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## PARVA AESTHETICA ET CULTURALIA

### Alternative processes in artistic creation.

1. *Introduction.* In a long list of publications<sup>1</sup> spanning over more than twenty years I have repeatedly tried to grasp and expose the problematic of artistic creation as a whole and as a sequence of successive treatments which the work of art has to go through, on its way towards instauration and completion, i.e. towards existence. Each work of art undoubtedly reflects a particular and exceptional procedure of which it is the unique outcome. However, in each case, this procedure is far

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1. On this precise issue, cf. a series of specific considerations by E. Moutsopoulos, namely, *Vers une phénoménologie de la création*, *Revue Philosophique*, 150, 1961, pp. 261-291; *Formative Imagination*, *Annales d'Esthétique*, 2, 1963, pp. 64-71; *L'expérience esthétique: contemplation et expérimentation*, *Revue de Synthèse*, 1963, pp. 303-305; *Sur le caractère «kairique» de l'œuvre d'art*, *Actes du Ve Congrès International d'Esthétique*, Amsterdam, 1964, pp. 115-118; *Aesthetic Categories. An Introduction into the Axiology of the Aesthetic Object*, Athens, Hermes, 1970, pp. 67 sq. (Spanish ed., Monterrey, Centro Estud. Humanist., Univ. N. León, 1980, pp. 129 sq.; Romanian ed., Bucharest, Univers, 1976, pp. 88 sq.); *Structures: the Aesthetics of Contrasts and the Art of Syntheses*, *Diotima*, 3, 1975, pp. 164-165; *Expériences esthétiques convergentes ou: du style*, *Annales d'Esthétique*, 15-16, 1976-1977, pp. 164-168; *Art as an Expression of Creative Imagination*, *Philosophical Itineraries*, 2/4, 1978, pp. 3-6; *La finition de l'œuvre d'art: contraintes et licences*, *A filosofia e as ciências*, Rio de Janeiro, 1978, pp. 22-24; *Artistic Renewal as Disengagement and as Nostalgia*, *Nea Hestia*, 107/fasc. 1264, 1980, pp. 384-386; *La raison esthétique*, *XVIe Congrès Mondial de Philosophie*, Düsseldorf, 1978, pp. 451-453; *Contemplation et création dans l'art religieux*, *Diotima*, 8, 1980, pp. 187-195; *Le modèle de l'œuvre d'art: idéalisme ou pragmatisme? La représentation*, *Actes du XVIIe Congrès des Sociétés de Philosophie de Langue Française*, Strasbourg, 1980, pp. 300-303; *La fonction révélatrice de l'imaginaire dans la conception esthétique de la transcendance*, *Metafisica e Scienza dell'Uomo*, *Atti del VII Congresso Internazionale* (Bergamo, 1980), t. 1, Roma, Borla, pp. 703-706; *La laideur et ses droits dans le domaine des arts*, *Actes du XVIIe Congrès Mondial de Philosophie*, Montréal, 1983.

from being simple, since on one hand it comprizes several successive stages, and on the other hand it results from several concomittent (indifferently whether converging or diverging) main tendencies that determine its trajectory from potential being towards actual being, and even further, towards *more-being*. Artistic creation, then, seems to be a complex though analysable, means of access to aesthetic existence, the main trends of which are an idealistic conception of the structural foundation of the generic appearance proper to the concrete form of the work and a pragmatistic *reshaping* and *remodelling* of the successive aspects which correspond to each one of the stages of elaboration of the form in question. In other words, artistic creation may be considered as a series of efforts of the creative consciousness whose *intentionality* consists in defining beforehand its particular scope, and then trying to match its own realizations to it. These two attitudes which are opposed, though not antinomical, creative processes, intervene alternatively throughout the whole progression of the artistic creation which they render both dynamic and practically efficient.

2. *Definitions*. Some terms already mentioned in the preceding paragraph have to be explicated, for they will be largely used in what follows, since they represent some fundamental concepts proper to my personal views on the problem. Intentionality of consciousness may not only be taken in a more or less strict conformity with its meaning within the range of Husserlian phenomenological thought, i.e. as an expectative opening and as a reference of consciousness towards its contents, but rather, in a Bergsonian viewpoint, i.e. as a vigorous impetus projecting the inner energy of existence whose consciousness is *the* consciousness, towards the world, with the precise purpose of imposing its own structures on it, by restructuring it in a creative manner, and by actualizing portions of time and space; in other words, by rendering past or future moments, or places to reach, parts of a present or of a presence which is directly experienced by the consciousness. I call such attractions («*kairic*» data (from the Greek notion of *kairos*, meaning «seasonableness»).

*Reshaping* may be understood as the result of the intentional activity of consciousness applied to forms, either conceived or realized: in the first case one has to do with forms which emerge directly from the unconscious or even from the visceral layer of the existence. Under such conditions, reshaping becomes equivalent to restructuring, the structure itself being the concrete link between matter and form taken as essential elements of an entity. If the structure is the inner texture of an entity, it is possible to consider it as a unit, as well as a unity, which has its own

immanent law of activity and development, its own causality and its own finality which consists in the realization of a functional individuality<sup>2</sup>. The eventuality of restructuration is thus inherent to the nature of the structure and, hence to the nature of the entity the latter characterizes. The intentionality of consciousness renders such an eventuality, a conscious reality. Under such conditions, the reshaping of the artistic form results from the action of consciousness upon the structure, which allows it to develop the whole range of its possibilities in order to attain the maximum of its chances for existence.

*More-being* would then be the ultimate scope of the passage from potential being to actual being. As such, it is included in the project of being, but becomes an obvious demand as soon as the being reaches its actual status. It consists, for the being, in the progressive exclusion from it of most of the eventualities that form the initial unlimited number of its possibilities and in the compensative progressive integration into it of the final limited or unlimited number of its actual characters. Thus, becoming acquires the meaning not of a transition from one kind of entity to another, by means of alteration, as e.g. Hegel puts it, but rather of a persistence of the being in itself by an increasing, in depth, of its own nature. In terms of traditional Logic, this means a narrowing of its extension and an intensification of its comprehension. In this context, morebeing is a further increase in depth of the being's nature after it has reached a status of actuality<sup>3</sup>.

Dynamic ontology is based upon such a conception of the being, and the ontology of the work of art thus acquires the meaning of an extension of ontology («tout court»): it deals with the work of art considered not only as an accomplished entity, but also as an entity in a continuous structuring, i.e. as a presence which is more and more organized by its creator, by means of the model of behavior its own structure suggests to him. Structuring and restructuring of the work of art are phases through which it is successively led to, and even beyond completion. By doing so, the artist proceeds to a free selection of means suggested to him either by his imagination or by a precise phase of the work which is already totally or partially achieved.

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2. Cf. R. Muccielli, Stabilité et labilité des structures de la personnalité, *Notion de structure et structure de la connaissance*, XX<sup>e</sup> Semaine de Synthèse, Paris, A. Michel, 1957, pp. 344-358, namely p. 344.

3. Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, L'être accompli, *Les Études Philosophiques*, 20, 1965, pp. 3-13.

3. *Creation in process.* It is perhaps possible to speak of some kind of «archaeology» of the work of art, as it is possible to mention an «archaeology» of the creation of the being within the limits of Christian thought<sup>4</sup> and, *mutandis mutatis*, of its philosophical antecedent, the creation of the world in Plato's *Timaeus*<sup>5</sup>. In the first case, one has to do with a creation which is *ex nihilo* only by virtue of the will of the divinity; in fact, one is led back to the level of non being which the being is extracted from. However, the Platonic demiurge proceeds in a more complicated manner, i.e. through the double mixture of a part of the being with a part of the non being, and then through the mixture of either of the remnant part with the product of the initial mixture. Thus the final mixture obtained is more perfect. The demiurge then proceeds to organize the structure of the soul of the world. But in doing so he fixes the boundaries of two separate moments of his activity: that of conception and that of execution according to the model conceived. It is understandable that in the case of a creator who remains transcendent to the world such boundaries may or may not exist: they may exist since the creator conceives of the most perfect model and is able to apply it with the same perfection; they may not exist as far as the divine thought is identical and simultaneous to the divine will.

However, at the level of human creation things happen in a different way: neither conception and creation are identical and simultaneous nor do they define separate areas of creative activity. The «economical» formula (in the theological sense of the term) is the result of a negative appreciation of an ideal creation which, in fact, is impossible with respect to human data. At the human level, creation is a continuous struggle within which conception and execution are neither identical nor separate, but essentially complicated as far as their interference is taken into consideration. It mainly consists of permanent or repeated actions of prevision (or even provision) of future achievements to be inserted into performances already produced, which, in turn, intervene, through reminiscence, into subsequent constructions: reminiscence and prevision thus seem to alternate during the birth of the work of art. Elements deriving from or referring to preceding or to following developments are submit-

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4. Cf. Idem, Une archéologique chrétienne de l'être est-elle possible?, *Diotima*, 8, 1980, pp. 184-186.

5. Cf. Idem, *La musique dans l'oeuvre de Platon*, Paris, P.U.F., 1959, pp. 352-375, namely pp. 358-365; cf. J. Moreau, *L'âme du monde, de Platon aux Stoïciens*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1939, pp. 39-42.



ted to a continuous interchange of inventions imposed or to be imposed to the work whose creative construction thus becomes the framework of an endless struggle between concurrent, yet not incompatible, data, conveyed through adequate tendencies which contribute to instauring the final artistic form.

One has mainly to do with a kind of dialectical interweaving of two distinct series of dialectical processes (an interweaving which is dialectical itself) in the mingling of various elements belonging to structures already achieved or on their way towards achievement. It is clear that artistic operations obey two principles the first of which may be called *constructive*, and the second, *finitive*. I intend to analyze separately each one of these principles and of the creative conducts they imply.

4. *Constructive conducts*. By qualifying the first principle and its derivate operations as *constructive*, I mean that they relate to the impulse, felt by the artist, to proceed to the production of a basic structure which admits, of course, of further developments and improvements, but which is to remain fundamentally unchanged and unaltered during the subsequent phases of its evolutive way.

