Derrida: from pure reason to *marrano* reason

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Abstract: Derrida´s political thought witnesses the consequences of the logocentric rationality of domination and of the wars that have made homeless beings out of individuals. This essay aims to discuss some elements of the philosophical and political thought of the author, noting especially its relations with the concepts of identity and territorialization. Finally, the essay discusses the task of deconstruction and its relation to the ethics and politics of friendship.

Keywords: Derrida, identity, territorialization.

The book by Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other, Or, The Prosthesis of Origin*, evokes the France defeated by Hitler's forces and by the Nazi army from 1940, as well as the racist policy adopted by the Vichy government. With the Nuremberg laws of 1934, Jews and Gypsies lost their German nationality, the same occurring in France. A French Jew born in Algeria, as a child, Derrida knew only the official language of the Overseas Territory. Contrary to the current idea of the mother tongue being property derived from the ontological depositary, the author reflects on the nature of heritage bond and on the rhetoric of belonging. In occupied France, deprived of citizenship, the French Jews speak a language that becomes the language of the Other, producing a specific distance, a distance not of that which is further away, but of that which is closest. Exile, isolation and loneliness reveal what sedentary comfort and adequacy to the self hide. This sudden loss of citizenship and of language deconstructs the identity, affective or territorial illusion:

> Imagine, think of someone who cultivated French. Someone who denominated him/herself French. And that French would cultivate back. And that, a French citizen on top of that, this fellow would be, so to speak, of French culture. Well, one day, this fellow of French culture would tell you, in good French: "I only have one language and it is not mine" (Derrida, 1996, p. 13).

Between 1940 and 1943 the Jewish community of Algeria was deprived of citizenship and nationality "without being able to recover any other. None". Such is a community - who spoke only "colonized" French, maintaining almost no ties with Jewish tradition and with local languages, such as Arabic and Kabyle - in disintegration.

Exiled in their own land, living an exodus in immobility, those being chased see themselves excluded from the legal field, reduced to homo sacer and to "bare life". The foreigner is no longer the one who comes from the outside, but the one that is not in his/her place in any place. In a state of "extreme emptiness", Derrida could understand that the transmission of a language is neither natural nor artificial, and develops its reflections in full validity of the Linguistics of Saussure, of the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss and, more recently, of the linguistic turn and the "semiologic turn". From the arbitrarity of the sign, passing through language as system until its formalization in models, this is what Derrida names "logocentrism", the subordination of language in its *différance* to its orality, according to a "metaphysics of presence". Orality — speech and voice — are considered the "real rationality", being writing a secondary extension or supplement to voice, an auxiliary inessential technology with respect to reason: Saussure says that "the philological criticism is still deficient in one aspect — it slavishly follows written language and neglects living language. The reciprocal effect of writing over speech is wrong, such misconceptions are really pathological "(Saussure, cited by Derrida, 1967, p. 38). For Saussure, writing is "non-related ... to the internal system of language" (Derrida, 1967, p. 57). Derrida shows, through "deconstruction", through *différance* and through "trace", how linguistics and structuralism operate according to the binary opposition between a pure inner core or origin (of language, of voice) and the external mediation of this core or source that would be writing. For Derrida, the very possibility of supplementation of oral language exposes an essential lack in the very heart of this self-sufficient and "autonomous" linguistic system. Because for Derrida there is no pure source, to the question "when does writing begin", the author answers "always already". Postulating an origin of writing is not considering that writing is the structure of all complex systems on all their levels. Writing occupies a broader field than structuralism does, for it is its own condition of possibility of empirical writing and of language in general[1] (Derrida, 1967, p. 227). Thus, every mother tongue is not "natural", but a search for the self

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1 The "linguistic and semiologic turn" are final figures in the process of formalization of thought and its ideal of scientification of thought.

and a task of thought, a being alone with the self and a reach for the other with the difficulties that this entails. Derrida (1967) revisits Joyce's Ulysses, reviewing the question: "Are we Greek?" "Are we Jews?" "But who, us?" "Are we Jews first or Greek first?"[2] (This formulation is made by Eli Schonfeld (2005), referring to the relationship between Derrida and Lévinas). Such is the question of "origin" that Derrida deconstructs and, with it, the idea of Nation, understanding it not from politics but from language, in the difference (*différance*) between political Nation and cultural Nation, deconstruction that interrogates the nature of the political hierarchy of Nations and the power that its prestige is a carrier of. Deconstruction is not the transition of stability - guaranteed by the idea of center - to "liquid modernity", but the seizure of flexibility and decentering. This is why *différance* refers to *logos* no longer, but to forces that do not stabilize into an identity:

