FREEDOM FROM WHAT? FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE, AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN THE CONTEXT OF POWER

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Abstract
This conceptual paper explores the complex relationship between power and freedom, with special reference to freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of religion. Starting from a relational definition of power as "action upon action" (Foucault, 1982), and a logical definition of freedom as "*of* something, *from* something, *to* do something" (MacCallum, 1967), I suggest two original typologies of power and, respectively, freedom – in interconnection. Fully restoring cognition, emotion, volition, and the self to this model moreover informs a universal principle of legitimacy, a dynamic network of integrated interaction, and the conceptual relationship between thought, conscience, and religion themselves.

Keywords: authority, autonomy, behaviour, belief, freedom, legitimacy, power

"*verbum hoc pre ceteris norunt ignorare*"
(*Carmina Burana*, 3, 3)[1]

1. Is freedom slavery?

What does it mean to speak *correctly*? Let us but, by way of illustration, mention one more time the well-known fact by students of religion that in China there are two main native traditions, two "religions", two

1 "This word, rather than any other word, they know how to ignore" (my own translation; quoted from the standard edition of *Carmina Burana*, Hilka, Schumann, & Bischoff, 1930-1970: vol. 1, 4).

"philosophies"[2] (in contrast, by its origin Buddhism being a "foreign faith"[3]), that deeply shaped this vast and varied country's intellectual history since antiquity into modernity: *i. e.*, Confucianism versus Taoism[4]. Moreover, it is customary, and indeed an age-old intellectual exercise, to pit Confucianism against Taoism in order to try and determine their respective strengths and weaknesses; so, to begin with, would Confucius in a dark and distant past meet memorably Lao Tzu, the legendary founder of Taoism, and "meeting Lao Tzu, it was like facing a dragon"[5], and so on. And yet, behind the obvious differences that give each of these two traditions its distinctive flavour, there also must be commonalities, in so far as both may perhaps be likened to two twin rivers running across the bedrock of one single culture. Therefore, it is as difficult as is irrelevant to make a laundry list of commonalities and/ or of differences between the two traditions; rather, instead, a single commonality will have to do for the more modest purpose of the present paper. Confucius' *Analects* (XIII, 3) record the following exchange: "Adept Lu said: 'If the Lord of Wei wanted you to govern his country, what would you put first in importance?' 'The rectification of

2 Rotaru, 2005: 55-58.

3 Caustically construed for instance by Han Yü twelve centuries ago in his double-edged poem *Girl from Splendor-Bloom Mountain* (the standard translation is Hinton, 2008: 253-254).

4 I refrain from discussing in any detail, due to reasonable constraints of space, the fundamental fact that "religion", "philosophy", and also "faith" are *stricto sensu* three misnomers when applied to the native traditions of China (or India, for that matter) – *cf*. Eliade, 1969: V; Assmann, 2008: 10 *sqq*.; and Assmann, 2010: 12-15. And this is incidentally, I argue, the main reason why South, and South-East, and East Asia have a deeply different sense of freedom of thought, of freedom of conscience, and of freedom of religion from our (traditionally Christian) West. *Cf*. the single, simple case of Japan: "The US government estimates the total population at 126.5 million (July 2017 estimate). A report by the government Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA) indicates that membership in religious groups totaled 188 million as of December 31, 2015. This number, substantially more than the country's population, reflects many citizens' affiliation with multiple religions. For example, it is common for followers of Buddhism to participate in religious ceremonies and events of other religions, such as Shinto, and vice versa. According to the ACA, the definition of follower and the method of counting followers vary with each religious organization, and religious affiliation includes 89 million Shinto followers, 88 million Buddhists, and 1.9 million Christians, while 8.7 million follow other religions. The category of 'other' and nonregistered religious groups includes Islam, the Bahai Faith, Hinduism, and Judaism. The indigenous Ainu people mainly practice an animist faith and are concentrated in northern Honshu and Hokkaido with smaller numbers in Tokyo" (United States Department of State, 2017: 1).

5 Hinton, 2013: 13.

names," replied the Master. 'Without a doubt'"[6]. This brief excerpt, at least to my mind unmistakably makes breathe the same sobering breeze as Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* (in chapter 81): "Sincere words are never beautiful/ and beautiful words never sincere"[7].