It is practically impossible to assert that such a structure is suggested uniquely by unconscious general schemes, since it also may occur to the artist through a mere allusion which is subsequently organized into a precise structure. Paul Valéry explains that his poem *Le cimetière marin* was first suggested to him under the abstract form of a single verse empty of any content, which needed to be filled up through sounds and words-destinated to give it its definite flavor and shape, while, on the contrary, his poem *La Pythie* was first suggested to him under the concrete form of an accomplished verse which, in its turn, suggested some other verses to precede and several other verses to follow it<sup>6</sup>. A similar aspect of the two conceptions of poetry is again given by Valéry when he proceeds to his famous distinction between *given* and *calculated* verses<sup>7</sup>.

The contemporary Greek poet Costes Palamas confesses that the poet does not even seem to have ideas, since he fundamentally thinks through language and sound, through verse and rime, through rythm and measure<sup>8</sup>. This instinctive instaurative process contrasts with the logical one Baudelaire describes, and according to which the good writer

6. Cf. Paul Valéry, *Poésie et pensée abstraite, Variété V*, Paris, Gallimard, 1944, p.161.

7. Idem, *Tel quel*, I, pp. 150-251.

8. Cf. C. Palamas, *Hapanta*, vol. 1, Athens, Biris, 1954, pp. 326-327.



envisages his last line at the very moment he is writing his first one. Every project which is pretended to be such has to be carefully prepared before its creator begins to operate its execution. Apparently, such an idealistic approach to the problem has been already made by Buffon who asserts that the poets undoubtedly prefer to let their admirers think that they compose easily, in a condition of ecstatic intuition, and that they would be horrified had they to allow them to penetrate into their poetic workshop and examine their sketches which only indicate their own hard efforts<sup>9</sup>. In fact, however, Buffon contradicts Baudelaire and is closer to Valéry's viewpoint<sup>10</sup>.

One may easily apply these views to all the other artistic activities: dramaturgy, composition, painting or sculpture, with some exceptions concerning architecture which needs an exact calculation of its executions, due to the fact that they have to obey natural laws parallelly to the artistic laws forwarded and imposed by their own creators. In almost any other case the artist is free either to fill up as he only understands it, any kind of preexisting artistic form, that of a sonnet, that of a fugue or even that of a mycenian engraved stone (and it is true that such a process compels the artist to submit his own work to the demand of resemblance to former models) or to proceed directly to a free development of a basic idea, theme or motive which he subsequently seeks to invest in a form strictly conceived and achieved (and in this case he definitely remains the master not of the form, but of himself, for he experiences his freedom at every moment and at all levels). In this respect, the most suggestive dialectics is that of the conciliatory and compromissorial alternance of themes and divertimenti, stretti and loosening, in a fugue: an alternance which is rather accepted, if not persued, in accordance with the biological binary rhythm. There is no need to enter here into further details, since several parallel examples of such an alternance will easily be found in almost all kinds of artistic creations. The intentionality of the creator's consciousness has to adapt itself to the needs implied by the execution of the work.

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9. Cf. Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon, *Discours sur le style*. Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Art and the Artist, Labor and the Worker*, *Rotonda*, 3, 1971, pp. 277-279.

10. Cf. Paul Klee, *On Modern Art*, London, Faber, 1979, p. 29: «Speaking from my own experience, it depends on the mood of the artist at the time *which* of the many elements are brought out of their general order, out of their appointed array, to be raised together to a new order and form an image which is normally called the subject».

It is possible to follow similar processes on a micro-scale, within each part of a wider work. The main theme of a tonal fugue has to be slightly altered in the answer, in order to match with its initial exposition. «X»-rays have made it possible to detect, under the visible color layer of a painting, hidden forms or arrangements which have been subsequently abandoned by the artist. Such changes obviously are due to the need of establishing a satisfactory equilibrium between the various parts of the painting instead of the preceding disposal which probably testified to some lack of equilibrium. In the first case the changes brought to the work are due to general basic structural models which function as rules, according to the uniqueness of the precise work or part of a work which they apply to. These examples clearly show that the structural modelling or remodelling is a process which has to be fixed each time after the specific individual nature of the work and, hence, of the artistic idea it is supposed to express.

5. *Finitive conducts*. The same examples help in examining the second principle, qualified as *finitive*, and the concrete operations which derivate from it. The example shows that, unless some detailed, but fundamental, alterations are brought to the work or to some of its elements, from the very beginning, the work in its totality will not be feasible at all. The second example shows that some alterations of minor importance are required in order to improve the work. This example may be used above all as a transition towards the analysis of the finitive conducts of the artist. Such conducts testify precisely to the adaptability of the creative intensionality. By asserting that the artist has first to define a structure which he subsequently tries to realize, one might probably be charged with «platonism». In fact, no initial model may ever be used without undergoing several changes or alterations which, however, do not affect its essence.

During each phase of its instauration, an artistic creation admits of a certain number of improvements which tend to assure its more-being. To each successive phase corresponds a particular and specific model which, if considered as satisfactory, even temporarily, may be taken as a standard for further developments. Hence, instead of dealing with only one model, the artist deals with a series of successive models, and instead of «platonism», he may only be charged with «pragmatism», which, in fact, is no charge at all. Indeed, «pragmatism» supposes an identification of reality (or truth) and success. In case the phase considered is deemed

successful, the artist proceeds to the conception of the next phase which is taken by him as the next model to realize<sup>11</sup>.

It is important however to keep in mind that the instaurative phase is independent from the preceding or the following ones. «Hystereses» or anticipations are more than frequent cases of interweaving between successive phases. In fact, they form normal links that assure the continuity of creation. This kind of interpenetration is to be found not only objectively, within the framework of the becoming of the work, but also subjectively, at the level of the artist's consciousness. It is at this level that one may in particular consider the functioning of his creative intentionality. His consciousness, namely, refers to data that normally exist beyond present experiences and in a potential state, in order to actualize them by integrating them into the framework of the present, thus extended in both directions, past and future. Creative intentionality functions in such a way that it remodels time and space as far as they are involved in the creative process, by allowing what is past or behind to infiltrate itself into what is situated before or in the future, and *vice versa*, thanks to the enlarged present which it shapes by encroaching upon both directions in order to allow not only a spatial and temporal brewing, but also a spatial and temporal cleaving, under entirely new conditions, created precisely for that purpose.

At this very point, the notion of *kairos* may intervene in my analysis. I understand by *kairos* a structure both minimal and optimal that helps in restructuring other structures through actualization of elements which otherwise would remain extraneous to the experienced creation, but which are susceptible to fit into it by integration, and help it acquire an intensity of comprehension — in other words, to enrich and to complete it. Such an integration implies that, despite their eventual extraneous character, they are not inadaptable to the work, but, on the contrary, that they are *given an opportunity to integrate it*. Being potentially parts of it, they only acquire actuality through their confirmation as such, while, at the same time, they are confirmed themselves, by still being themselves and parts of the work as well.

The kairicity of this integration is closely related to the intention of the creative consciousness which proceeds to it. Time and space are

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11. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 45: «(the artist) does not attach such intense importance to natural form as do so many *realist critics*, because, for him, these final forms are not the real stuff of the process of natural creation. For he places more value on the powers which do the *forming* than on the final forms themselves».



thus restructured, remodelled and reshaped together with the relations between the consciousness and the work in process themselves. At every phase of the «becoming» of the work of art the main characteristic features of this precise work and the objective conditions of its creation as well are profoundly influenced by the successive steps taken by the creative consciousness which operates through its own intentionality, in order to reestablish an objective continuity which has been interrupted by a subjective initiative, in and through an objectified form. Continuity of the work thus becomes the expression of its integrity considered as emerging from a disrupted continuity of the consciousness and the world.

The kairic aspect of creation is expressed by the kairic categories: *not yet* and *never more*; *not enough* and *too much*; etc., which respectively indicate deficiency, insufficiency, imperfection, shortcoming, stint, and redundancy, exuberance, profuseness, repletion, excess, i.e., in both cases, a lack of measure, of preciseness and of entirety. Applied to the creation of the work of art, these categories acquire a decisive importance for the qualification of the work itself as well as for the qualification of the creative functioning of the consciousness itself which proceeds each time by selecting the most fitting and prominent element in order to integrate it into the form of the work of art and thus improve both of them by assigning them a renewed function within the whole creative procedure.

This procedure may be characterized both as finite and endless. It is finite because there is always a precise optimal point at which creation is supposed to stop; and it is endless because the creative consciousness never has the satisfaction of having fully reached such a point which it has eventually reached in fact. In this case it proceeds further and beyond what is really right, seeking for what it deems to be more than accurate, through additions or eliminations. In this respect, there is always a new possibility for another «last touch». The intentionality of the creative consciousness follows, so to speak, an asymptotic curve, and its dynamism seems to exhaust by attaining a point of efficiency after which it is effectively exhausted. Its dynamism however is thus directly transmitted to the work of art. The perfection of the work resides in its reduced imperfection or rather in its own dynamism; and its own kairicity resides in its inability to surpass itself, after having reached a degree of almost-self-sufficiency<sup>12</sup>.

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12. Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Le presque-beau*, *Revue d'Esthétique*, 1964, pp. 40-45.

6. *Dialecticity of creation.* The alternation of constructive and finitive attitudes during artistic creation is manifested through the alternation of constructive and finitive processes used by the artist. Such an alternation indicates the functional character of the artist's activity and exertion. In effect, the artist's intention continuously leads him to select new ways to complete his production by acting dialectically. He namely conceives of a structural plan he subsequently tries to pinpoint by implementing and elaborating it, before he tries, on the basis of the form already achieved, to progress towards another form derivating from it, which is reached, in its turn, through a new cycle of structuring and implementing efforts. It is precisely in this alternativity that dialecticity of creation resides. Once more, perfection is reserved only to a transcendent level of creation, even if the product of such a creation is experienced. At the level of human creativity, what counts is the succession of approximations envisaged and attempted by the artist, and which finally leads him to consume his intentionality by transfusing it into the created work. However, this transfer of potency is not definitive and exhaustive.