> That which lets itself be designated *différance* is neither simply active nor simply passive, announcing or rather recalling something like, the middle voice, saying an operation that is not an operation, an operation that cannot be conceived either as passion or as the action of a subject on an object, or on the basis of the categories of agent or patient, neither on the basis of nor moving toward any of these terms. (Derrida, 1991, p. 35)

Différance brings with it the Freudian concept of *Entstellung* — deformation and displacement. In *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud develops the conceiving of an Egyptian Moses, both by nationality and by culture, and that -- having

adopted the monotheistic religion of Akhenaton and Athon and being this faith unpopular in Egypt -- looking to spread his beliefs among the Jews, introduced among them the Egyptian custom of circumcision. In this sense, for Freud, one cannot be a Jew without somehow embodying Egypt or a "specter of Egypt". Jews would be neo-Egyptians who performed Egyptianism through Jewish means. This *Entstellung* (deformation, displacement and disfigurement) protects the Egyptian leaving him incognito and, once the goal is achieved, the head of Judaism could no longer tell himself whether he was Egyptian or Jewish. Considering that his project was more important than his origin, he becomes hetero-Egyptian, because "*défiguration*" concerns an uncertain territorialization. Difference and differentiation, present in differing, in postponing, evolve over time. This is the Derridian line of thought in *Fichus*, reception speech of the *Adorno Award* in Frankfurt. In it, Derrida refers to the meanings of the word *fichu* that as a noun, means the female scarf that covers the head, a shawl. As an adjective, "*fichu*" means "getting your fingers burnt", hitting a dead end, and as a verb, "*se ficher*" means "to mock someone", or even the eschatological sense of sexual background. Moreover, *Fichus* itself is a Derridian narrative displaced from a dream of Walter Benjamin in 1939 when he was on the run from Nazism and exiled in Paris. Derrida develops a second *Traumdeutung* of Benjamin's dream, which will be interpreted by Derrida who did not dream it. Not being the dreamer, this other that did not dream this dream and that reports it does so in a conceptual threshold beyond the conventions of the genre "interpretation of dreams":

> At this moment, speaking to you, standing up, eyes open, starting to thank you from the bottom of my heart, with the ghostly or *unheimlich*, uncanny gestures of a sleepwalker or even a bandit come to get his hands on a prize that wasn't meant for him, it's all as if I *were* dreaming. Admitting it, even: in truth, I am telling you that in gratefully greeting you, I think I'm dreaming. (Derrida, 2001a, p. 11)

Sleep and wake, "*rêve*" and "*reveil*" are associated in a "sleepwalking trance", in the uncertain share between dream and its daytime remnants, between the "inertia" of sleep and daytime activity, between the sleepy consciousness and the wake of the unconscious that watches all states of waken consciousness. Sleepwalking trance of insomniacs, these "seconds states" of consciousness have the mark of a passive activity, like the photographs of the ruins of Athens, in which the photographer photographs himself photographing, amid "the day and night of the unconscious", the archaeology and psychoanalysis that bring to mind "*Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis*" by Freud. He wondered what the photographer was thinking in

> recording the speed of light with speed of light itself: was he thinking of the Athens of everyday, of

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2 Being Greek or Jew requires reflection on origin, and so the question refers to Philosophy and Theology. For Derrida, Philosophy is the "first science", for Benjamin, it is Theology. Jewish-Greek, Messiah is for him an essential operator, while for Derrida, a "Greek-Jew", the "source" is the object of deconstruction. Philosophy and Theology thus designed address the nature of *logos* and language. For Benjamin, there is an original language that is first of all an "ancestral palace" that is not a simple system of signs or a communication tool, but a medium, an environment in which all communication happens, in its subscriptions more or less dense and the passage from one to another is the translation: "beyond the awareness that philosophical knowledge is absolutely certain and a priori, beyond the awareness of those aspects of philosophy that identify mathematics, Kant completely neglected the fact that all philosophical knowledge has its unique expression in language, not in formulas and numbers" (Benjamin, 1981, p. 168). Kant neglected language metaphysics, the "pure language" (*reine Sprache*), which refers not only to the adamitic language that, in the Bible, pre-exists the dispersal of post-Babel languages because the *reine Sprache* is related to *reine Vernunft*. This language previous to the empirical languages and that makes them language is the language of truth, which makes translatability possible, but in a specific sense, "translatability is essentially itself to certain works, and this does not mean that its translation is essential for themselves, but that a certain significance inherent in the original, expressed in their translatability. A translation, however good it is, means nothing to the original, it is an evidence" (Bernjamin, 1981, p. 170). Because the essence of a work never transferred to the translation, Benjamin emphasizes the sterility of the task when he translated. In a letter to Hofmannsthal, he wrote: "It is clear to me that all translation work, unless it is undertaken for clearly evident and compelling practical purposes (whose model is the translation of the Bible) or the intention to strictly philological studies, necessarily contains an air of nonsense". Maybe this is why his translations of Baudelaire are formalist and "scholar" (letter to Scholem of January 13, 1924).