Why is this so? This should be so, I argue, in so far as both excerpts can be quite usefully construed as meditations in a nutshell on the shared topic of the *correct speech*. This commonality sheds light indeed on much more than the distinct, and long since discovered, difficulty to transplant our (traditionally Christian) Western concepts such as freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, due to deep-seated differences in culture, to alien contexts such as ancient and/ or modern China. This commonality sheds light in turn on much more than the very complex and ever evolving status of Christian denominations in Imperial and/ or in communist China[8]. This commonality sheds light

6 "'That's crazy!' countered Lu. 'What does rectification have to do with anything?' 'You're such an uncivil slob', said the Master. 'When the noble-minded can't understand something, they remain silent. Listen. If names aren't rectified, speech doesn't follow from reality. If speech doesn't follow from reality, endeavours never come to fruition. If endeavours never come to fruition, the Ritual and music cannot flourish. If Ritual and music cannot flourish, punishments don't fit the crime. If punishments don't fit the crime, people can't put their hands and feet anywhere without fear of losing them. Naming enables the noble-minded to speak, and speech enables the noble-minded to act. Therefore, the noble-minded are anything but careless in speech" (Hinton, 2013: 314-315).

7 "The noble are never eloquent/ and the eloquent never noble./ The knowing are never learned/ and the learned never knowing.// A sage never hoards:// the more you do for others/ the more plenty is yours,/and the more you give to others/ the more abundance is yours.// The Way of heaven is to profit without causing harm,/ and the Way of a sage to act without contending" (Hinton, 2013: 122).

8 According to Professor Voegelin's world-famous concept (1939), communism is itself a quite important "political religion", imported from the West much later than Christianity. The concept of *political religion* should not be used without qualification, however. "Into this context belong the studies that I published under the title *Die politischen Religionen* in 1938. When I spoke of the *politischen Religionen*, I conformed to the usage of a literature that interpreted ideological movements as a variety of religions. Representative for this literature was Louis Rougier's successful volume on *Les Mystiques politiques*. The interpretation is not all wrong, but I would no longer use the term religions because it is too vague and already deforms the real problem of experiences by mixing them with the further problem of dogma or doctrine. Moreover, in *Die politische Religionen* I still pooled together such phenomena as the spiritual movement of Ikhnaton, the medieval theories of spiritual and temporal power, apocalypses, the *Leviathan* of Hobbes, and certain National-Socialist symbolisms. A more adequate treatment would have required far-reaching differentiations between these various phenomena" (Voegelin, 1990-2009, 78-79). However, despite Voegelin's own later reservations, the concept had already gained traction, and was applied, *inter alia*, to communism, fascism, and National-Socialism.

in sum on much more than the very presence and increased awareness within our globalized[9] and pluralistic Western societies of large numbers of Confucians and of Taoists (and Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, to also mention native *Indian* traditions, and therefore turn our Chinese illustration into a local stepping stone leading toward a truly global context). Because – beyond these fundamental facts, some ancient and some modern, some very remote and some quite intimate – beheld miles and millennia away from ancient China, the words abovementioned of both Confucius and the legendary Lao Tzu can usefully be read, I argue (by "triangulation", to adopt and to adapt a fashionable concept), in the complex context of Orwell's 1946 essay, *Politics and the English Language*: many a word we utter in the world today is worn out and thus utterly inadequate to further serve as food for thought ("but if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought"[10]). A word, and concept, thus corrupted is, for instance, the word and concept that we specially concern with in the present paper, *i. e.*, "freedom"[11].

"Freedom is slavery", runs the Party slogan in Orwell's fictional Oceania (as depicted in his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*[12]). "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it", contends one of its characters[13]. And he concludes:

> Even the slogans will change. How could you have a slogan like "freedom is slavery" when the concept of freedom has been

9 Rotaru, 2014: 532-541.

10 Orwell & Angus, 1968: vol. 4, 137.

11 "Many political words are similarly abused. The word *Fascism* has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies 'something not desirable'. The words *democracy*, *socialism*, *freedom*, *patriotic*, *realistic*, *justice*, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like *democracy*, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it: consequently the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning. Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way. That is, the person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different" (Orwell & Angus, 1968: vol. 4, 132-133).

12 Orwell, 2003: 4.

13 Orwell, 2003: 53.

> abolished? The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking – not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness[14].

This brief excerpt raises more questions than it answers. First, it rehearses a rhetoric that might be labelled *secular* actually, at least, if not also, to take a further step, potentially anti-religious, in so far as Orwell makes quite frequent use of the religious lexicon (*e. g.*, "orthodoxy", in this excerpt) in order to describe or, rather, to explain the inner workings of his fictional totalitarian regime[15]. Thus, he apparently tends here as elsewhere in his life and work toward the intellectual trend forcefully summarized, for instance, by Professor Smith ("in the twentieth century, monotheism has been criticized as a totalizing discourse that tends toward an exclusivity of others and consequently a potential for inducing violence")[16]. But, then again, this certainly is Orwell's inalienable right, *i. e.*, to freely think and/ or believe whatever he chooses to think and to believe, including in the instance when free thought becomes freethought. And let alone the fundamental fact that this quite influential intellectual trend, running from Hume, through Orwell, to Professor Assmann[17] and

14 Orwell, 2003: 54. *Cf*. Calder's comment in a broader context: "one of the most insistent features of Blair/Orwell throughout his life and writing career is his hatred of orthodoxy" (1985: 27).