At the level of the transcendence, creation is realized through an overflow. Be it continuous or momentaneous, by no means does it affect the divine intentionality<sup>13</sup>. On the contrary, artistic creation is both continuous and discontinuous: it is discontinuous because it manifests itself every time in a particular work; and it is continuous because it is never completely exhausted so that, every time that a particular creative impulse is manifested in a precise work, there is always a considerable residue of it left within the consciousness. This residue is exactly intended for the next work to be created, and so forth, so that it may be not an excessive claim or even an exaggerated pretention to assert that every work can find its completion in the one that follows it, and that, despite their unicity and irrepitibility, all the various works of an artist are partial attempts to realize the same aesthetic ideal, though under various aspects and in different ways.

Through ceaseless restructurations and implementations of structures, the artistic consciousness steadily, though hesitatingly, proceeds to the instauration of forms that express, manifest and materialize through successive stages its own motion towards completion. It is understood

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13. Cf. Idem, Prospective et historicité de la présence divine, *Il senso della filosofia cristiana oggi. Atti del XXXII Convegno del Centro di Studi Filosofici* (Gallarate, 1977), Brescia, Morcelliana, 1978, pp. 103-104.

that this advancing process finds its accomplishment in the accomplishment of such forms; in other words, that, thanks to the relative imperfection of the works of art, the dynamism of the creative consciousness remains unexhausted itself. The asymptotic curve followed each time by the artist's activity is thus integrated into a more general curve that transcends it at the same time.

7. *Conclusive remarks.* Had artistic creation been identical or even homologous to divine creation, it would also have been as easy, spontaneous, though elaborate, complicated, though momentaneous, and unique, though universal, just as cosmic reality. On the contrary, artistic creation is a continuous struggle for the instauration of various forms which express the dynamism of artistic consciousness itself. In this struggle, and in order to be efficient, artistic consciousness proceeds by using alternatively two fundamental methods of behavior, that of structuration and that of correction. Structuration consists not only in conceiving and imposing shapes and forms which are to last, but also in reconsidering them through new conceptions which complete the preceding ones. Correction consists not only in respecting accepted rules, but also in violating them<sup>14</sup> in order to impose new ones which seem more adequate to the final form the work tends to receive. Structuration takes place on behalf of an initial ideal structure. Correction is a finitive process and aims mainly towards the final aspect of the whole realization. Alternative use of these two methods or processes is a necessary, though freely accepted, consequence of their dialectical relation which is reflected upon the dialectical nature of the work of art itself.

More-being of the work of art is reached through the objectification of the intentionality, i.e. of the dynamic tendencies of the consciousness of the artist, when applied to it by means of the kairic categories brought into play in order to assure a successful outcome of the creative effort, by eliminating any danger of significant defection or of slight excess of of the instaured form. Finally, these dialectically connected processes of artistic creation help in manipulating and in organizing in a better way elements brought together so as to shape a stronger identity, a deeper unity, a more equilibrated completeness and an optimal integrity of the artistic being.

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14. Cf. A. Mercier, *Le viol des symétries comme principe structurel de la création artistique*, *Diotima*, 10, 1982, pp. 72-75.

### Artistic Approaches of the Absolute.

There are various ways of approaching the absolute. One of them is through art and creativity. It is understood that no identification or confusion should be made between artistic creation and the creation proceeding from the manifestation of the absolute. Creation is potentially included in the very action of the absolute. It is only due to an «economical» conception, in the theological sense of the term, that human, i.e. relative characteristics are attributed to the absolute and to its creative activities.

Creation is art just as art is creation. Such a comparison seems to be a commonplace. However it is not always self understandable. Creation means art, for not only creation has to be a process the outcome of which is to last, but also it has to be a process leading to a solid, steady and unshakable, unyielding and unflinching effect. In other words, in order to be worthwhile, creation must lead to a lasting result. Such a result is not possible unless it has an inner structure which guarantees its permanence and there is no permanence possible, in this case, other than that which is confirmed by an almost perfect form.

That perfection has been brought together with absoluteness — and one may particularly think, in this respect, of the various forms under which the ideas of absoluteness and perfection have been linked in the so-called ontological proof due to Anselm and illustrated by Descartes and others — entails that they both need each other in order to be fully conceived of, and that they are two different faces of the same reality. This is true to the extent that it enables one to speak of perfectness as of a modality of being which is equivalent to that of absoluteness; for both presuppose the postulate of solidity and, hence, of permanence and eternity. All these qualities are expressions of the same idea, or rather indications of the same entity.

However, the way the human mind conceives of these qualities brought to the highest level still remains a relative one, for, even above absoluteness, perfection cannot be conceived of completely and adequately by a mind which, by definition, is insufficient and unable to reach them. That is why the «economical» factor has to be taken here into consideration. Indeed, it is only «economically» that the human mind excels in reaching the level of the absolute by its weak relative means.

Human art is the most appropriate way that leads to the understanding of the absolute and that makes it seizable by consciousness. I will



divide my thoughts on the issue into three parts. In the first part I will undertake a phenomenological analysis of conceptions concerning the structure of the universe as a work of art, and then try to explain its resemblances and differences with the outcome of human artistic conduct. In the second part I will discuss the problem of artistic participation as opposed to ontological participation at various levels, and try to show the importance of such an opposition for a better explanation of the opposition between the relative and the absolute. And in the third part I will insist upon facts concerning the history of art itself, the analysis of which will enable me to draw some essential conclusions of the whole issue.

### I. Creation: Structure and Universe.

When Aristotle insists on the fact that the being may be designated in various ways, he means by this, that human consciousness may refer to it, each time according to one of the several properties it consists of, and which are, at the same time, attributed to it. Out of the total of the ten categories Aristotle recognizes as the qualities and factors of the presence of the being, later and more recent thinkers, have come, by means of concentration, to enumerate only five which contain them all, and which seem to favor their own systematic classification: essence, form, relation thereof, space and time. These concentrated qualities are considered as the parameters of the function which manifests the entity called being.

Let us analyze each one of them: *Essence* is, in a way, the fundamental part of the being, the one that enables it to exist even before it is given any real existence, and assures the continuity between its being and the non being it precedes from. In the same order of ideas, *form* is the particular and specific disposition and display of the constituent particular portions of the essence which make it distinguishable as such or such. Then the *relation* between essence and form makes it possible for them to coexist, instead of being opposed (or, even, in spite of their apparent opposition), within the broader framework of the being.

More than a function itself, such a relation is a *structure*, in the most dynamic meaning of the term, since it constitutes the program of the being, namely its given and irrevocable identity that makes possible the transition from the state of potential being to the state of actual being without any intermediate interference; or, rather, that ensures a presence of the actual being within the potential being itself and, *vice versa*, a retentive presence of the potential being within the actual provisional

being. Thus, structure becomes an intermediate itself, i.e. a mediety which assures the continuity of the being.

The next parameters of the ontological function of the entity are *space* and *time*. Their own roles and significances in the whole is that of elements which assure the concreteness of the being. In fact, such a concreteness is guaranteed by the divisibility of space and time, and by the separation of parts of them which unite to the being in order to specify and complete its presence. The whole ontological function, then, consists of essence, structure, form, space and time as its functional components.

If the above analysed ontological function characterizes common beings, ontological eminence, which is the specific qualification of the beautiful, is characterized by a deeper unity of the elements that constitute the eminent being, i.e. the beautiful, as the main attribute of the work of art. Such an eminence qualifies, in respect to the common being, a state of *more-being*. Ontological eminence is an equivalent to the *more-being* and it becomes obvious that one may use both expressions indifferently. Under such circumstances, a work of art is a being which does not impose itself any more, due to its creator, but by virtue of its own *more-being*. Its eminence makes it function as an exemplary presence; more, to remember Kant, as an *heautonomy*, i.e. as a self ruled capacity. One should not forget that such a state is made possible by the inherent program of the eminent entity which is its own structure. Structure, then, becomes the most important element of the eminent being, and of the common being itself.

One should remark here that in both kinds of beings, common and eminent, it is possible to observe a certain tendency that makes them proceed from their inner elements towards their outer elements. This exteriorization qualifies their permanent need for manifestation, i.e. for constant expansion. Such an expansion may be interpreted as a flow and as an irradiation, without them losing any portion of their entirety or becoming deprived of their tight unity and uniqueness; an irradiation which instead enhances and ensures their inner completeness.

However, completeness does not mean perfection, but only perfectibility. Indeed every being, be it a common or even an eminent one, is capable of acquiring even more unity than it displays at a certain phase of its existence, either by itself or by means of any kind of intervention from outside, an intervention according to which the integrity of the entity in question would be respected. But, unlike these procedures, no process of perfectibility is applicable to perfection itself; and, since perfection is the main attribute of the absolute, it is evident that the

unique being that composes the highest class of beings, i.e. the absolute being, is not subject to any perfectibility, for the elements that form its ontological function are even not distinct from, but identical to each other. Its essence coincides with its form though it is distinct from it and their relation, i.e. its structure, is the tightest possible, since it also is the strongest and most unifying possible one.

Space and time however do not participate in the absolute, since they ordinarily function as concretizing elements of the other beings, and since the absolute being itself admits of no concretization. Space and time, then, are reduced to nothingness at the level of the absolute; they are converted into another attribute of absoluteness: infinity, which is expressed instead as boundlessness and as eternity. To manifest itself, however, the absolute has to proceed to the concretization of one of its aspects. Space and time are thus created.

In his *Timaeus*, Plato asserts that time is the moving picture of eternity. In the same spirit, one could assert that space is the noetic picture of boundlessness. In any case, the fact that the absolute, in order to manifest itself, secretes the universe is characteristic of its nature.

The Universe, as the object and the outcome of a creation, is far from displaying a lack of structure. Its structure is that of a work of art, i.e. the deeper unity of an eminent entity, namely that unity which Heraclitus had in mind when he stated that hidden harmony is better than manifest harmony. This was the idea that haunted Kepler when he qualified the laws that govern the world, as its harmony. This was also, long before Kepler, the idea Plato had in mind when he described the soul of the universe created by the demiurge whom he did not identify however with the good, his own conception of the absolute, but with a subalternate deity enabled by the good itself.