the Athens of today or of the eternal Athens? Was he already haunted by the stratified ruin of all the Athenian memories he would have wanted to take in view, to shoot, this day, today , under this sun, but for every day and forever? .... One might as well ask what takes place when, photographed in the process of photographing (himself), photographed photographing,active and passive at the same time, in the same time, that is, during time itself — which will always have been this auto-affective experience of passactivity. (Derrida, 1996, p. 4)

To consider this state and develop his analyses, Derrida "refigures" words, displaces a noun or an adjective into a verb, but a verb in its simultaneously active and passive forms: "I sleepwalk," says Derrida. With this, the philosopher not only infringes the state of sleep and the state of wake, destabilizing them, as he also spectralizes - decomposing and phantomalizing them - states of consciousness, dreaming with eyes open and sleeping while standing up.

If *Fichus* is a dream that Derrida inherited from another, the question is knowing whether who dreams the dream is the one who dreams it or the one who questions it. An issue that deviates to another, of the difference between dream and reality. In the words of the philosopher: "can the dreamer talk about his dream without waking?" Derrida finds possible answers in the sphere of philosophy, literature and similar areas. In philosophy, the "rational imperative of the wake", of the "ruler of myself", because "what is philosophy for the philosopher? Wake and awakening"(Derrida, 2001a, p. 13). But "the answer of the filmmaker, of the playwright, of the writer, of the musician, of the painter and even of the psychoanalyst" (p. 18) could be another: "They would not answer *no*, but *yes, maybe, sometimes*.... There is thus a clarity, an *Aufklãrung* in the speech of the dreamer about the dream.... Hesitating between 'no' and 'yes, sometimes, maybe', both [are welcomed]." (p. 18)[3]

Benjamin's dream questioned by Derrida is the hermeneutics of a dream which belongs to another, like the language that is not his. And between dreams and dreamers, as happens between languages, alliances, passwords, passages and "traces" are established. This non-coincidence of something with itself does not mean that it is out of itself, because it is "a negativity without denial", inscriptions without thickness, expressions of a "between-two", appearance and disappearance in an uncertain interval between the absence of a presence and the presence of an absence. That is why Derrida indicates the "ghosts", specters of deconstruction, of "*hantologie*". "*Je suis hanté*" is the condition of being harassed by a thing of the past, by

obsessive tracks of which the arch-inscription is the Judeo-Egyptian ambivalence of Moses.

"*Hantologie*" concerns the non-identity of all identity, in which there is no return to a previous specificity, even if desired, because in the deepest of what is specific the indelible mark of the Other is recorded, no matter how shredded it is: "the ghost", writes Derrida,

is a paradoxical embodiment, the state of becoming a body, a somewhat phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit: nor soul nor body, but also both. Because flesh and phenomenality are what give the spirit its spectral appearance, that however disappears in its appearance, in the coming of the ghost or return of the specter. There is something disappeared in disappearance itself, as reappearance of the disappeared. The spirit, the specter, are not the same thing..., but [what] they have in common, it is not known what it is, what it is presently. It is something that is not known, precisely, and it is not known whether, for a fact, that is, if this has a name and corresponds to an essence. It is not known: not by ignorance, but because this non-object, this present not present, this being-there of what is missing or disappeared does not depend on knowing no longer. (Derrida, 1993, p. 25-26)