15 An insightful analysis of Orwell's approach is, *e. g.*, Hunt, 2013.

16 Smith, 2001: 11.

17 For instance, in Assmann's critique of the "intolerance" of monotheism as "secondary religion" as "counterreligion": "The concept of 'counterreligion' is intended to draw out the potential for negation that inheres within secondary religions. These religions are also essentially 'intolerant', although again, this should not be taken as a reproach. Two hundred and fifty years ago, David Hume not only argued that polytheism is far older than monotheism, he also advanced the related hypothesis that polytheism is tolerant, whereas monotheism is intolerant. This is an age-old argument, which I had no intention of revisiting in my Moses book. Secondary religions *must* be intolerant, that is, they must have a clear conception of what they feel to be incompatible with their truths if these truths are to exert the life-shaping authority, normativity, and binding force that they claim for themselves. In each case, counterreligions have transformed, from the ground up, the historical realities amidst which they appeared. Their critical and transformative force is sustained by their negative energy, their power of negation and exclusion. How they deal with their structural intolerance is another matter. That is not my concern here, although I want to note in passing my belief that religions ought to work through the problem rather than attempting to deny that it even exists. Significant progress has undoubtedly been made on this front in recent years" (Assmann, 2010: 14). ...

beyond[18] – is in reality historically flawed[19]. More pertinent perhaps is, second, Orwell's elaboration on the Newspeak as illustration of what has famously been labelled the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis"[20]; and let alone the fundamental fact that evidence for this *hypothesis* is still disputed to this day. Furthermore, third, the precious gift of all that Orwell offers us in this excerpt is the construal of conceptual confusion in its reality-altering

... Conversely, in connection with "hatred" for polytheism, also known as "primary religion": "Naturally, I do not believe that the world of the primary religions was free from hatred and violence. On the contrary, it was filled with violence and aggression in the most diverse forms, and many of these forms were domesticated, civilized, or even eliminated altogether by the monotheistic religions as they rose to power, since such violence was perceived to be incompatible with the truth they proclaimed. I do not wish to deny this in the least. Yet neither can it be denied that these religions simultaneously brought a new form of hatred into the world: hatred for pagans, heretics, idolaters and their temples, rites, and gods. If we dismiss such considerations as 'anti-Semitic', we consent to discursive and intellectual fetters that restrict our historical reflection in a dangerous way. Whoever refuses to account for the path he has taken for fear that the goal at which he has arrived might prove contingent, relative, or perhaps even undesirable when compared with his point of departure, or the options he has rejected along the way, fosters a new form of intolerance. The capacity to historicize and relativize one's own position is the precondition of all true tolerance" (Assmann, 2010: 16). Moreover, that "intolerance", that "hatred", fosters "violence": "The fifth and final form of violence I call religious violence, meaning violence with reference to the will of God. My thesis is that this form of violence occurs only in monotheistic religions"; and Assmann adds, "religious violence, conversely, is directed against pagans, unbelievers, and heretics, who either would not convert to the truth or have defected from it and are therefore regarded as enemies of God" (Assmann, 2008: 144).

18 Raging antitheism in the new millennium during what Professor Rossano dubbed the "God wars" (2010: 20-27) being yet another distinct development.

19 "It has also been claimed that traditional forms of monotheism, for example in Judaism and Christianity, lead to intolerance and violence. However, the ancient record shows that this was not so. Monotheism in antiquity was not itself the mechanism of intolerance or even violence. Indeed, it was often the opposite, a strategy for resisting imperial power and maintaining local cultural traditions" (Smith, 2010: X). On biblical monotheism as the guide leading from the "house of serfdom" into the "realm of freedom", *cf*. Assmann, 2008: 83-89 & 144-145.

20 *Cf*. Professor Tomasello's succinct and suggestive synthesis: "At least since Sapir and Whorf, but really since Herder and Humboldt, the influence of linguistic communication on cognition has been a topic of singular interest to philosophers, psychologists, and linguists. The focus of virtually all theorists has been on how the acquisition of one particular natural language (*e. g*., Hopi) versus another (*e. g*., English) affects the way in which human beings conceptualize the world – the hypothesis of 'linguistic determinism'. Recent research suggests that this hypothesis is almost certainly true in one form or another, be it the 'strong' form in which particular languages influence nonlinguistic cognition in particular ways or the 'weak' form in which learning and using a particular language draw attention to certain aspects of situations as opposed to others – so-called thinking for speaking" (2000: 164). *Cf*., *e. g*., Herder, 2015; Humboldt, 1998; Humboldt, 1945; Mandelbaum, 1949: 160-166; Sapir, 1921: 1-23; and Whorf, 2012.

consequences as a controversial issue that should be clarified before one can begin at last to speak correctly of – *freedom*.

