

EMPEDOCLES AND THE LIMITS / ENDS OF DISCOURSE

Summary

When does a philosophical discourse claim to reach its limits? Or – otherwise: what does it mean when a philosophical reflection is reaching the limits of discourse?

The attempt of an answer to this question, could emerge through the endeavour to study a case, that of Empedocles' thought, which confesses that it has reached the limits of its discourse when, this discourse itself, comes to its limits.

This is precisely the objective of our work: *Empedocles and the limits / ends of his discourse*; that is, the thought of Empedocles, revealing his discourse until its absolute limits; therefore, and at the same time, the thought of the Agrigentian thinker, in discovering the limits of his discourse; so, in addition, and ultimately: the thought of Empedocles reflecting (and) on the limits of his discourse, that is: the reflection of the Agrigentian thinker, reflecting, self-referencing, with the modifier of the limits of his discourse.

If this is the subject of our work, the effort to bring it to an end is divided into two Parts.

I

The First Part of our work deals with the paths of the discourse of the Agrigentian thinker. In this context, the path of his discourse is examined, the path which refers to the gaze and its locus, to the locus of

the emergence of this function: the eye; this path, to which Empedocles attaches great importance, the same as the one he attaches to the one concerning the blood, is in itself the epitome of the world in which his reflection moves, a world beyond (: in present-day perspective) or before (: in historical perspective) the representational world: for Empedocles, therefore, the gaze is the familiar to all of us look, but at the same time, it is not (only) the familiar to all of us look: it is, at the same time, the look - that non-representational, ontic concentration of the becoming of the life of the subject, of the subject that is in a spectacular relation to the life of the Cosmos; and at the same time it is the gaze - that non-representational, ontic condensation - multiple intersection of the visible with the invisible, of the human with the natural, the natural with the holy, of the risking with necessity, of the openness / two-way character of the relation of the interior (: of the human world) to the outside (: the Cosmos) and of the exterior to the inner-gaze; and even, it is the emergence of the desire and the dual pleasure of totality-gaze, the dual pleasure of the totality-gaze qua the pleasure of the androgynous micro-wholeness and at the same time qua the pleasure of the participation of the androgynous micro-wholeness in the fertility of the macro-wholeness of Nature.

The second path of Empedocles' discourse that we are examining is the path that refers to the blood, a path in which –as we mentioned above– the Agrigentian thinker also attaches with great importance. Blood is also an emblematic path of the world in which his reflection moves, a world –we repeat– beyond or before the representational world: for Empedocles, therefore, blood is the familiar to all of us blood, but it is not (only) the familiar to all of us blood: it is, at the same time, the blood that non-representational, ontic concentration of the becoming of the life of the subject, which has as exemplary forms of its presence, the organic time and organic thought.

These two aforementioned paths of the Agrigentian thinker, the gaze and the blood, refer to the subject and constitute the new –non-representative– focus on the subject, which is now these two non-representational, ontic concentrations / condensations - multiple intersections of his life's becoming. There are identified however, and are subsequently discussed in our work, other paths of Empedocles' discourse too, paths which present his discourse in a non-representational frame of reference, when this discourse refers to the beings of the Cosmos. Such paths are the following paradigmatic ones: organic metaphor and its aspects (the gendered time, the gaze and the blood), the organic difference and the organic mythology. Through these paths of the Agrigentian thinker's discourse, we have a multiple emergence and a diverse indication of the organic, as a non-representational way of understanding the wholeness of the world of the subject and of the Cosmos-Nature, which ultimately forms a hyper-wholeness. Furthermore, in the context of this hyper-wholeness, the ontic transition from the Cosmos / Nature-organism to the mortal organism, brings –with an extreme consistency to the non-representational universe of discourse– the modifier «aipsa», that is, the modifier of atopia relating to the time and space of the presence of the Cosmos and the mortal world, or, albeit, the modifier of the «between» («metaxy») the space and time of the Cosmos and that of the living world. Finally, with regard to the ontic and semantic presence of the beings in Empedocles' discourse, we have the onto-clasmatic way, the morpho-clasmatic way, and the mega-onto-clasmatic way, as paths of non-representational, ontic presence and the path of semantic-clasmatic as a path of non-representational meaning.