When Derrida claims to have a single language and that it is not his, but of an Other, he follows up, displacing it, the interpretation of Freud on the issue of identity and origin. In this reconfiguration of the tongue there is a "disturbing" feeling, a situation similar to the pariah's, in the paradox of impossible inclusion and of impossible exclusion. Derrida elaborates the condition of those of who live on the margins, without reference to a political community. After the First World War, the fall of the Russian Empire, of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, as well as the political reordering of Eastern Europe, the racial laws under Nazism and the Spanish civil war, a refugee population spread over Europe as a continuous mass phenomenon. The stateless person and the refugee, although they bear differences concerning legal and symbolic belongings, refer, in industrialized States, to "non-stable residents" and non-citizens, who cannot be naturalized nor repatriated. In this sense, the Derridian deconstruction of the dream and of the *fichu* detects their heterogeneity, manifesting the fragility and vulnerability of Benjamin (and of Adorno) amidst the rise of Nazism and, simultaneously, of the animal, in what it leads back to the animality of man, that exposes him to the condition of "sacrificial victim". The "interpretation of dreams" of Derrida goes "Beyond beyond the pleasure principle", it is another way to relate to cruelty, to State Sovereignty and to death, which has hermeneutics that surpasses the "death drive":

I will assert that there is — or should be — a reference to the unconditional, an unconditional without

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3   Benjamin refers to Adorno and to the "dreams" that are damaged, mutilated, hindered by the awakening, as if the dream "was more vigilant than the vigil, the unconsciousness more reflexive than consciousness, literature or the arts more philosophical, more critic, than philosophy" (Derrida, 2001a, p.18).

sovereignty and thus without cruelty [as an originary statement] *from which* and, therefore, *beyond which* death and power drives, cruelty and sovereignty are determined as 'beyond' principles. ... This originary statement from beyond beyond is made from numerous figures of the unconditional impossible: hospitality, gift, forgiveness. (Derrida, 2000, p. 82-83)

Derridian deconstruction searches for what in marginality is marginal and what is not, evoking the aporia of proximity in distance and of distance in proximity. And Derrida does so through the interposed character of Spinoza and Flaubert. In "*Une idée de Flaubert*", Derrida addresses the relations of the novelist with philosophy and his "hyperbolic admiration" for Spinoza: "*Quel homme! quel cerveau! Quelle science et quel esprit!*" (Derrida, 1987, p. 310). If Flaubert is addressing the critical power of the *Political-Theological Treatise* — in which Spinoza discusses Moses and monotheism, the prophecy and the election of the people — he evokes *Ethics* and the "idea of idea" as well:

> It is exactly in the same way that thoughts and ideas of things order and concatenate themselves in the mind, that also order and concatenate themselves the affections of the body, that is, the images of things in the body.... As the mind understands things as necessary, it has more power over their affections, that is, suffers less because of them. (Spinoza, 2013, pp. 373-375)

By making reason an affection, by breaking with the idea of perfect and imperfect and with the hierarchy that they imply, by reflecting on the power of being, acting and thinking that is in passion and in action, Spinoza differs himself from the metaphysical *logos*. When considering Spinoza's "idea" – nor Cartesian, nor Platonic (nor Hegelian nor Marxist) – Derrida writes: "Spinoza's idea ... does not give way to any representation, mimetic or not ... and Spinoza is opposed to tradition, especially to the Cartesian idea, the act or the statement [opposed] to reproductive copy or even to its modeling" (Derrida, 1987, pp. 323-324). Without many references to Spinoza, Derrida is also "impregnated" with his presence, as is Flaubert: "Although Flaubert, admirer of Spinoza, does not refer to Spinoza's idea as such", the silence itself makes one think that the affirmative force of this idea got confused, somehow, "with the act of its writing, with literature, with his own work" (Derrida, 1987, pp. 323-324).

With this, Derrida indicates his approach to the philosophy of Spinoza, the philosopher critic of the dualist and mimetic "logos", the "philosopher of life". Because Spinoza's concept of *conatus* is the effort of self-preservation and growth of vitality, he differs himself from Freud who dramatically opposes "death drive" to the *conatus*. In Spinoza, it is the happiness that is born of joy and company, of friendship:

> Since reason demands nothing against nature, it concedes that each man must love himself, and seek what is useful to him, and desire whatever leads him truly to a greater state of perfection; and that each man should endeavor to preserve his being so far as in him lies.... It is completely impossible that we do not need anything exterior to us in order to conserve our being, and that we live in a way that does not allow us any exchange with things that are outside of us.... Among them, none other can be considered better than those that are entirely in accordance with our nature.... From this it follows that the men who are governed by reason, that is, men seeking, under the guidance of reason, what is useful to them, want nothing for them that they do not also wish to others and are, therefore, fair, trustworthy and loyal. (Spinoza, 2013, pp. 287-289)

In the same way that Spinoza's freedom is the awareness of necessity and, thus, the active becoming of a passion into action, in Derrida there is in the concept of *différance* a "reconciliation", passion is not just passive, difference is no longer referred to as *logos*, because difference and differentiation of forces could not be neutralized in an identity or synthesis. If Spinoza criticizes the notion of "chosen people" and of "Jewish identity" which, as with every "election" and fixed identity, engender, in excluding the other, the exclusion of the self, Derrida reflects on the colony and the metropolis beyond the center-periphery, Jewish-Gentile, Algerian-French binomials.