Freedom, indeed. This is a complex and perennial problem (*i. e.*, a problem of the sort promoted by Professor Strauss[21]) without one single and simple solution. There is at least however one thing one can do in order to increase insight in the specific problems of research on freedom. Tedious as it may seem perhaps to the sophisticated scholar, it is only fit for the simple student of freedom to define at the beginning of her or his research its fundamental concepts. This need for definition is indeed age-old, and truly a confession of confusion, spreading potentially permanent and pervasive, and surprisingly enough perhaps, actually coming from the common sense itself. In this connection, it is rather noteworthy that no less than twelve of Plato's dialogues[22] are engineered in their entirety as successive albeit not always successful attempts at defining some thing or another[23]. As Plato (or "Socrates"[24]) put it in the *Phaedrus*: someone who does not define in advance what one is talking about will come to agree neither with himself nor with others[25]. Why should I choose to disagree myself with a sensible habit? Why should I

21 *Cf.* Strauss, 1989 and Strauss, 1959.

22 *I. e.*, *Gorgias*, *Euthyphro*, *Theaetetus*, *Hippias maior*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, *Meno*, *Res publica*, *Politicus*, *Protagoras*, *Sophistes*, and *Charmides*.

23 *I . e.*, as attempts to define, respectively: rhetoric, piety, knowledge, beauty, courage, friendship, virtue, justice, statesmen, virtue again, sophists, and moderation.

24 Or should I even go so far at this point as to put Plato as "Plato"? "It is important to realize that whatever is stated in his works is stated by one or another of his characters, not directly by Plato the author; in his writings he is not presenting his 'truth' and himself as its possessor, and he is not seeking glory for having it" (Cooper, 1997: XIX). How should we go about it then, through all this undecidable polyphony and "this inherent open-endedness" (*ibid.*, XXI)? "It is in the entire writing that the author speaks to us, not in the remarks made by the individual speakers" (*ibid.*, XXIII). But then, "in the entire writing", Plato is consistently both defending and illustrating this position on the fundamental need for definition – hence the circle is complete, and we can confidently enough put "Plato" once again as Plato.

25 "If you wish to reach a good decision on any topic, my boy, there is only one way to begin: You must know what the decision is about, or else you are bound to miss your target altogether. Ordinary people cannot see that they do not know the true nature of a particular subject, so they proceed as if they did; and because they do not work out an agreement at the start of the inquiry, they wind up as you would expect – in conflict with themselves and each other" (Plato, 1997: 516). The original text is: "Περὶ παντός, ὦ παῖ, μία ἀρχὴ τοῖς μέλλουσι καλῶς βουλεύσεσθαι: εἰδέναι δεῖ περὶ οὗ ἂν ᾖ ἡ βουλή, ἢ παντὸς ἁμαρτάνειν ἀνάγκη. Τοὺς δὲ πολλοὺς λέληθεν ὅτι οὐκ ἴσασι τὴν οὐσίαν ἑκάστου. Ὡς οὖν εἰδότες οὐ διομολογοῦνται ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς σκέψεως, προελθόντες δὲ τὸ εἰκὸς ἀποδιδόασιν: οὔτε γὰρ ἑαυτοῖς οὔτε ἀλλήλοις ὁμολογοῦσιν" (*Phaedrus*, 237b-d).

try to break free from a long tradition? Since, as Professor Whitehead memorably quips, "the safest general characterisation of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato"[26]. Therefore, I take myself Plato's example and proceed toward an always badly needed definition of the fundamental concept of my research: *i. e.*, freedom. "And a definition is a formula which is one not by being connected together, like the *Iliad*, but by dealing with one object", aptly quipped Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*[27]; again, in his *Topics*, "a definition is a phrase signifying a thing's essence"[28]. Accordingly, I contend that an *explanatory* definition is best built on Aristotle's theory[29] of what was later labelled *genus-differentia* definitions, involving a proximal *genus* and a specific *differentia*[30]. The road to such a proper definition can be long and winding indeed – but it is still *the* royal road.

26 Whitehead, 1929: 63.

27 Aristotle, 1984: vol. 2, 1650. The original text is: „ὁ δ' ὁρισμὸς λόγος ἐστὶν εἷς οὐ συνδέσμῳ καθάπερ ἡ Ἰλιὰς ἀλλὰ τῷ ἑνὸς εἶναι" (*Metaphysica*, 1045a).

