

THE GAZE AND THE BLOOD
THE NON-REPRESENTATIONAL
CONCENTRATIONS OF THE TRAGIC
IN EURIPIDES
THE PARADIGM OF *MEDEA*

SUMMARY

In relation to *Medea*, Euripides' tragedy, the Nurse is quick to inform us, just at the beginning of the development of the textual reality, that she looks at her children with a gaze of a bull, that she looks at her children with the thirsty for blood, eye of the bull.

How has this reference-quote of the Nurse, been hitherto dealt with? And how should it be addressed? These are the two questions – of critical, as will be seen below, importance.

An attempt to answer the first question, could be summarized as follows: This reference-quote of the Nurse, was being viewed as a small, simple aspect-instant of the *Medea* tragedy, from the philological, aesthetic, psychoanalytic, anthropological and theatrical approach, which addresses both the “tragic” in general and the “*Medea* tragedy” in particular, which examines both the

“meaning” of the “tragic” in general as well as the “meaning” of the “*Medea* tragedy” in particular. Indeed, the mechanisms of these emblematic categories of interpretative approach of the “meaning” of the “tragedy” in general and the “meaning” of the “*Medea* tragedy” in particular, have crushed this reference-quote of the Nurse into rationalistic (even when they speak about the irrational) and representational (even when they speak about non-representational) shapes. (And the philosophical hermeneutic mechanism of the “tragic” in its prominent three versions? The platonic mechanism exiles, from the outset, tragedy in general in the name of reason, morality and representation and declares itself as tragedy and even so as the best kind [καλλίστη]. Aristotle’s mechanism masterfully interprets it as a representation in a proto-philological way. The early Nietzschean mechanism reduces it to the universal-representational form of Dionysian – Apollonian, and the mature Nietzschean is self-identified as tragedy – but, partly, also as a parody of this tragedy).

And, after this parenthesis, we repeat: the mechanisms of these emblematic categories of interpretative approach of the “meaning” of the “tragic” in general and the “meaning” of the “*Medea* tragedy” in particular, have crushed this reference-quote of the Nurse into rationalistic (even when speaking of the irrational) and representational (even when speaking of the non-representational) shapes, thus degrading, almost negating its importance on the level of one line worthy of –at the most– a comment that has the scope and value of a note.

And yet: In this line we read that the gaze of Medea: (a) expresses, according to the Nurse, Medea herself and her intention to commit infanticide· therefore, (b) it expresses Medea on the level of her intention to actually commit the ultimate tragic act of this tragedy: infanticide· (c) the same line also reads that

the gaze of Medea, which expresses Medea herself ([a]) and the ultimate tragic act of this tragedy ([b]), has the *uniqueness of power* to lead the hand of Medea to committing this particular act, and this is the reason why –repeatedly, intensely and within the maximum density of time– the Nurse attends to withdraw the children from the field of the gaze of their mother Medea – and not merely, from that moment on, to withdraw her children, to withdraw the lives of her children, but still more accurately (in the aforementioned universe of discourse that deals with her gaze as a thirsty for blood bull): to withdraw their life qua their blood, qua blood that the gaze - bull of their mother is thirsty to pour.

If that is so, then the attempt to answer the second question could have as a starting point, our decision to reserve from the aforementioned emblematic categories of interpretative approach of the “meaning” of the “tragic” in general and the “meaning” of “*Medea* tragedy” in particular, that is, to reserve from the rationalistic and representational forms of interpretation, which never cease to remain continuously and unwaveringly faithful to their foundation-center: reason and representation, even when –we will repeat it one more time– they speak of the irrational and the non-representational.

And after our reserve, what could be the next step of our response-position always in relation to the second question? The answer, in this case, coincides with our whole effort to advance our text: it is about the, after the above mentioned reserve, step, the step of trying to detect an another interpretative perspective for that other gaze and for that other blood: (i) for that gaze - blood that reflects the desire for blood, for that gaze that on the one hand expresses the subject in its whole and on the other has the total uniqueness of the power to lead this subject to com-

mitting the ultimate tragic act; (ii) for that blood which –for that gaze that reflects both the desire for murder as well as the murder qua blood– is the life of the other subject itself, but also its extinction / its death.

II₁

Our effort to detect that other interpretative perspective for that other gaze and for that other blood, and –it is already clear– for their relationship, but also for their relationship with the commitment of the ultimate tragic act, has as its starting point, in the First Part of our text, the discourse for the gaze and for the blood, the discourse for the gaze and the blood as non-representational ontological concentrations of becoming of the life of the subject. Consequently, this effort ascertains that the gaze and the blood, these non-representational, ontological concentrations of becoming of the life of the subject, constitute the becoming of the non-representational tragic. After this ascertainment, this effort refers to the modes and the quality of becoming of the non-representational tragic that are included in ‘the human’; that is, it refers –among other issues– to the meeting of the gaze and the blood with death, within the frame of the openness of time to death. Subsequently, the same always effort, follows the presence of the gaze and of the blood, of these two non-representational concentrational manifestations of becoming of the non-representational tragic, from the perspective of the transition of the tragic from ‘human’ to ‘non-human’. What follows, on behalf of this effort, is an attempt of outlining the modes of the becoming of the non-representational concentrations of the life of the subject - of the modes of becoming of the non-representational tragic: of the blood of the gaze,