The creative process the demiurge follows illustrates Plato's theory of the mixed beings. The demiurge first mixes together a portion of the being (called the Same) and a portion of the non being (called the Other). He then proceeds to mix this mixture with the remaining portions of the Same and the Other. In this way, the mixture finally obtained is the most complete possible one. The demiurge then proceeds to the extraction of portions of this final mixture, which are related to each other according to the following ratios on the basis of the first one taken as unit: 1, 2:1, 3:1, 4:1, 9:1, 8:1, 27:1. Crantor the Academician, the first editor and interpreter of the *Timaeus*, saw in this series a kind of musical scale. This musicalistic interpretation was strongly influenced by Plato himself who writes that the demiurge filled the intervals with parts of the remaining

portion of the final mixture, and even uses a technical term also used in music.

I have demonstrated however that this passage of the *Timaeus* refers neither to an astronomical model (since Plato confounds the notions of mass and of interval) nor to a musical model (since technical terms may be used at different levels). In fact, the model Plato's text refers to is strictly mathematical (the interversion of the ratios 9:1 and 8:1 gives the key to the aenigma): we are in presence of a combination of two mathematical progressions, starting with 1, i.e. 2,  $2^2$ ,  $2^3$  and 3,  $3^2$ ,  $3^3$ ; a combination which, in a particular way, is by no means musical, but, at least, harmonical itself. This is far from preventing it from being conceived according to some vaguely concretized artistic principle. At a mythical, but still ontologically important level, for Plato, due to the artistic structure of its soul, the universe fills the function of a work of art.

The construction of the world's soul is, in a way, the transcendent replica of the construction of a work of art. Leibniz, for instance, would not accept the subsequent phases through which the demiurge proceeds to its instauration. For him, the divine creation is not at all equivalent to the human creation; namely, at the human level, creation presupposes two distinct moments of activity of the creator's consciousness: a moment of planification during which the intellect proceeds in advance to the organization (or rather to the structuration) of the work; and a moment of realization during which will enables consciousness to convert the planified work into a real aesthetic being. Within the artist's consciousness, these two moments are more or less separated. At the level of the absolute, intellect and will are identical and they operate just as a unified faculty; at the moment the absolute wills, it also conceives of the object of its will and instaures it as well.

However, at the level of human creativity, conception and realization of the work of art interfere with each other, though they still remain distinct from each other.

The process of creation may thus be analysed into several subsequent processes which we can qualify as structurative and as finitive. Such processes alternate in such a way that a structurative phase of creation is followed by a phase of partial finition, and so on. Creation proceeds either synthetically or analytically, i.e. either starting from an insignificant element which is, then, elaborated till it reaches, by means of opposition, of analogy, of generalization and of completion, the final form displayed by the completed work; or, starting from a very imprecise form which is given subsequently all kinds of formal precisions, up to its



utmost details. In both cases, and throughout his creation, the artist cares for the unity of his work.

This unity is preserved through the distinction of nodal points (I would call them «kairic» points) which function both as milestones of the artist's itinerary during the creation and as important elements of the whole structure of the work to the unity of which they greatly contribute. From a certain viewpoint, they remind of the portions of the mixture of being and non being the Platonic demiurge disposes at precise intervals which he then fills with other elements of secondary importance. The «economical» interpretation of divine creation as «transcendentization» of the experienced process of artistic creation is one of the numerous ways of the approach of the absolute through art.

In such an approach there is no real equivalence between relative and absolute creation. However, the analogy of the two levels considered provides a concrete basis on which the impossibility of such an equivalence is formed. The fact that the creativity of the absolute transcends the experienced artistic creativity, entails that the structure of the cosmic universe is in fact far more complicated than the structure of the aesthetic universe of the work of art, which, on the contrary, tends not to suppress it, of course, but to provide each time a model of an approximation thereof, by transferring its importance at another scale and by giving it a different meaning, namely, the meaning of a relative perfection. At the level of the absolute, creation is a procession in the neoplatonic sense; at the level of human artistic relativity, creation is, in a neoplatonic sense, a conversion towards the absolute.

## II. Participation: Ontological and Aesthetic.

There are two ways to designate participation, i.e. the presence of an entity in another entity. One has therefore to refer to the expressions, of French origin, «participate of» and «participate to». The former indicates the dependency of an entity on another which it proceeds from; the latter, a common activity leading to the creation of a new reality, generally an action, considered as a value. It is obvious that the first expression is the most adequate to the problem faced here, and that the second expression may only help, by opposition, in better understanding the meaning of the first one. For Plato, participation is, above all, an epistemological activity. It is only with the Neoplatonists that participation becomes a fully ontological status. Especially for Proclus, for whom «everything exists within everything», participation is the permanence of a

part of an entity in the entity it proceeds from; and, *vice versa*, the permanence of an entity in its derivate. This is why there is in the derivate entity a kind of nostalgia of its source, which makes its conversion possible. The question is to precise which part of the original entity remains in the derivate entity. On the other hand, participation is also the relation of the derivate entity to the original one by means of the retention, by the latter, of a part of its derivate. Here again, the question is to define which part of the derivate such a part is. In the neoplatonic thought there is a strong manifest hierarchy of beings deriving from one another and forming an ontological «chain» of «paradigms» and «images». Their mutual relations make that the ontological «chain» they help establishing reminds of the causal «chain» of causes and effects envisaged by Aristotle in whose work it finally leads to the notion of the prime mover. The analogy between the two «chains» thus considered, the ontological and the causal, is more than obvious, although no strict similitude between them can be established. The prime mover which is the original term of the Aristotelian causal series may, analogically, only be compared to the One which is the original term of the neoplatonic ontological series.

*Ontological* and *causal* participation are both dynamic relations between distinct entities. However, ontological participation is also, to a large extent, a causal participation, for the derivate entity precisely exists because of its precedent entity: If there is no precedent entity, there is neither any subsequent entity. The precedent entity is considered not only as an entity which potentially contains the subsequent one, but also as an entity which actually causes its derivation from it, be it a mere emergence or a real creation, for, in both cases, the precedent entity behaves as a causal entity. Indeed, no subsequent entity would be possible without a precedent one, unless the derivate is the absolute itself (which, in any case, cannot be conceived of as a derivate whatsoever). In a similar way, for Aristotle, if the prime mover is an effect, it is its own effect, just as it is its own cause. Causal participation, then, obviously becomes a specific aspect of ontological participation, and it is easy to follow the process of generalization of the model of participation from Aristotle to Neoplatonism.

The *processional* type of participation is, in fact, completed by the *conversional* type of participation. Such a complementarity presupposes a fundamental differentiation: the difference in either case is not only vectoral, i.e. depending on the participative direction considered, but also deeply essential. In the case of procession the precedent entity gives birth to the subsequent entity: it causes its being, as a reality that is by no

means identical to the own being of the precedent entity, but that still retains from it a minimum resemblance, since it virtually exists in it before being detached from it. The problem is to define why the given subsequent entity is brought into actual being instead of another possible subsequent entity. The reason why this occurs may be placed within the precedent entity or outside it.

In the first hypothesis, the precedent entity is the unique cause of the process. At the level of the absolute, and according to Leibniz, the very nature of the precedent entity imposes the nature of the subsequent entity: the latter is the best possible one among all the others. In other words, the perfectness of the absolute admits of no other choice; and possibility, in that case, is synonymous to necessity, for any other choice would be incompatible with the nature of the precedent entity. In the second hypothesis, i.e. in the case of the choice being placed outside the precedent entity, it is obvious that such a cause can only be a secondary and contingent one; for, the main cause continues to reside within the precedent entity. Under these circumstances the external cause intervenes only to determine secondary characters on the subsequent entity. There is a continuity within the discontinuity that qualifies the relation between the precedent entity and the subsequent one.

The *conversional* type of participation involves the existence of at least a residue of the precedent entity within the subsequent entity. It is precisely this residue that causes the conversion of the whole subsequent entity towards the precedent one, under the form of a nostalgic tendency, in order to unite with the totality of the essence which it is identical to. Plotinus, after Plato himself, has given the best description of such a process, by following what, according to him, occurs within the third hypostasis, the soul, which is the dramatic hypostasis *par excellence*, since it behaves in a highly dramatic way: part of it tends towards matter, i.e. towards nothingness (indeed, for Plotinus at least, matter is nothing real, unlike for Proclus), whereas part of it tends towards the superior hypostasis, intellect.

Leaving aside the problem of the fourth hypostasis as well as that of the degradation of the soul and emphasizing on the problem of conversion, i.e. of the elevation of part of the soul, one should understand that such a process is possible only because of the existence of a continuity between the two hypostases in question, as far as the totality of either of them is considered, but that, by virtue of the quasi resemblance of a part of the lower one with the higher one, the elevation of the superior part of the soul impedes its inferior part from claiming a total separation

from it. At this level, participation becomes a kind of dialectic activity. One has both to generalize and to specify this process, in order to grasp the profound meaning of the participation of the human being in the absolute (or, rather: «of» the absolute, according to the distinction made above).

There is one more acception of the term of participation, which should be mentioned: that of the energy coming from an initial being and diffused in every direction towards every being. Such a conception is widespread, and common to all beliefs reflecting primitive mentality, as L. Lévy-Bruhl has shown, but is far from being opposed to the above-mentioned ones. In fact, here again, there is some kind of insertion of an essential element into every distinct being. The difference is that this element is not substantial, but energetic; it does not designate the possibility of a status, but that of an activity of the beings it qualifies in common. More than pantheistic, such a conception is purely animistic.

Ontological participation which is meant to link human consciousness to the absolute apparently has nothing to do with *aesthetic* participation which is meant to link human consciousness to the more-being of the beautiful, i.e. to the eminent entity of an excellent aesthetic presence. Three main modern theories have been proposed in this field. In a chronological order, one has to mention first Theodore Jouffroy's theory of *aesthetic sympathy*. The main feature of this theory is that it points out the possibility of consciousness to move at the same periodicity and with the same vibration as the organized aesthetic structure it contemplates. The identity of the movement enables consciousness to penetrate into this structure and to take possession of it. Plato had already given an analytical mechanistic explanation of this process, but in a reverse sense. For him, beauty is not a mere structure, but a structure in movement, because its components are in movement themselves. Their separate movements penetrate into the human body and successively overwhelm the seats of the various parts of the soul, which, in their turn, they also set in motion, a motion which exactly responds to their own. The more they penetrate into the human body, the more the structure they initially constitute is reproduced in it, matching with a latent structure they help actualize. The correspondence of two equivalent or even identical structures causes aesthetic pleasure.