28 Aristotle, 1984: vol. 1, 169. The original text is: „ἔστι δ' ὅρος μὲν λόγος ὁ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι σημαίνων" (*Topica*, 101b).

29 *Cf.* Aristotle, *Topica*, 102a-b, 107a-108b, 109a-b, 111a-b, especially 120a-128b, and *passim*.

30 Or better not? Forget it all about the need for definition, Plato and Aristotle, and their likes? Indeed, the concept of "freedom" is time and again used without much discrimination, albeit by distinguished scholars. And yet they still manage to make their point without particular difficulty. "What's in a name"? Well, actually, quite very much. Indeed, names are our favourite tools for both cognition and communication to work across contexts accurately – and we should at all times simply not be without the right tools, I contend. The next potential contestation concerns conceptual construction in Aristotle and his heirs: "The scholastic method of definition of a concept by means of *genus proximum* (next genus above) and *differentia specifica* (specific difference) is more and more commonly recognized as inadequate. The object of a definition in this sense is not merely to analyze and describe a given conceptual content; it is to be a means for constructing conceptual content and for establishing it by virtue of this constructive activity. Thus arises the theory of the genetic or causal definition, in whose development all the great logicians of the seventeenth century participated. The genuine and really fruitful explanations of concepts do not proceed by abstraction alone; they are not content to divide one element from a given complex of properties or characteristics and to define it in isolation. They observe rather the inner law according to which the whole either originated or at least can be conceived as originating. And they clarify within this law of becoming the real nature and behavior of this whole; they not only show *what* this whole is, but *why* it is. A genuine genetic definition permits us to understand the structure of a complex whole; it does not, however, stop with this structure as such, but goes back to its foundations" (Cassirer, 1951: 253-254). How could one answer such a powerful objection? And then, should one reject this marked improvement? I, for my part, note only that *becoming* is indeed the needed complement of *being*; yet I contend that being is more basic than becoming. Concerning concept construction, one can always improve on Aristotle. But one can never, I believe, dispense with Aristotle. Or with his master Plato, for that matter.

In the remainder of the present paper, I will remind my kind reader that Kant's remark, albeit immensely immodest, and made only for the purpose of explicitly[31] suggesting the fundamental *strength* of theory ("it is obvious that between theory and practice there is required, besides, a middle term connecting them and providing a transition from one to the other, no matter how complete a theory may be"[32]) – can also be construed, within the scope of our discussion of the concept of freedom, as implicitly suggesting the fundamental *weakness* of theory. Hence, what I will advance here in this paper at the level of concept, and of theory, and of typology, can necessarily be no more than, as the saying goes, "the tip of the iceberg". As this position paper, rather than reporting results of past research, takes only the first step toward advancing the theoretical framework of hopefully future (empirical) research. And incidentally, Kant's "middle term" between both theory and practice brings irrepressibly to my mind also, albeit as a different concept in a different context, Professor Merton's "theories of the middle range"[33]. Specifically, these I lack, for the time being. Empirical research conducted

31 Its actual context being the beginning of Kant's 1793 essay "On the Common Saying: That May be True in Theory, but It Is of No Use in Practice".

32 "For, to a concept of the understanding, which contains a rule, must be added an act of judgment by which a practitioner distinguishes whether or not something is a case of the rule; and since judgment cannot always be given yet another rule by which to direct its subsumption (for this would go on to infinity), there can be theoreticians who can never in their lives become practical because they are lacking in judgment, for example, physicians or jurists who did well during their schooling but who are at a loss when they have to give an expert opinion. But even where this natural talent is present there can still be a deficiency in premises, that is, a theory can be incomplete and can, perhaps, be supplemented only by engaging in further experiments and experiences, from which the recently schooled physician, agriculturalist, or economist can and should abstract new rules for himself and make his theory complete. In such cases it was not the fault of theory if it was of little use in practice, but rather of there having been *not enough* theory, which the man in question should have learned from experience and which is true theory even if he is not in a position to state it himself and, as a teacher, set it forth systematically in general propositions, and so can make no claim to the title of theoretical physician, agriculturalist and the like. Thus no one can pretend to be practically proficient in a science and yet scorn theory without declaring that he is an ignoramus in his field, inasmuch as he believes that by groping about in experiments and experiences, without putting together certain principles (which really constitute what is called theory) and without having thought out some whole relevant to his business (which, if one proceeds methodically in it, is called a system), he can get further than theory could take him" (Kant, 1996: 279).