Think of Espinosa in Holland and Derrida in Algeria, of the 17th century Marrano and the "stateless man" under the Vichy laws (Agamben, 1994), of the *différance* between Derrida and Espinosa. On proposition 17 of Book III of *Ethics*, Spinoza defines "fluctuation of soul" as the "structure of the Spirit born from two opposing affections", basis of the ambivalence of who finds himself torn between two contradictory poles, between a desire of belonging (or belonging once more) to the Jewish people as the chosen people and, on the other side, the reticence, the critical retreat with respect to the return to the Jewish community of Amsterdam, that is, to the institution of Rabbinic Judaism. Abensour reflects on the condition of the Jew as "new Christian" and as "new Jew". To understand the Marrano, Abensour considers him as double in himself.

At first, the Marrano was the "new Christian" under the laws of forced conversion in the Catholic Spain of 1492 and, after the immigration to Holland, with the freedom of worship, he was able to regain his identity as a Jew and as a practitioner of the Mosaic law, becoming, thus, the Marranos, "new Jews". It is known through Weber that the Jewish people, to some extent, could be defined as "pariah people", a guest-community in a foreign land which it differentiates itself from formally, ritually and effectively. Under the constraints of a forced conversion, the Marrano condition is to live in two simultaneous realities, in public life, externally, as new Christians, and in private life and

in the Jewish community while continuing to reject the law of Christ. In this sense, there is in Marranos a "crypto-Judaism", early "deformed", "displaced", "disfigured", "reconfigured":

> Another duality arose in their lives: of essence and of existence, of the reality of life and of what should be its deep meaning. Thus, the Judaizing Marrano did not experience alienation of its Catholic surroundings only, but also an intimate kind of alienation, within his own being, which he could not expose to the light of day; so his life and essence remained perpetually opposed to one another. (Yovel, 1991, p. 42)

The Marranos which became Jews once more did not recover a full identity which could exceed the internal division experienced by their ancestors. If the oscillation of the new Christian was between a public Christian existence and a Mosaic clandestine one, the one of the new Jew is another, because he fluctuates between his new state of belonging to the chosen people and an irrepressible critical distance in the face of a Judaism that now is no longer imaginary and phantomalized, but real. This reluctance and resistance occurred in the internalization of Christianity and of the influence of Epicureanism regarding the idea of revealed religion, Epicureanism applied now to Judaism. Thus, the struggle with the Inquisition is replaced by the conflict with Rabbinical authorities of the "real Judaism": "the contents of Judaism had disappeared from the horizon of Marranos and it could not have been otherwise: their ties to Judaism were strong enough to make it hard living naively in the interior of the Christian world, but too weak to make life inside the Jewish world possible" (Strauss , 1996, p. 34). This tension between two religions — Judaism and Christianity — produces doubt, comings and goings, skeptical removal, but also interferences, hybridizations, "double sincerities" (Wachtel, 2001, p. 15). The relationship to the Other materializes like a "trace", like a "vestige" of the Other in me, as "spectral" presentification or "conciliation", like in tongues. In *Margins of Philosophy* he discusses *différance* that is not a process of "propriation" in any sense of the word, because, unlike the "propriation" of Heidegger (Heidegger, 1968), there is no "propriation" that does not imply in itself the most originary dimension of "disappropriation". So for Derrida, *différance* bears the meanings of differing, of being the common root of oppositions, of producing conflicts and developments of difference (Derrida, 1972, p. 17). This is also true for languages.

In Judaism, the language of paradise, the original language prior to Babel, was Hebrew which, as such, was one and only, the multiplicity of languages was, as for Benjamin, its collapse; for Derrida, the language prior to Babel was already multiple in itself. Differences that communicate differences, the language of origin is Pentecost *avant-la-lettre*, in which everyone spoke several languages, but they all understood each other in a kind of "simultaneous translation".