This «psychagogic» theory was also adopted by Plotinus, and particularly by Atriusides Quintilianus who exposed it in such terms: «one should not wonder when the soul receives a motion similar to those that make strings and breathings move, and moves together with them in beau-



tiful melodies and rhythms, and shares their passion; nor should one wonder when a string being stricken, the soul stretches and sounds together with it, through its own strings, in a harmonious way» (*De musica*, p. 107 Meibom). It is obvious that, according to the Platonic and neoplatonic theory, aesthetic participation is due to a motion, an emotion or a commotion imposed to consciousness from outside. It is also obvious that this theory postulates the existence of two similar aesthetic structures or entities: one external and one internal. The coincidence of these two structures is participation. More precisely, consciousness participates in beauty through its response to the external aesthetic structure, a response which consists in shaping a replica to it.

For Jouffroy, aesthetic sympathy is not mechanistically analyzable. Aesthetic sympathy results from the tendency of consciousness to penetrate into the beautiful and to feel it in the deepest way. To enable itself for such a process, it has to harmonize itself in order to coincide with it. The more the coincidence is accurate the more the sympathy is complete. Again, the process postulated by Jouffroy is a reversal of the process postulated by Plato.

The second theory is that of Theodor Lipps, known as the *Einfühlung* theory which is more than an aesthetic theory, since it claims to be valid for the totality of reality, and since it applies to the emotional and dynamic understanding of nature which, in its turn, is considered as the operational field of living forces. It is characteristic that Lipps' theory has been accepted by Max Scheler who has also tried to give it a personal tint which is expressed through the substitution of the term *Einfühlung* by the term *Einsfühlung*. The same Lippsian term has been translated by H.S. Langfeld (*The Aesthetic Attitude*) not as *sympathy*, but as *empathy*.

The term of empathy itself generally means the projection, by consciousness, into an object, of the subjective feeling of bodily postures and attitudes which result from the tendency of the body to conform to the spatial organization of the object; it is however particularly and specifically applicable to attitudes of consciousness towards aesthetic objects. Lipps' theory claims to explain a process of penetration of consciousness into the aesthetic object, and, in this sense, it closely reminds of Jouffroy's theory. It has not been definitely proved that Lipps has been inspired by Jouffroy, but the resemblance of both theories is at least astonishing. Indeed, just as the theory of aesthetic sympathy, the theory of *Einfühlung* or empathy establishes that consciousness has to conform itself to the

structure of the aesthetic object, otherwise it is incapable of grasping and penetrating it.

Here again, the process proposed is a reversed conception of the process implied by the Platonic attitude; consciousness, of course, adapts itself to the external structure it envisages to penetrate; nevertheless, it adapts itself literally, and is not compelled to do so by the elements of the object which penetrate it and impose upon it the structure they belong to. Consciousness thus displays an intention or rather an intentionality in this field; an intentionality which attests its own energy and initiative. According to Lipps, this is a process which applies both to aesthetic objects, i.e. to eminent entities, and to common objects, i.e. to mere entities. In both cases, participation is secured through intentionality and adaption of consciousness thanks not to an essential element it possesses in common with its object, but to the equivalence (if not to the identity) of the structure it adopts and of the structure of the object in question.

This means that such an equivalence may also be taken into account as far as the absolute is concerned. It is understood that consciousness cannot conceive of the structure of the absolute in order to conform itself to it, since such a structure is radically different from the structures of mere (and even of eminent) entities. However, in its impulse towards the absolute, consciousness finds in eminent entities with tightly structured ontological elements intermediate degrees from which it is possible for it to attempt an approach of the absolute. Either instaurated or contemplated, a work of art encourages and enables human consciousness to superate its own relativity towards the absolute. The *Einfühlung* is then the gate through which human consciousness has a glimpse of, if not access to, the absolute.

The third theory which promotes the idea of aesthetic participation is the intuitionistic theory of Bergson. I concede that aesthetics is not the central domain of Bergsonian philosophy and that, therefore, the Bergsonian notion of artistic participation is not particularly known. Nevertheless, the Bergsonian notion of intuition implies a certain solution of the problem of artistic approach of the absolute. According to the first version of Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1903), in spite of the irreducible opposition between intuition and intellect, intuition is that kind of *noetic sympathy* by means of which consciousness is able to be «transported» to the heart of reality which is the duration of the being. Far from being contradictory, the term noetic sympathy is simply opposed to terms like emotional sympathy which rather becomes to

conceptions such as those of Jouffroy or Lipps. This is the reason why Bergson, in the second version of his *Introduction* (1934), has omitted the element «noetic» of the term, and has identified sympathy with intuition.

Unlike intellectual knowledge, intuitive knowledge which allows consciousness to install itself in general within moving reality, and which adopts its very life, is not a «relative» knowledge; on the contrary, «it touches the absolute».

As an example of such a process, besides philosophical intuition through which, instead of walking around a system, one is able to install oneself within the thought of its creator, in order to grasp «that simple, that infinitely simple, that eminently simple something which the philosopher was unable to express», and which however is the heart, the direct inspiration of that system, Bergson cites aesthetic intuition through which the artist «aims to grasp, by installing himself within the object, the intention of life». Life is, for Bergson, the adequate expression of reality; intuition, the adequate means through which expression and reality itself are understood. Finally, intuition may become artistic participation, and artistic participation, a means to reach and understand the absolute.

Though ontological participation has a quite different meaning than aesthetic participation, it no doubt fully helps conceive the meaning of the latter. Namely, it allows to make clear that at least a certain partial similarity, if not identity, has to exist between its terms, be it essential or formal, though «structural». All three theories of aesthetic participation, which have been analysed above, and those from which they eventually have been inspired, as well, point out, though each in a different way, that the aesthetic object, i.e. the work of art, is a means for at least the relative access to the absolute. Without being an emanence or even an image of the absolute, the work of art includes an allusion to it.

### III. The Idea of Absolute in Art.

An allusion is certainly not a complete image of the reality it refers to. However, it includes the possibility of suggesting the idea of the reality in question. And art is a complex of possibilities of suggestions. Art is also, and above all, creation, presence of the object of art, contemplation. Of these three artistic functions, the two preceding parts of my text respectively deal with creation and contemplation. In this last

part, I will successively discuss about the problem of the work of art itself as a sensible substitute of the idea of absolute, and as the framework for allusions to this idea.

From the first viewpoint, being an eminent entity, the work of art is an undeniable challenge to the aesthetic dimension of intentionality of consciousness. By eminent entity, I understand an organized presence which displays a tight unity of its constitutive elements. Such an entity is by far unique, otherwise it would be a common entity; but also very particular, otherwise, it would be the absolute itself. Being a kind of Aristotelian mediety, equally distant from the common sensible object and from the absolute, the work of art may be considered as a sensible idea.

An idea is both an abstraction and a generalized content of the understanding. As such, it has no form. This is why the shapeless absolute itself may be conceived of through the idea of absolute.

However, as has already been said, also the work of art is an idea, though a sensible one. Regardless of the difference in the meanings of the term idea, in either case, one has to recall here Hegel's definition of the beautiful as «the sensible manifestation of the Idea». Indeed, Hegel denies that the work of art, as a concrete and precise beautiful presence, is an idea itself, and concedes to it only the status of a manifestation. In my own acception, the work of art is a sensible idea inasmuch as it is the incarnation of itself, i.e. inasmuch as it is an entity that embodies a unique structure which is identical to the very entity the work of art constitutes itself. In other words, the work of art is the expression of an entity and, at the same time, this entity itself.

Such a double status makes the unicity of the work of art. Further on, by sensible idea, I understand a presence which, due to its material dimension, manifestly addresses itself to the senses, and which nevertheless, due to its uniqueness, possesses its own meaning, a meaning that imposes it to the intellect. The work of art has its uniqueness in common with the absolute. Unique, just as the absolute, the work of art differs however from it, since its unicity is a particular and relative one, whereas the unicity of the absolute is the most general and absolute possible. Therefore, without being indetifiable to the absolute, the work of art may suggest it at the level of the understanding.

From the second viewpoint, that of the consideration of the work of art as the framework for allusions of the idea of the absolute, it is obvious that history of art is full of examples of such allusions which may be classified in three groups: *thematic*, *structural* and *finite*.



*Thematic* allusions include indirect as well as direct mentions of the absolute. The whole range of religious art is a wide testimony of such mentions. The magic origins of art allow it to refer indirectly to the absolute through the implication of the power the work of art is supposed to grasp and to utilize to the benefit of the user. This is the meaning of the design of animals on the walls of the caves of Altamira or Lascaux. Plato repeats five times in the same book of his *Laws* that, in fact, songs are incantations and the double meaning: «song» and «charm», of the latin word *carmen* corroborates this fact. This dimension of the work of art joins the conception of participation. under its causal aspect, as established by L. Lévy-Bruhl.

Such cases underline the symbolic function of art. In connection to this, I have asserted on another occasion, that «the religious function of the work of art is to reveal, in its own specific way, a transcendent reality and that, as such, it is generally related to the aesthetic category of the sublime, since it allows consciousness to grasp through it an idea that reflects transcendence itself». In the same context, I also have asserted that «the more the relation between the quest and the expression of transcendence indicates their mutual respectivity, the more the religious work of art functions both aesthetically and religiously, in an intensive way, since it plays the role of a revealing intermediate between the idea of the absolute and consciousness itself which tends towards it»; and that the religious work of art «intensifies and colors this relation through its aestheticity».

Direct allusions to the absolute in religious art need not be of liturgical order: Michelangelo's fresco called *The Creation*, or sculptural *Pietà*, have no liturgical value; Monteverdi's *Magnificat* is a work of art both religious and liturgical. One recalls R. Wagner's conception of art as a substitute to religion, if not religion itself; a conception which he tried to illustrate by creating *Parsifal*. Ancient art in the Middle East has represented divinities under the form of animals, and Greek art has shaped divinities of the Olympus under a strictly human form. The same occurs with Michelangelo or Caravaggio. But no artist has depicted the ineffability of the absolute as the Israelite painter Benn did, i.e. under the form of wings of light.