33 "The term *sociological theory* refers to logically interconnected sets of propositions from which empirical uniformities can be derived. Throughout we focus on what I have called *theories of the middle range: ...*

in a systematic manner (for instance, following Professor Platt's method of "strong inference"[34]) requires, I contend, a theory allowing for truly scientific hypotheses, as memorably argued at great length by Professor

33 ... theories that lie between the minor but necessary working hypotheses that evolve in abundance during day-to-day research and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, social organization, and social change. Middle-range theory is principally used in sociology to guide empirical inquiry. It is intermediate to general theories of social systems which are too remote from particular classes of social behavior, organization, and change to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all. Middle-range theory involves abstractions, of course, but they are close enough to observed data to be incorporated in propositions that permit empirical testing. Middle-range theories deal with delimited aspects of social phenomena, as is indicated by their labels" (Merton, 1968: 39-40). "From all this it would seem reasonable to suppose that sociology will advance insofar as its major (but not exclusive) concern is with developing theories of the middle range, and it will be retarded if its primary attention is focused on developing total sociological systems" (*ibid*., 50-51). (For a recent plea for the application of Merton's principle of the *theories of the middle range* in international relations, *cf*. Brooks, 2017). In a dynamic complex network, uniting time and space, of intertextuality, *i. e*., inherent intellectual influence, Merton mentions as well in this connection (concerning more the concept than the context, as a matter of fact) the famous names of Bacon and of Plato. "And Plato, in his *Theaetetus*, noteth well, *That particulars are infinite, and the higher generalities give no sufficient direction; and that the pith of all sciences, which maketh the artsman differ from the inexpert, is in the middle propositions, which in every particular knowledge are taken from tradition and experience*" (Bacon, 2001: 116). This exact wording, to be sure, is nowhere to be found in Plato (in the *Theaetetus*, or elsewhere). Here is perhaps a style of attribution not so unlike Erasmus's a century before: "first consider how Plato imagined something of this sort when he wrote that the madness of lovers is the highest form of happiness" (Erasmus, 1971: 206) – conflation of sorts respectively between *Phaedrus*, 245b and *Symposium*, 193d. Hence, Bacon's attribution too certainly warrants further, systematic, research. Let us therefore rather conclude this brief incursion into intertextuality in Bacon's own words written elsewhere: "*Salomon* saith; *There is no New Thing upon the Earth*. So that as *Plato* had an Imagination; *That all Knowledge was but Remembrance*; So *Salomon* giveth his sentence; *That all Noveltie is but Oblivion*" (Bacon, 1985: 172).

34 "Strong inference consists of applying the following steps to every problem in science, formally and explicitly and regularly: 1) Devising alternative hypotheses; 2) Devising a crucial experiment (or several of them), with alternative possible outcomes, each of which will, as nearly as possible, exclude one or more of the hypotheses; 3) Carrying out the experiment so as to get a clean result; 1') Recycling the procedure, making subhypotheses or sequential hypotheses to refine the possibilities that remain and so on" (Platt, 1964: 347). "It is clear why this makes for rapid and powerful progress. For exploring the unknown, there is no faster method; this is the minimum sequence of steps. Any conclusion that is not an exclusion is insecure and must be rechecked. Any delay in recycling to the next set of hypotheses is only a delay. Strong inference, and the logical tree it generates, are to inductive reasoning what the syllogism is to deductive reasoning, in that it offers a regular method for reaching firm inductive conclusions one after the other as rapidly as possible" (*ibid*.). "The difference between the average scientist's informal methods and the methods of the strong-inference users is somewhat like the difference between a gasoline engine that fires occasionally and one that fires in steady sequence.

Popper[35]. Thus, this position paper strives, for the time being, to only begin and bridge the gap lying wide open between what Professor Oakeshott famously labelled "technical knowledge" versus "practical knowledge"[36]: *i. e.*, the gap, or should I say rather perhaps the abyss, insulating the theorists from the practitioners of freedom. This is a topic,

34 ... If our motorboat engines were as erratic as our deliberate intellectual efforts, most of us would not get home for supper" (*ibid.*, 348). Platt's method of strong inference indeed formalizes the fundamental insights of Professor Chamberlin's "method of multiple working hypotheses" (1965). For recent developments on Chamberlin's method, *cf.* Elliott & Brook, 2007 and Rosen, 2016.

35 *Cf.* Popper, 2013, Popper, 2002, and Popper, 1945, vol. 2, 246-267. In a consistent application of Popper's requirement of "refutability", or "falsifiability", or "testability" of scientific hypothesis – we will have to strive to disprove rather than confirm our hypotheses in our (hopefully) future empirical research. Thus this research can fully contribute to the "growth of scientific knowledge" (to borrow Popper's subtitle of his groundbreaking book). This fundamental fact does not entail that we should strive to formulate hypotheses as weak as possible; quite on the contrary, we should strive to formulate hypotheses as strong as possible, as unlikely as possible to be disproven – and then test them as strictly as possible in order to determine their effective validity. The critical issue is here to formulate hypotheses which *are* hypotheses rather than predetermined answers begging their self-explanatory questions.