Derrida, "Greek Jew", approaches the Greek world. If, for it, the language of the golden age was Greek, it was so for reasons different from those related to Hebrew, because Athens was searching in origin the *différance*, its hallucinatory and surreal power, the diversity of senses, while Jerusalem found in the language of paradise an unitary and essential origin. From *heteros* to *allii*, language, for Derrida, is mixed, "contaminated", hybrid. If "*heteros*" is the other of the "One", unchanged in itself, "*allii*" are the others in the Same. If Babel is the divine punishment and loss of the "universal language", now available to translation, this initiates the deconstruction of the tower as universal language and gives way to violence: "[God] disperses family affiliation. He cuts off the lineage. He imposes and forbids, simultaneously, translation" (Derrida, 1998, p. 207). Necessary and impossible, translation improperly says what is proper, Babel meaning, precisely, "confusion".

For Derrida, the "Marrano" without melancholy, the originary uprooting is within the interior of languages themselves[4], words containing, such as *pharmakon*, at least two meanings, supportive of one another, not admitting any internal or external division, since we only know our own language if we relate to it as a foreign language:

> If I love the French language like I love my own life, sometimes more than a native Frenchman does, that is because I love it as a foreigner who was well welcomed and who appropriated it like it was for him the only one possible.... All the Frenchmen of Algeria share this with me, whether or not they are Jews. ... I have only one language, but at the same time, in a unique and exemplary way, this language does not belong to me. ... A singular story exacerbated in me this universal law: a language does not belong. It does not belong by essence (Derrida, 2006, pp. 35-36)

The idea of "election" and "origin" of a language result in the particularisms of "election-exclusion". In this sense, there are no particular languages that rank among each other, no language chosen naturally, similar to how Spinoza, in the chapter "About the Vocation of Hebrews. Or if the gift of prophecy belongs to them" of his *Political Theological Treatise*, questioned the idea of election of the Jewish people, according to which there would be two different natural laws, one for the Jews, another for the Gentiles, because "true happiness and true beatitude consist only in the enjoyment of good and not in this bragging of enjoying good by yourself, others being excluded "(Spinoza, 1999, p. 50). Friendship politics, underlies in the thoughts of Spinoza and Derrida the consideration of

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4 Besides incorporating previously non-existent words and to the literary and philosophic language, Derrida also resignifies many others, giving them new meanings, as he did for: différance, Pharmakon, chaîne, marca, re-marca, trace, dissémination, supplement, greffe, ex-orbitant.

what constitutes a society and the bonds between men, being it necessary to observe what is there in common rather than what separates them: "the supreme good of those who seek virtue is common to all, and all can equally enjoy it." (Spinoza, 2013, pp. 401, 403). In this sense, the election has an effect of producing distance and fracture among those that the election brings together and those that are not called, while at the same time expressing a "collective pride": "we thus see that it so easily happens that man makes of himself and of what he loves an estimate above what is fair and, contrarily, of who he hates, below what is fair. This imagination, when it concerns the man who makes of himself an estimate above what is fair, is called pride and is a kind of delirium. " (Espinosa, 2013, p. 193).

This illusion of superiority ruins coexistence and happiness, being contrary to beatitude. There would not be less happiness "If God had called all men to salvation in the same way". So when Moses gives the Law to the Jews, he instructs them "as parents have the habit of teaching children devoid of common sense". Election and origin do not attest to the wisdom of a people, they are a symptom of puerility such as xenophobia, nationalisms, chauvinisms. Spinoza's "universal" search of *conatus* and its becomings, Derrida's *différance* and its semantizations bring apart the existence doomed to the acosmism of the pariah (Arendt, 2000, p. 562), opening it to the welcoming of the Other, to friendship and hospitality. Thus, if "I have only one language and it is not mine" that is because it is simultaneously mine and not mine, as in the city there is no dualism between the resident and the foreigner. One is one and the other, always a guest and a foreigner.