There is distinction to be made between religious and sacred art. The former category is wider than the latter, since it includes several other classes of expression. Sacred art is an art which has been accepted by the religious authority, and more or less integrated into the cult, whereas religious art is an art which merely refers to religious experien-

ces. A parody of religious thematic, J. Bosch's *Last Judgement* is by no means even mere religious art. Every liturgic art is not sacred art in the strict sense of the term.

Is a *Mass* by Mozart, for instance, sacred music? To what extent is it rigorously integrated into the cult? On the contrary, there is no doubt that Gregorian chant is sacred music. Sacred art has to be not only accepted and integrated, but also consecrated as such.

*Structural* allusions to the absolute are inherent to the work of art. They refer to the eventuality of a pale, but still accurate resemblance of the structure of the work of art with the supposed structure of the absolute. Schopenhauer considers music as the art which attains the summit of expressivity of the ineffable, and as allowing the creation of works of high ineffability.

Without being religious at all, Brahms's *Fourth Symphony*, for instance, is an example of such an artistic creation: an «absolute» music in itself, it suggests the structure of absoluteness. Likewise, Dali's *Christ crucified* suggests the structure of absoluteness regardless of its thematic, but uniquely through its structure, and through the reversed perspective which complies to the view the absolute has of the crucifixion, i.e. from above towards the earth.

*Finitive* allusions absolute to the relate to technical, yet decisive details in a work of art, which are worthy of the designation: «kairic». A prolonged silence in R. Strauss' *Don Juan* (silence is mostly suggestive of the ineffable), the persisting mention of a Lutheral choral in Mendelsson's *Fifth Symphony*, the impression of stained glass in Rouault's *Christ*, the repeated expression «pink-fingered Eos» in the *Iliad*, are pertinent examples of this kind of references to the absolute. They create a highly intense climate of elevation and help consciousness through the powerful suggestions they contain. They do not imply absoluteness itself, but bear like its shadow.

All the abovementioned examples of the various ways art alludes to the absolute give the measure of the importance of the expression: «sensible idea», applied to the work of art. It is possible to multiply the examples relating to all categories of artistic allusions to the absolute, by considering primitive and oriental art. Yet what is called great art, i.e. the great achievements of modern times in the performing and in the visual arts, allow a better and more pertinent apprehension of the work of art as a «sensible idea», and of its capability of expressing the idea of absolute.

Parallely to philosophical meditation, to religious belief and to

practical union with life, artistic creation and contemplation is another way towards the absolute. Cosmogonic myths and philosophical creationistic conceptions allude to creative processes through which the presence of the absolute is suggested as pertaining to the world and as structuring it according to transcendent models which are themselves subalter-nate expressions of the perfect model of existence of the absolute. On the other hand, the various processes of linking together entities of different ontological statuses or, at an «epistemological» level, human consciousness with reality, especially with precise aesthetic realities, indicate models of communication of consciousness with the absolute by means of the products of artistic creation. Finally, the examination of concrete examples of artistic realizations allows to understand how a given work of art may function as a «a sensible idea» reflecting the idea of absolute itself.

The variety of the catagories of processes leading to the approach of the absolute by means of artistic creation or contemplation materializes the abundance and profusion of the aspects under which the absolute may reveal itself to human consciousness, be it through art alone, and the adequacy of consciousness that makes it capable of grasping the absolute through every form of its manifestation.

### **Mythical Dimensions of Art.**

More than two mere independent activities in man's social existence, myth and art are closely interrelated. One may even assert that art and myth obey the same creatively functioning structures as they are conceived of, formulated by and imposed to individual or collective consciousness in need of self-confirmation. Individuals or collectivities, creators of artistic forms and mythical fictions obey not only to powers of inspiration, but also to experienced factual structures which they subdue to adequate formal containers by means of which they become conveyable.

Artistic and mythical creations are not however of an entirely similar nature or aspect. Either of them fulfills a different aim, due to its particular possibilities, according to which it is conceived and practiced. However, and in spite of their differences, myth and art undoubtedly co-operate in defining and combining features that characterize individual and social life.

The interaction of myth and art may be analyzed at various levels which allow a thorough examination of its various aspects or dimensions.

Three categories of such dimensions may be successively envisaged. They might be respectively named *static*, *dynamic* and *cinetic*. One may try to study through the first of them what art is in itself as compared to myth; through the second, how art is able to function with respect to myth; and through the third, under which conditions art effectively extends the presence of myth. Such a phenomenological analysis of the problem will allow a general evaluation of the role and importance of art within a mythical context.

1. *Static dimensions*. Artistic activity obviously has a basically aesthetic purpose, whereas mythical activity mainly displays aptitudes that allow its being applied to processes of organizing and maintaining fundamentally practical patterns of life.

1. *The essence of myth* mainly consists (a) on expressing, through prominent and striking exemplary models which are homologous to factual, experienced or reported data, the complicated structures which define the basic functioning of the process through which man is confronted with, adapted to and integrated into his world and particular community, thus creating the substitute of a properly historical sphere; and (b) in serving, once it has been constituted and imposed as such, as a pattern and as an actual truth, in order to help maintaining the structural equilibrium it illustrates by opposition to any kind of disturbance.

2. *The essence of art*, in the same order of ideas, mainly consists (a) in combining already existing elements of reality seen under their intrinsic aesthetic aspect, (b) in fusing them into new structures which suggest new modes or surpassing the already adopted structural wholes, and (c) in insisting upon their potential truth by referring to a reality which is different from the commonly experienced one, and therefore upon their being normally unrealizable.

3. *The essence of both myth and art* allows, if not imposes, their combination. Their function being both parallel and diverging, concomitant and opposed, they both start from factual data, but the aim of myth is mainly to help consolidating them, whereas the aim of art is mainly to allow a fictive vision of their being surpassed which would make possible any kind of harmless secondary improvement. In this respect, myth is an ideal framework for a social structure, and it functions as a preventive or curative incantation against any change at the level of social institutions; art is an idealized framework for a possible social remodeling, and it functions as a moderating and temperating incantation against any brutal movement which would be dangerous for a given structure of reality.



Beside their diverging elements, myth and art display substantial similarities which allow their close interrelation, but they also exercise an influence upon each other, especially as they both emerge out of visceral structures illustrated by each of them in its own particular way. Such an interrelation is mainly expressed by the presence of artistic elements within mythical structures. (a) In general, a myth is modelled by numerous generations. (b) Art intervenes at this level not only imposing rough fundamental patterns, such as oppositions and repetitions, but also by suggesting complicated means of refining the basic mythical structure through extension or condensation of its various elements, thus assuring its formal equilibrium. (c) On the other hand, myth interferes with art in lending it its rough materials thus enriching its thematic content, vivifying its structural aspect, conveying in it its own truth, and making out of it an extension of mythology (cf. *infra*, III, 1).

II. *Dynamic dimensions.* What matters more than the truth conveyed by myth into art, and hence by art itself to human consciousness, both social and historical, is the survey of ways according to which art enables specifically mythical structures to acquire a particularly artistic aspect.

1. *Art as a structured myth.* It is understood that no myth lacks some kind of structure. The meaning of art, then, as a structured myth is that, in spite of the existence of structures being common both to myth and art, it appeals to specific processes in order (a) to enhance mythical structures by sanctioning them aesthetically through slight readaptations which by no means alter them essentially, but which, on the contrary, appease their eventual brutal or shocking aspect by rendering it more easily acceptable under a new artistic aspect, precisely because, having lost its proper spell, which has been subdued and replaced by artistic spell, it has become aesthetically objectified. Its initial mythical truth has been converted into an aesthetic truth.

2. *Art as an imposed myth.* Though myths have a structure, they have no evident and defined forms (in the sense of easily apprehended outlines, reducible to knowledgeable categories). Art, on the contrary, has both. (a) A myth needs no form to be understood as conveying a truth; as such, it needs no distancing. It remains in the background, exerting from there a continuous influence which, though immediate, is by no means manifest and precise. (b) Besides, in dealing with institutions a myth cannot be directly institutionalized without losing the distance that made acceptable the truth it conveyed. The suppleness of the structure of myths prevents them from sclerosis. (c) Being not fre-

quently renewed, at least partially, myths tend to lose their dynamism and vitality. However, under the cover of art, a myth keeps its possibility of distancing, especially when introduced into aesthetic forms which are themselves institutionalized. Religious art and, to a larger extent due to its transitory actuality, political art are prominent examples of such a process.

3. *Art as a substitute of myth.* Under such conditions, art provides particular items that may be raised to the rank of mythical presences. The law of distancing is valid here again, and entails the vanishing of the importance of artistic form. Un-aesthetic considerations are thus introduced in evaluating artistic creations. One may refer to such artistic creations independently from their respective aesthetic forms. Consequently, such artistic realizations tend to exert a certain influence that reaches the limits if not of imitation, at least of compliance on behalf of younger generations. Independently from its intrinsic value, it is not their form that interests any more, but the myth around them at an un-aesthetic level.

Mythical truth may be converted into aesthetic truth, artistic or non-artistic. Thus it either survives or merely imposes itself in an easier way, or is even transposed to a quite different tonality. The parallelism of mythical and artistic structures makes such a transposition easier.

III. *Cinetic dimensions.* These dimensions apply to problems of myth conceived of as transposable into art (cf. *supra*, II). They may be called kinetic because they refer to the modalities of the movement through which, under their artistic cover, myths are propagated within a given social and cultural means. Their importance is stressed by the fact that, with relation to them, one needs to refer not merely to myths, but to whole mythologies.

1. *Art as the extension of a mythology.* It has already been stated (cf. *supra*, I, 3, *in fine*) that myth enriches the aptitudes of art in conceiving new elements of expression and in extending its power on the consciousness. Art has access to this possibility (a) by referring to separate myths as parts of a given religious, national or political mythology into which it intrudes: Aeschylus's *Prometheus*, Wagner's *Siegfried* and Anouilh's *Antigone*, but also Picasso's series of *Doves* are, at various levels, examples of such an artistic connection to a mythology which is experienced as vivid or, more or less, as revived, but in which art feels free to be subordinated, and (b) by completing creatively a given mythology: Euripides's *Helen*, Gros's *Bonaparte* or Portinari's Church in Pam-

pulia (Brazil) are outstanding examples of this category of artistic accomplishments.