36 "Every science, every art, every practical activity requiring skill of any sort, indeed every human activity whatsoever, involves knowledge. And, universally, this knowledge is of two sorts, both of which are always involved in any actual activity. It is not, I think, making too much of it to call them two sorts of knowledge, because (though in fact they do not exist separately) there are certain important differences between them. The first sort of knowledge I will call technical knowledge or knowledge of technique. In every art and science, and in every practical activity, a technique is involved. In many activities this technical knowledge is formulated into rules which are, or may be, deliberately learned, remembered, and, as we say, put into practice; but whether or not it is, or has been, precisely formulated, its chief characteristic is that it is susceptible of precise formulation, although special skill and insight may be required to give it that formulation. The technique (or part of it) of driving a motor car on English roads is to be found in the Highway Code, the technique of cookery is contained in the cookery book, and the technique of discovery in natural science or in history is in their rules of research, of observation and verification. The second sort of knowledge I will call practical, because it exists only in use, is not reflective and (unlike technique) cannot be formulated in rules. This does not mean, however, that it is an esoteric sort of knowledge. It means only that the method by which it may be shared and becomes common knowledge is not the method of formulated doctrine. And if we consider it from this point of view, it would not, I think, be misleading to speak of it as traditional knowledge. In every activity this sort of knowledge is also involved; the mastery of any skill, the pursuit of any concrete activity is impossible without it. These two sorts of knowledge, then, distinguishable but inseparable, are the twin components of the knowledge involved in every concrete human activity" (Oakeshott, 1962: 7-8). In the *Chuang Tzu*, 3, 2, a book that Oakeshott was himself fond of, there is a memorable story that serves to illustrate practical wisdom, somewhat too long however to be quoted here; one can combine the useful with the pleasant and read it, *e. g.*, in Hinton, 2013: 161-162.

I contend, whose time has come. Indeed we must stop speaking past each other if we sincerely wish to learn anew from one another. To speak correctly starts with using the correct concept in the correct context.

2. Freedom and power

What then can ever be the correct context for the concept of *freedom*?[37] First, on a pragmatic level, this context is without doubt open-ended, as it depends on ever changing circumstances. Second, on a heuristic level, this context is in contrast shaped by the everlasting dialogue between freedom and *power*. Power therefore becomes the foil for freedom. This is a fundamental fact that begs the single simple question – what is power? And also, does this question have a single simple answer? Or, *any* answer whatsoever that common sense could use as common ground for common consent? There is one thing at least that we all might perhaps feel free to say: that power is a problem. In this connection, power is a fundamental problem of politics; indeed, *the* fundamental problem of politics. This problem of organization (which is the problem of why and how a given group of individuals will organize *adaptively*, *i. e.*, so as to have a higher likelihood of survival, and success, in a changing and challenging environment) has been with us for quite a while. Humankind may indeed have been born bound to this perennial problem of power – a problem that can already be found often in the animal kingdom[38], and always among primates[39]. But does this obvious problem also have any obvious solution? I can see none. And this is not because we humans did not strive time and again throughout our history to come up with a real solution to this real problem.

Power as *action upon action*[40] always involves in contrast *freedom*[41]. The agent's power on the one side – and on the other side the patient's freedom: to put it in a nutshell (see the graphic below). Both of these sides being essentially engaged in endless and relentless dialogue.

37 Rotaru, 2017: 545-550.

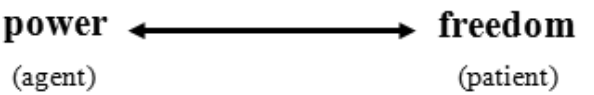
38 *Cf*. Lorenz, 1963. For the results of recent research, *cf*. Gómez *et al*., 2016.

39 *Cf*. Gardner, 1996: 120.

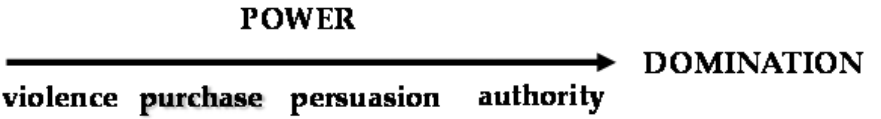
40 Foucault, 1982 – *cf*., *inter alii*, Mises, 1985: 200; Dahl, 1973: 53 *sqq*.; and Aron, 1972: 184.