of the gaze of the blood, but moreover, of the logos of the gaze and of the logos of the blood, in relation to the gaze of logos and the blood of logos (: representational reason and discourse of polis and morality). In the same universe of discourse of the modes of the non-representational becoming that involve the gaze, the blood and the logos, this same effort attempts a treatise on the tragic logismos qua anti-logismos and on the tragic as an agon of death between the logos of gaze / the logos of blood and the gaze of logos / the blood of logos. Then, the same effort attempts to capture the phenomenology of the modes of becoming of the non-representational concentrations of life of the subject - the phenomenology of the modes of becoming of the non-representational tragic.

Finally, the closing discourse of this effort, in the First Part of our text, focuses on figuring the range of the representational forms of loss of the becoming of the non-representational tragic. Within this frame, this effort firstly researches, in an exemplary way, the twofold intra-textual reality of Euripides' tragedies: their textual 'continuity' as the representational deprivation of the continuous character of the becoming of the non-representational tragic and their textual 'rupture' as a non-deprivation – revealment of it, through the poetic phenomenology of the modes of the becoming of its concentrations that emerges through his tragedies. What follows, on behalf of the same effort, is an examination of the reading - interpretative forms of representational loss of becoming of the non-representational tragic: of the philosophical (Plato, Aristotle, Nietzsche), the philologic, the aesthetic, the psychoanalytic, the anthropological, the theatrolgical. In conclusion, the discourse of this effort, discusses the openness of the risking between the loss and the non-loss of becoming of the non-representational tragic, meant

as to live it (: the text) as an actor – to present it (: the text) as a spectacle and as reading and/or viewing it; that is, this discourse, in conclusion, discusses the fatal synergy of the representational character of everyday life and of the reading - interpretative forms of representational loss of becoming of the non-representational tragic, and the effective antidotes of the Thucydidean phenomenology of non-representational becoming of the subject's life.

II₂

In the Second Part of our text, the same as always effort of detecting another interpretation - perspective for that other gaze and for that other blood that have the uniqueness of power to lead the subject to achieving the ultimate tragic act, focuses on the attempt of an exemplary revealment of becoming of the non-representational tragic, through the discussion of the poetic phenomenology of the modes of becoming of the non-representational concentrations of this tragic in *Medea*.

Subsequently, this effort addresses, exemplary, the twofold intra-textual reality of the *Medea* tragedy. (1) First, it discusses its textual 'continuity' as representational loss of the continuum of becoming of the non-representational tragic, through the alternation of the modes of expression of the relationship of the non-representational logos and of the modes of expression of the relationship of the representational logos with the gaze and the blood: It is about a death agon, in which the logos of the gaze and the logos of the blood partake, against the gaze of logos and the blood of logos; and still to verify the above, it is about a death agon of the logos of the gaze and the logos of the blood of Medea, against the gaze of the logos and the blood

of the logos of Creon, and of two death agons: of the logos of the gaze and the logos of the blood of Medea against the logos of the gaze and the logos of the blood of Jason. (2) What follows, in the context of the same always effort, is the formulation of the exemplary self-reference of the *Medea* tragedy in its twofold intra-textual reality; in such a way then, the whole logos of the Chorus is stressed out as a double-faced reasoning, that is, as a textual, multi-faceted, acceptance of the atopos (ἄτοπος) co-presence on the one hand of the twofold reasoning and of the twofold discourse of the logos of blood of Medea, and on the other, of the gaze of the logos and of the blood of the logos (representational reason and discourse of the polis and morality). Subsequently, this same effort, exemplary detects and formulates, through the textual 'dis-continuity' of the *Medea* tragedy, the revealment of the poetic phenomenology of the continuum of becoming of the modes of concentrations of non-representational tragic - of the ways of the continuum of becoming of the non-representational ontological concentrations of the subject: It is, in particular, about a twofold attempt, about the undertaking of a twofold attempt on behalf of this effort: (3a) for the revealment of the continuum of becoming of the non-representational tragic / for the revealment of the continuity of the non-representational ontological concentration of becoming of the subject - gaze, (i.e. of the subject-qua gaze), that is open to the continuity of the non-representational ontological concentrating of becoming of the subject - blood, i.e. of the subject qua blood; (3b) for the revealment of the continuum of becoming of the non-representational tragic / for the revealment of the continuity of the non-representational ontological concentrating of becoming of the subject - blood, i.e. of the subject qua blood, that is open to the continuity of the non-rep-

representational ontological concentrating of becoming of the subject - gaze, of the subject qua gaze.

Finally, (4) at the end of the final part of this Second Part of our text, the same always effort of formulating another interpretational perspective for that other gaze and for that other blood, discusses this same, this unique power of the need of the modes of non-representational ontological concentrations of becoming of the life of the subject - Medea itself, to advance and finally achieve the ultimate culmination and ultimate densification of becoming of the non-representational tragic - *Medea*: the blood-heaving infanticide, but also the unique power of the above mentioned need itself, potential and actual, to negate this progression and this attainment.

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