2. *Art as a creation of mythology.* Conversely, art often needs to create its own mythology within which it has the possibility of better expressing its message. Namely, such a mythology easily becomes a kind of form through which art is perceived. There is a particular mythology in various utopias or in Zola's and Proust's syntheses and in Jeronymus Bosch's fantastic pictorial world. Their creations are not even conceivable outside these mythologies which are part of them.

3. *Art as a mythology itself.* This is the case of artistic works which symbolize the whole process of artistic existence on account of their importance. There is a mythology of the *Iliad* and of the *Parthenon*, as well as there is a mythology of Dante's *Comedy* or Michelangelo's *Creation of man*, and a mythology of Beethoven's *Ninth symphony* or Picasso's *Guernica*. Besides, there is a mythology of artists and works, which is created for certain purposes independent from any search for truth (cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Conformisme et deformation. Mythes conformistes et structures déformantes*, Paris, Vrin, 1978, ch. 2 and 4).

Cinetic mythical dimensions of art allow to understand the way art is integrated in a given culture which is eager to accept new mythologies in order to adapt them to its needs before expressing itself through them. Just as every myth creates a temporal structure which it imposes upon a certain culture, the cinetic mythical dimensions of art create a particular temporality according to which they proceed to restructure experienced temporality by remodelling it as a «kairicity».

In conclusion, mythical dimensions of art help understanding the passage from a temporality of continuity to a «kairicity» of discontinuity, by allowing to conceive the structures by virtue of which art inserts into the cultural and hence into the historical process to which societies are closely linked. The «kairic» contribution of artistic structures to culture completes the fundamental mythical structure of the universe of man, and supplies a truth which both completes and transcends the truth already reflected and manifested in myth.s

### Art and Values.

1. *Introduction.* Art is undoubtedly the highest expression of human mind, because it allows human creativity to manifest itself in the most concrete way, by instauring forms which are inexistent previously, and by introducing into these forms the expression of the whole range of

man's bodily, affective and intellectual experience in a comprehensive and easily communicable way. Art, then, is the most pertinent evidence of man's existence, that which allows him to extend his own life on earth far beyond his own physical existence. If art is a value in itself, i.e. a center of interest that attracts human consciousness, it is also a means through which other values are conveyed from the creative consciousness to the perceiving consciousness. It is this double function of art that makes it important in itself and a major acquisition of human societies. Besides, art materializes all the other human accomplishments, namely science, religion, humanity, philosophy, technology, progress; in one word, culture and civilization in their widest sense, but also any kind of reprehensible activities, such as war, rejection of human rights, prejudice and oppression under the cover of justice, and related values such as absolute freedom in man's behavior towards himself and the others. The problem then arises: should art be allowed to express any kind of values, positive or negative, or even pseudo-values, or is it desirable that it be controlled in a way so that it at least may not convey pernicious ideas and myths, which is the case in every contemporary society? And if such a control is ever desirable, which is the factor that would be authorized to act in such a spirit? Three main theories may be envisaged. Two of them are completely opposed to each other, though both of them have at least one characteristic in common, i.e. that both are exclusivistic in their extremism. The third is an intermediate and moderate theory which tends towards reconciling the others.

2. *The Damonian conception.* This theory is named after Damon of Oa, the thinker who in 443 B.C. delivered a speech before the members of the supreme court in Athens, the Areios Pagos, hence the title *Areopagiticus* which has been given to it by the scholars. Although the text of this speech was lost as a whole, we still know its contents and even possess some fragments of it which already Plato recorded in his *Republic*. Damon's main concern was with the idea that a human society is sound and prosperous as long as it functions as an organism well adapted to its environment and does not suffer any disturbance from within. Such a society has its laws which should remain unalterable, and which express a system of values which, in its turn, is reflected in art. Besides, Damon maintained that art is the main medium through which values are not only conveyed, but also imposed. This entails the idea that there is an interaction between legislation, the system of values and art itself, and that the slightest change in artistic forms may cause a complete reversion of the system of values and the collapse of the laws, and hence that of



the city-state. The argument may sound sophistical today, but almost one century before Aristotle wrote his *Sophistic Refutations*, it did not, and one understands that it might have impressed some of Damon's listeners. Happily this was not the case with all of them, at least not with the majority, and it is due perhaps to this incidental fact that art in Athens continued to be free and to flourish. Nevertheless, Plato himself was extremely favorable to this theory, of course not because he feared that the stability of the city would suffer from some artistic innovations, but precisely because he thought that art is the most impressive and efficient agent of contagion of what he considered to be negative values. In this he fully agreed with Damon.

What Damon was really asking for was, on the one hand, the prohibition of certain artistic forms which he thought to be strongly associated with negative values and, on the other hand, the encouragement of other artistic forms which he qualified as bearing positive values. His proposals, which were very concrete, are extraneous to the main ideas exposed here, since they do not deal with the history of art. But what is extremely interesting to notice is the values that Damon considers as those which should be predominant in a society and the ones he deems to be pernicious. In the first group we find courage and religiosity; in the second, femininity and lascivity. One can in no way disagree with the repartition, provided Damon really means what he writes. In fact, by what he calls courage he means military virtue and obedience, and by lascivity, a kind of individualistic behavior. Everything, then, becomes clear. Damon is for what we call today a powerful regime under which citizens are considered to be virtuous provided they are obedient. Our century has given us quite a number of examples of such a regulation of art: Wagner's musical dramas being used to ascertain social belief in the superiority of a certain so-called race, or Zhdanov's theory of socialist realism which resulted in the standardization and mass production of so-called artistic themes and forms, with sensitive artists like Mayakowsky, the poet, committing suicide or, at least, like Prokoviev, the composer, proceeding to his own artistic incrimination, for the sake of values related to a certain social conception. In all these cases, be they related to fascist, stalinist or other regimes, the human being is neglected for the sake of a so-called superior society—in fact, for the sake of a small group which holds the power and which has to invent and to impose artistic forms through which it may easily continue to dominate. But this is only one aspect of the possible excess.

3. *The aesthete-istic conception.* This theory is thus named after

the French term «esthète» which means an art lover, generally very sensitive, somehow effeminate and not caring at all about ethical or axiological concerns in dealing with art («art for art's sake»), but also lacking moral principles in his behavior. This theory has many roots from which several particular trends within its main ambitus have resulted. I will try to group them into two. The first has already its ancient forerunners. However, visibly, it goes as back as to the French «dibertinage» of the seventeenth century, and acquires its most dramatic expression in the eighteenth century through the writings of marquis de Sade. Its inspiration is clearly sensualistic and amoralistic. Pleasure found in every aspect of nature, of life and of arts is the sole aim of a consciousness which has formerly denied every possibility of even creating a new hierarchy of values. Its views are absolute, since it admits only one value, namely pleasure. Such a hedonism however has not the character of the helplessly hedonistic consideration of Hegesias, which led to desperately seeking death (and Kierkegaard has in an excellent way depicted this syndrome in his critique of the mentality and personality of Don Juan), but, on the contrary, the character of a free and nonchalant acceptance of every kind of artistic experience, provided it leads to an unsuspected pleasure. Within this trend, art has to promote the value of pleasure by being pleasant itself. There is here an obvious shift from amorality to immorality.

The second trend of the theory emerges from the eighteenth century, but finds its best expression only during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is a trend that at least does not accept mingling aesthetic problems of morality, amorality or immorality. Its best representatives are some of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, poets and artists. Thus Rimbaud, after Baudelaire, will opt for the solution of eternal wandering, adrift, on a «drunk boat» to which he identifies himself. Likewise, Desnos will reject any adherence to values other than art. What is important is not the words and ideas expressed in poetry, but sounds following one another in a sequence which is to bring excitement to a fine taste that knows how to appreciate it. Claude Debussy will treat musical chords for themselves, Claude Monet will infatigably concentrate on such-and-such a red point at such-and-such a precise place of a painting, Cezanne on such-and-such a precise shadow that creates the particular impression of a certain volume. All this however leads to the cult of the «minor scale», of details and, finally, of the insolite. The next step both aesthete-istic trends take relates to the complete abandonment of consciousness to its irrational instincts. Breton's surrealist *Manifests*

have widely opened the gates to the individual and his right to art and to culture, as well as to the experience of «artificial paradises»; the most ignoble commerce is not only tolerated, but also promoted by some aesthetes. Again here however a specific kind of art, plastic, of course, but above all musical, is widely propagated together with a certain model of everyday life offered to young people, together with drugs. *Mutandis mutatis*, one certainly understands why some of Damon's listeners may have been attentive to him.

4. *The Humanistic conception.* Exaggerations from both sides have contributed in discrediting both the theory of artistic regulation and that of artistic inconvenience. The classical Greek ideal of the cultivated citizen, as Werner Jaeger has shown with unequalled mastery, inspired a general resolution according to which continuous attempts should be made in order to prepare young persons to think without prejudice and to judge freely, as free citizens. Some fundamental and important values were inculcated into them through artistic means, such as patriotism, respect for others etc. But in no way was it possible to force them to accept these values. Feeling free, mature and responsible, these were the ultimate experienced values a young person in Athens, for instance, should acquire through education, including artistic education. It is this ideal that, when materialized, produced the Parthenon, Phidias's sculptures, Sophocles's *Antigone*, and, later, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is this ideal again that, in modern times, made possible the creation of outstanding works of art. We know that Plutarch's works were almost everyday readings for Beethoven. And, indeed, one even gets the impression that Plutarch's elevated ideas about society and the human being emerge from Beethoven's own musical creations. The whole work of Beethoven is an expression of the values of the decent, of the suitable, of the appropriate, of the «becoming» (the Greek «prepon»). Likewise, Victor Hugo's works are the best manifestations of the values of justice, of magnanimity, of honor, of respect. Both the former and the latter express, through their form only, the highest moral qualities. One should be careful not to mix aesthetic with non-aesthetic problems. Morality has in fact nothing to do with artistic form. However, when in the name of protection of art from the irruption of immoral ideas in it, the irruption of «moral» ideas is tolerated to the point that humanist traditions might suffer, then it is an obligation to point out some works of art which are so important that their meaning trespasses their artistic forms to reach the level of axiological thought.