Derrida begins his *Hospitality* by asking: "Isn't the question of the foreigner a foreigner's question? Coming from the foreigner, from abroad? Isn't "universality" not an abstract idea because it does not submit to the criteria of the *logos*? That is why, in analyzing Lévinas' thoughts, Derrida highlights a peculiar sense of "election" of Israel as absolute and exemplary estrangement of a people without a land of origin. Between Greece and Jerusalem, between Ulysses and Abraham, the difference is the one that exists between *nostos* and *exodus*, two forms of travel and departure. If the former lives in the light of the return to Ithaca, the latter aspires to a homeland where he was not born and every step taken towards it does not get him closer to a land, it is not a home that already belonged to him: "the assertion of the Nomad truth," says Blanchot, "distinguishes Judaism from paganism.... Nomadism is the answer to a relationship for which ownership is not enough. This nomadic movement affirms itself not as perennial deprivation of a headquarters, but as an authentic mode of inhabiting" (Blanchot, 1961, p. 170). Thus, the question of what comes from the outside and what is from the inside is always something that comes from the foreigner, the bearer of the question. Indeed, in Plato' *Sophist*, it is the foreigner who

> proposing the intolerable question, the parricidal question, disputes Parmenides' thesis, puts into

question the *logos* of our father Parmenides.... The foreigner shakes the threatening dogma of the paternal *logos*: the being that is, and the non-being that is not. As if the foreigner should start challenging the authority of the chief, of the father, of the lord, of the family, of the "master of the house", of the power of hospitality. (Derrida, 1997b, p. 165)

In this horizon, the foreigner is the "third wheel", someone who is always and only an outsider, the one who "got there first", that "deprives us of security and makes what is to-be come". This "guest" or "unexpected visitor" comes from the future, contrary to the notion that what happens to us is determined in relation to the past: "*unexpected* and *unpredictable* event of who arrives, at any time, early or late, in absolute lack of temporality, uninvited, unannounced, without a horizon of waiting" (Derrida, 2001b, p. 296).

If a language is ours, it is like a home, "only owned because it has been since always a place of hospitality" to its owner. In this sense, the space that hosts is always of an other and for others, there being no return to an originary property. Hospitality precedes property:

> the host that welcomes others and who believes to be the owner of the place is, in fact, a guest welcomed in his own home. He receives the hospitality he offers *in* his own home, receives it *from* his own home - that deep down does not belong to him.... Who invites is a guest of his guest. He who receiveth is received, receives [hospitality] in the place that he considers to be his own home and thus his own land. (Derrida, 1997b, pp. 103-104)

Within this proximity is the enigma of contraries, as *ospis* and *hostis*, hospitality and hostility, the proximity in distance and the distance in proximity. By deconstructing *philia* and *neikos*, love and hate, friend and foe, Derrida deconstructs duality, all opposition that prematurely certify opposition, to find the "exception", the "exceedance" of this opposition, the "agreement", that is, for Derrida, peace. The refusal of the abrupt sharing, of metaphysical origin, does not befit the times under a law of immediate decision, always violent, a law of here and now: "the passive decision", writes Derrida,

> condition of the event, is always in me, structurally, another event, a rending decision as the decision of the other. Of the absolute other in me, the other as the absolute that decides on me in me. Absolutely singular in principle, according to its most traditional concept, the decision is not only always exceptional, it makes an exception forlof me. In me. I decide, I make up my mind in all sovereignty. This would mean: the other than myself, the me as other and other than myself, he makes or I make an exception of the same. This normal exception,

the supposed norm of all decision, exonerates from no responsibility. Responsible for myself before the other, I am first of all and also responsible for the other before the other. (Derrida, 1994, pp. 87-88)

Every time a decision is made we can feel the injustice done against the disregarded choice, and thus find ourselves trapped: "when you elect something," writes Peter Sloterdijk, "you expose yourself to the risk of identification, and avoiding it was always the overwhelming concern of Derrida. Deconstruction would need to be considered, first of all, as a procedure intended to protect intelligence against the consequences of one-sidedness" (Sloterdijk, 2007, p. 55). That is why Derrida reverses the declaration attributed to Aristotle —"o, my friends, there is no friend" — following the paradox of Nietzsche-"enemies, there are no enemies". And this in the sense that Montaigne noted: "love him — said Chilon — as if you should one day hate him; hate him as if you should love him". Or, in William Blake's verses cited by Derrida: "your friendship often hurt me heart/be my enemy for the sake of friendship". A kind of wording that should be opposite to that of Nietzsche when he writes: "who lives off the fight against an enemy has an interest to keep him alive" (Nietzsche, 2000, p. 176)[5]. Derrida understands this statement in terms of a "superior friendship", in the oxymoron: the "loyal enemy", hyperbolic Ethics here, such as of the gift which, within the limit of its impossibility, cannot be known as donation, a gift that does not operate within the registry of retribution, that is forgotten in the very act of giving, as pure gratuitousness and grace. As hospitality, the unconditional welcoming of the visitor, of the "supplicant". Like Oedipus who, deposed, blind and aged, arrives at Coloneus, and is received by the king, Oedipus who is Oedipus is no longer, but whom is told like every unexpected visitor and supplicant: "Come in, whoever you are and whatever is your name, your tongue, your gender, your species, be it human, animal or divine.... In this undecidability of borders, of the delimitation of a stable territory, the condition of Oedipus is exemplary: "is the offering of hospitality dependant on the assured existence of a home or is only the dislocation of the homeless, of the shelterless necessary to assure the authenticity of hospitality?" (Derrida, 1997b, p. 56).