II

The Second Part of our work focuses on the limits of the Agrigentian thinker's thought, limits meant as the discourse that refers to

the indivisible of part and the whole - Cosmos, and also as the discourse that refers to the transition from the part to the whole.

The discourse for the transition from the part to the whole is revealed as having the following two modifiers: The first concerns the recovery of the wholeness of discourse and its transition from the part to the whole, understood as a reconstruction of the body of the discourse after its shear / dismemberment into splanchnic parts - limbs and as an exercise of divination on its part. The second concerns the recovery of the wholeness of discourse and its transition from the part to the whole as the revealment of its versions, meant as «oaroi» discourses, that is to say, as discourses that carry one's sexual impetus so much so for its unification with the others (: copulation [«synousia»] in discourse [«en logos»]), as with the Cosmos; it is noted, however, that this impetus has its limits, which are set from the - not forever for wholeness - impetus of the Cosmos.

Consequently, in the context of the same Part of our work, we examine the achievement of the wholeness of Empedocles' discourse, understood as optical noesis / thought; furthermore, it is this optical noesis in itself which drives the discourse of the Agrigentian thinker to its limits, to its ends, as «revealing» (:«pifafskousa»): More specifically: optical noesis as the recovery of the primary signification of thinking qua «theorein», sees that which it sees and seeing as seeing, but is not dazzled / blinded by them – as is the case with seeing as seeing, which as blinded (:«tethipos») is grounded / fixated to the part; optical noesis therefore sees beyond the seeing and reveals (:«pifafskei»): This means, however, that it sees beyond the seeing as seeing the part: it sees, that is, the four rhizomes, their mixing and their deposition, that are due –respectively– to the dynamic presence of love and strife, both in the part and in the whole / Cosmos -that includes the part; and that which the optical noesis sees: the part, and the transition from the part to the whole - Cosmos, constitutes it «dilon», i.e. it is stated by optical noesis

qua «pifafskousa», so: it is stated in the light («phaos») of the presence of beings, within the context of the organic hyper-wholeness that constitutes the part and the whole.

As for the other side of the limits of Empedocles' discourse: the inseparable of the part and the whole - Cosmos: This indivisible character is achieved in two grades, within the universe of his discourse: as an emotional identification of the philosophizing subject with the whole - Cosmos and as an ontological approach and, ultimately, as an ontic identity of the philosophizing subject with the whole - Cosmos.

The first grade of achieving the indivisible of the part and the whole: the emotional identification of the philosophical subject with the whole - Cosmos is realized by the arousing of emotional vision, which is verified as having the following emblematic aspects: love and strife and the opposition between them.

Our work then attempts to thoroughly investigate the entire terrain of emotional topography, terrain that concerns the entire range of the aspects of love, and which derives through the intra-textual frame of discourse of the Agrigentian thinker, as well as the whole terrain of emotional topography, terrain that concerns the entire range of the aspects of strife, and which derive both through the intra-textual frame of his discourse and from the intertextual opening of this discourse about strife in the Homeric nekyia. With regards to the tension between love and strife, which is credited by us to the category of tragic, our work attempts to trace it in a three-fold way: with the comprehensive dealing of the intra-textual, empedoclean, narrative about the thorough suffering of the endless alternation between love and strife; with the brief presentation of two outer-textual narratives about the contrast between love and strife, which refer, respectively, to the alternation between love and strife in the relationship between Uranus and Gaia in Hesiod and Uranus and Tithis in Homer; and, finally, with the careful depiction of the intertextual opening of the discourse of the Agrigentian thinker from

the «venthos dinis» to the Homeric «vathidinis» Skamandros, which enables his theatrum philosophicum to present on stage the tragic phantasmagoria of the deadly spinning between love and strife.

Subsequently, our work examines the empedoclean, digressive, as far as the tragic contrast between love and strife is concerned, discourse, which is the discourse for the absence of this tragic contrast, and which is imprinted on his behalf as the discourse for the three gendered «Sphaeros» - Cosmos of the presence of love only and as the groundbreaking on his behalf discourse for the gendered, female, World of the presence of love only and the promotion of its status in the human world.

