possibly more philosophically oriented examination of a slippery meaning of fashion.

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