Only the one who lost his home, who experienced "desolation", the loss of all belonging, can offer hospitality. This hospitality without claims is the sense of hospitality that makes no reference to sovereignty: "for such an experience [of hospitality], that lets itself be transversed by that which arrives and by who arrives, by that which comes and by who comes, by the *other to come*, a certain resignation unconditional to sovereignty is requested *a priori*" (Derrida, 2003, pp. 12-13). This radical, absolute hospitality, is simultaneously impracticable and necessary, it allows the other to be another, because it welcomes the appeal of who is "worldess", of who does not speak our language. He should be welcomed, not because of the logic of reason and of universal human rights, not for being a man like us, but because he brings with him that which in him cannot be reduced to genus and to the calculation of the necessary, nor to the logic of self-giving and of gratitude, "the invitation, the welcoming, the asylum, the accommodation are... the addressing to the other". But, "what is always lurking is the dilemma between unconditional hospitality that goes beyond right, duty and even politics, on the one hand and, on the other hand, hospitality circumscribed by law and by duty." (Derrida, 1997b, p. 119).

Hospitality does not ask the other to translate himself into our traditions and our language. So Derrida may then say "I only have one language and it is not mine", and have started his speech in Frankfurt with the words: "I'm sorry, I'm about to greet you in my language. Language will be my theme: the language of the other, the language of the guest, the language of the foreigner, even of the immigrant, of the emigrated or the exiled" (Derrida, 2001b, p. 9). On the outskirts of the Empire, Jew and without citizenship, in the condition of a foreigner without fatherland, Derrida finds himself deprived of a language that does not belong to him anymore. In having it as a foreign language, he could claim loving it and knowing it, because we only know our own language when we receive it as a foreign language.

Speaking in French, in the language in which he found hospitality, in this language of the Other that is his *ethos*, Derrida acknowledges a "gift without refund, without ownership and without jurisdiction". Hyperbolic ethics, beyond "beyond", beyond jurisdiction and law, is friendship politics.

Derrida: da razão pura à razão marrana

Resumo: O pensamento político de Derrida testemunha as consequências da racionalidade logocêntrica de dominação e das guerras que fizeram dos indivíduos seres sem domicílio fixo. Este ensaio tem como objetivo discutir alguns elementos do pensamento filosófico e político do autor, observando especialmente suas relações com os conceitos de identidade e territorialização. Por fim, o ensaio discute a tarefa da desconstrução e sua relação com a ética e a política da amizade.

Palavras-chave: Derrida, identidade, territorialização.

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5   "The gift is an entire strange to the horizon of economy, ontology, knowledge, constative statements, and theoretical judging." (Derrida, 1992, p. 9)

Derrida: de la raison pure à la raison *marrane*

Résumé: La pensée politique de Derrida témoin des conséquences de la rationalité logocentrique de domination et de guerres qui ont fait des individus êtres sans-abri. Cet essai a pour but de discuter de certains éléments de la pensée philosophique et politique de l'auteur, en notant en particulier ses relations avec les concepts d'identité et de territorialisation. Enfin, l'essai traite de la tâche de déconstruction et de sa relation avec l'éthique et la politique de l'amitié.

Mots-clés: Derrida, identité, territorialisation

Derrida: desde la razón pura a la razón *mezclada*

Resumen: El pensamiento político de Derrida es testigo de las consecuencias de la racionalidad logocéntrica de dominación y de las guerras que que hicieron de los individuos seres sin domicilio fijo. Este ensayo tiene como objetivo discutir algunos elementos del pensamiento filosófico y político del autor, teniendo en cuenta especialmente sus relaciones con los conceptos de identidad y territorialización. Por último, el ensayo discute la tarea de deconstrucción y su relación con la ética y la política de la amistad.

Palabras clave: Derrida, identidad, territorialización.

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