Following the above, our work deals with the next and last grade of achievement of the inseparable between the part and the whole - Cosmos, which concerns the ontic approach and –ultimately– the ontic identity of the philosophizing subject with the whole - Cosmos.

It is precisely in this context of exploring the ontic approach between the philosophising subject and the whole-Cosmos, that the purificative studies are demonstrated which, according to the Agrigentian thinker, are necessary to achieve this approach; these exemplary purificative studies, which are a very clear sample of the uninterrupted, endless care, of the painful –psychic, emotional, mental and physical– care of the philosophizing subject for the human world and the Cosmos-Nature, are –as it is illustrated by Empedocles’ discourse– the following: The purificative study of the experience of the thorough pain of the endless alternation of the view between the various aspects of the dark field of strife and the fissionable fields of Aphrodite. The purificative also study of the experience of the thorough pain of the inevitable, recurring, transition to the displeasing space of strife as nekylia, meant as: the emerging emotional memory of dead people, dead events and dead emotional events; it is also meant as: multi-faceted

bodily decay, irrational recurrence of the unfruitful, quasi-punitive, identical; meant, furthermore, as a life that ended in another nekyia. In addition: The purificative study of the experientially reflective, the reflectively experiential awareness of the dismemberment of the body of the discourse in splanchnic parts - limbs and the undertaking of the work of its recovery as a whole. The hierourgic care of the transition from the part to the whole-Cosmos and the purificative study of the achievement of this transition as reflective divination, which has as its point of reference to the whole, the splanchnic parts - limbs of the whole of the discourse and of the Cosmos. The purificative study of the reflective experience of the aphrodisiac pleasure as its diffusion to the blooming, in oestrus, Nature of «gethosyne», but also as its simultaneous diffusion to the discourse that becomes a discourse with an erotic impetus («oaros»). And furthermore: The purificative study of the experience of the thorough pain of the endless transition from the beauty to ugliness –the aesthetic and moral–, from the boldness of the truth to its silence-lie. The purificative study of the endless movement of the gaze from the blooming, in oestrus, Nature of «gethosyne», to the in sickness, in decay, in deterioration and disintegration Nature, which is now unpleasant. In addition, the following: The purificative study of the sudden, that is, of the temporarily and spatially a-topic transition from the fixation to the part to the oversight («epopteia») of the wholeness - Cosmos. The purificative study of the highlighting of the presence of beings as ontic over-fullness, with the modes of onto-clasmatic, morpho-clasmatic, mega-onto-clasmatic, and, in some cases, the ontic concentration or the ontic condensation / multiple intersection; and, at the same time, the purificative study of the emergence of their presence as signifying over-fullness, in the way of meaning-clasmatic way; and finally: The purificative study of the division of time in external and organic and of the division of the intellect in organic and supervisory («epoptic») – meant as optical noesis.

In conclusion, our work, focuses on the ontic identification of the philosophizing subject with the whole-Cosmos, through thorough consideration of Empedocles' self-reference in his transformations as «kouros», «kori», «shrub», «bird», and «fish».

That which emerges, at the end of the end, is the following: With the organic mythology being the semantic and ontic transmuter, the signs of self-reference of the Agrigentian thinker when he refers to: «kouros», «kori», «shrub», «bird», and «fish», these signs, familiar to us, enclosed, self-contained presences, ontic and semantic units for the sheared dismembered stochastic discourse, now function as part of the recapture of the body of Empedocles' discourse, firstly as morpho-clasmatic presences, almost at the same time as onto-clasmatic and of course as mega-onto-clasmatic presences, simultaneously as meaning-clasmatic presences and, finally, they function as signs of ontic and semantic over-fullness, that is as non-representational, ontic and semantic concentrations of the becoming of the Cosmos / non-representational, ontic and semantic condensations of the flow of the becoming of the Cosmos; of the evolution of the Cosmos, whose ontic and at the same time semantic presence, with its gravity, its range and –consequently– the power it possesses, erupts to us as a cluster or is diffused towards us as a density, through these very same signs –we repeat– the ontic and semantic over-fullness.