5. *As a conclusion*, one should understand that artistic regulation

as well as artistic confusion are to be avoided in an intelligent society where citizens are treated not as mere individuals, but as persons. Free consciences have to know how to regulate themselves, be it on moral or on artistic questions. The qualification of art as a value in itself would not have any precise meaning if the axiological element did not influence part of the formal character of the work of art. After all, art reflects human reality and this reality too, is a value, perhaps of all the highest. It is the perceiver of an artistic form that should be able to try to understand what axiological elements this pure form contains, and towards which moral domain it may extend. In this respect, art does not address itself to social groups considered as wholes, but as groups of persons, of accomplished personalities, and often with tastes difficult to satisfy. Artistic recipes do not exist. To consciences well versed in art and instructed about human dignity only great artistic works may bring some new message. Of this dialectics great artists are certainly aware.

### **Temporal and «Kairic» Categories Applied to Providential History.**

#### **I. The Notion of Kairicity.**

The three-fold system of fundamental temporal categories: «past», «present», «future», helps defining and concretizing the scheme that contains becoming. According to the basic Bergsonian distinction, the flow of duration being indivisible, time is introduced into the process of becoming by human understanding in order to make possible its divisibility which is, of course, a «factice» conception, but which results from a typical application of a certain aspect of the Cartesian method (the more problems faced by the understanding are complicated, the more they are submittable to analysis to be solved). Hence the «revolutionary» conception of Bergson, that time is an invention aiming towards practical activity, whereas duration, which corresponds to the reality of becoming, helps grasping its meaning theoretically.

Now, another distinction is possible within the framework determined by the preceding considerations. Its meaning will be clarified through some examples. The system of temporal categories already described seems to be strictly static. Indeed, it implies that propositions formulated according to it correspond to mere statements which are entirely independent from any kind of commitment of consciousness to the process of becoming, the latter remaining definitely external to it. The following propositions: «it rained yesterday»; «it is raining today»; «it will (probably) rain tomorrow» imply no immediate consequence for



the consciousness itself which remains that of an indifferent observer.

Consider however the following propositions: «it has not rained yet»; «it will (probably) not rain any more (this autumn)». In these propositions the commitment of consciousness to the facts described is obvious and direct. Suppose these statements are due to a ploughman. They immediately acquire a very precise meaning. In other words, they respectively express on one side the ploughman's anxiety and hope, and, on the other side, his frustration, for his own existential activities are tied up to the facts stated by him.

Furthermore, these propositions express the ploughman's deep interest in precisising an advantageous moment which they help locate between the two distinct periods they respectively indicate, and during which this activity will be exerted in the best way and with the best possible results under the best objective conditions. More than mere statements, they are equivalent, to some extent, to axiological propositions, for they indicate the ploughman's interest and intention to recognize this advantageous moment as a «kairos», i.e. both as a minimal and as an optimal one, as a minimality and as an optimality in itself.

## II. Divisibility and Discontinuity of Becoming.

«Not... yet» and «not... any more» (or even: «never more») represent the two elements of a two-fold or dual categorical system which one may call «kairic», and which is generally disguised and screened by the former static system of temporal categories. The «kairos» is defined and determined by the minimal difference between the period covered by the application of the category of «not yet» and the period covered by the category of «never more». This implies the confirmation of the validity of certain notions such as objective uniqueness of the «kairos», due to its objective impossibility to be repeated within the limits of the process it engenders: actualization of the future (and of the past as well, depending on the orientation of the procedure) which consists in reducing it to the present; and intentionality of consciousness, understood not in a static Husserlian sense, as its reference to its contents, but, in a dynamic Bergsonian sense, as an orientation towards an aim to reach.

Combined to the «kairic» categories, these notions allow to understand the vectoral attitude of the consciousness when introduced and integrated into reality. Such an attitude entails, on behalf of the consciousness, the possibility of restructuring really not by statically proceeding to some kind of theoretical and phenomenal division of the indi-

visible duration, but by dynamically imposing to it a discontinuity which makes possible a radical distinction between its two subsequent, yet, henceforth, irreducible pottrions.

The «kairic» moment definitively inserts into and imposes upon the process of becoming a restructuring and catalytic distinction between what precedes and follows. Divisibility does not disrupt continuity of becoming. «Kairification», on the contrary, implies a fundamental discontinuity according to which there is no way to reconcile «before» and «after». The whole life of consciousness is thus reducible to a chain of «kairifications», its main activity consisting in conceiving theoretically, though intentionally, the aim of its immediate or subsequent action.

### III. Kairicity in Providential History.

Since history is the field *par excellence* of human exertion, it is manifest that it concentrates the major part of man's intentional activity. History of mankind is mainly a succession of «kairifying» actions. From this level the notion of intentionality may be easily raised, by means of an «economic» transfer (in the theological acception of the term), up to the level of divine action. At this level, God is considered mainly as an «acting person» who plans, decides and executes his acts, by actualizing, through «kairification», the moments at which his activity will prove more efficient.

Thus the «history» of the deeds of God since creation of time (in the sense attributed to it by St. Augustin, *Confessions*, 13), is a series of actions, of what one might improperly call «timings», but which is in fact a series of «kairifications», according to the nature of God's own intentionality, the most prominent of which are creation and redemption, completed by the prevision of the last judgement. An infinity of major or minor acts scheduled and executed according to the same model of divine activity, and which are interpolated between these basic actions, then incorporated and integrated to their fundamental system, constitute its comprehensive form: divine providence.

Considered under this viewpoint, divine providence proves to be a continuity of discontinuous acts, which is elaborated upon the basic model of «kairification», i.e. of actualization of remote instants within the range of divine intentionality. In this way, time turns out to be a typical illusion, and its creation, in fact, only a static form of the dynamic reality of God's activity. Such an activity actualizes eternity itself through a series of successive disruptions. These disruptions entail the

existence of gaps which God's activity fills up simultaneously, and finally surpasses by means of a series of «stridings» and «coverlappings».

Providential history thus acquires the meaning of a highly dynamic field in which divine intentionality is exerted under a creative form which is unconceivable through the static system of temporal categories, but which is fully realizable through the dynamic system of «kairic» categories. Such a system acquires the importance of an instrument which helps understand divine activity as a creative historical process comparable to usual human creativity, a comparison which would be otherwise unacceptable, namely under the shape of traditional insights based on mere temporality. Moreover, God's activity itself thus acquires a meaning which, even if not fully understandable, is necessarily the very reason of providential history.

## Ε. Μουτσόπουλου, *Μικρά αισθητικά και πολιτιστικά*

### (Περίληψη)

Πέρ' από την αξιολογική διάσταση της αναφορᾶς τῆς συνειδήσεως στὰ ὁρθώματα τῆς καλλιτεχνικῆς καὶ τῆς πολιτιστικῆς δημιουργίας, προέχει ἡ διερεύνηση τῶν δομῶν ποὺ ἐλέγχουν τὴν γενετικὴν διάσταση τῆς δημιουργίας αὐτῆς. Στὸ πλαίσιο τοῦτο ἀκριβῶς ἐντάσσεται ἡ ἀναζήτησις τῶν παραλλήλων ἢ συγκλινουσῶν διεργασιῶν ποὺ οἱ δομὲς ἐκεῖνες ἐπιτρέπουν, καθὼς καὶ τῶν σχέσεων ποὺ, ὑπὸ τοὺς ὅρους αὐτοὺς, εἶναι δυνατόν ν' ἀναπτυχθοῦν μετὰ τῶν δυὸ διαστασιακῶν ἐπιπέδων ποὺ διακρίθηκαν. Καλλιτεχνικὴ καὶ πολιτιστικὴ, ὅσο καὶ κοσμικὴ, δημιουργία ἀκολουθοῦν πορεῖες ὁμόλογες, ποὺ ὥστόσο συμ-πλέκονται σύμφωνα πρὸς δεδομένα ἔρια ἀμοιβαίας διεισδυτικότητος τῆς ὁποίας εἶναι ἐπιδεκτικές. Οἱ δομικὲς παράμετροι τῆς συναρτήσεως ποὺ ἡ ὁμολογία αὐτὴ συνιστᾷ ἐπιτρέπουν τὴν διατύπωση καὶ τὴν ἐρμηνεία τῶν παντοίων προ-τύπων ἐπὶ τῇ βάσει τῶν ὁποίων ἡ συμπλοκὴ τῶν πορειῶν ἐκείνων εἶναι προσ-διοριστή. Ὅχι μόνον ἡ προοδευτικὴ διαμόρφωση, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ τελικὴ ἔκβασις τῶν ἰδίων αὐτῶν πορειῶν ὑπόκεινται σ' ἐρμηνευτικὴν ἀξιολόγησιν. Οἱ διαφορὲς ἐπὶ μέρους διαπιστώσεις ποὺ προκύπτουν ἀπὸ τὶς διαδοχικῶς ἐξεταζόμενες πτυχὲς τοῦ θέματος, στὶς ὁποῖες κατὰ σειρὰν ἀναφέρονται οἱ συνεπτιγμένες εἰδικώτερες μελέτες ποὺ συναποτελοῦν τὴν εὐρύτερην ἐνότητα τῆς ἐργασίας αὐτῆς συνδέονται στενῶς μετὰ τούς. Δὲν ἐπιζητεῖται ἡ ἐμβάθυνσις στὰ προ-βλήματα μιᾶς «κανονικῆς» μόνον μορφῆς τῆς καλλιτεχνικῆς καὶ τῆς πολιτι-στικῆς δημιουργίας, ἀφοῦ, ὡς ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας τῆς φύσεως τῆς δημιουργίας αὐτῆς, δὲν ὑπάρχει «κανονικότης», ἀλλ' ἀποκλειστικῶς μοναδικότης, τῶν ὁρθωμάτων τούτων. Ἱστορικότης καὶ δομικότης, συνεπῶς, ἀποτελοῦν τὶς θεμελιώδεις συνιστώσας τους, καὶ μόνον οἱ παράλληλες θεωρήσεις τους ἐπιτρέπουν πλήρη καὶ ὠλοκληρωμένην ἀξιολόγησίν τους.