41 Foucault, 1982; *cf*. Foucault, 1986: 34 and Foucault, 1976.

The burning core of politics



Power, in its constitutive relation to freedom, drives politics indeed. Furthermore: "power is what keeps the public realm" – in Professor Arendt's words[42]. Yet, power is in itself a puzzle and a problem; yes, in Professor Nye's words, "power, like love, is easier to experience than to define or measure"[43]. I would like now to notice that the manifold manifestations power has, although so very varied across space and time, nevertheless can be construed essentially all as related to four fundamental techniques (*violence*, *purchase*, *persuasion*, and *authority*), classified along their progressive *efficacy* in terms of benefits *vs* costs and risks *vs* resources – with authority placed at the peak (see the graphic below).



Compliance is the master word here: in a moving balance between the effort that the "agent" has to make so as to take effect upon the "patient". To put it very briefly, if the agent effortlessly can make the patient comply effectively – then I may say the former has *authority* over the latter; however, if the latter disobeys authority that therefore fails – the former then will have to have recourse to *persuasion*; however, once again, if persuasion fails – *purchase* of the compliance then becomes necessary; however, finally, if such purchase as well fails – then use of *violence* remains the last resort. This is the end: I can indeed imagine no more

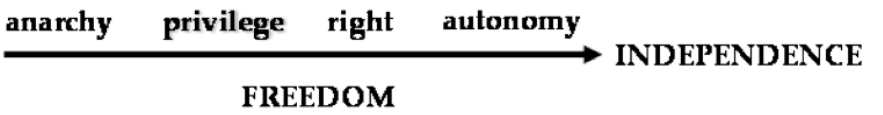
42 Arendt, 1958: 200. "What keeps people together after the fleeting moment of action has passed (what we today call 'organization') and what, at the same time, they keep alive through remaining together is power. And whoever, for whatever reasons, isolates himself and does not partake in such being together, forfeits power and becomes impotent, no matter how great his strength and how valid his reasons" (*ibid*., 201).

43 Nye, 1990: 177. *Cf*.: "power, like love, is a word used continually in everyday speech, understood intuitively, and defined rarely" (Martin, 1971: 241).

other course of action in order to compel compliance. No more *techniques of power*, in my words.

In practice anyway, of course, one "agent" can make use upon one "patient" of one or some or all of these techniques, in any order, as the former pleases or finds appropriate to whom the latter is. Nevertheless, the fundamental fact is that on the one hand *authority* both takes less effort and makes more effect – and on the other hand *violence* both takes more effort and makes less effect – with *persuasion* and *purchase* left in between according to these two criteria. This properly political principle proves to be pervasive, thus noteworthy. And the *original explanatory* complex and coherent typology of power that I have built upon above requires as its counterpart one of freedom as well (see the graphic below).

Typology of the practices of freedom



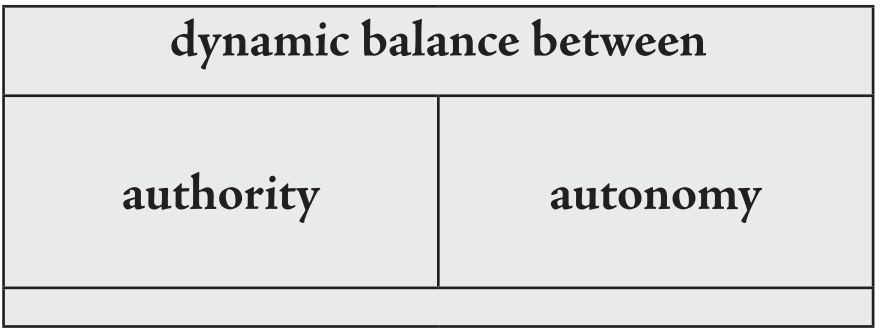
The other major point, the other vivid observation, and heuristic breakthrough – is that techniques of *power* on the one hand and on the other hand practices of *freedom* unite conceptually in couples. Each of the former four indeed together all out in the real world form natural relations with respectively one of the latter four. Just as above them all inclusive power and exclusive freedom in turn unite. So does therefore each of the four unite to its specific, may I say to its "hierarchical", counterpart: that is, to its equivalent in order (see the graphic below; for the typology of active and passive negation and affirmation, see next section with **Graphic 9**).

A competitional model of power and freedom

Please notice now that each of the four natural relations that I have described above is one of very high tension indeed. This fundamental fact should yet not be quite so surprising since the model I advance itself is *competitional*. Within each couple one "pole" balances the other: both bolster mutually and mutually both check (a complex state of things that

elsewhere I discussed more in detail, *i. e.*, for legitimacy as the dynamic balance to be found between *authority* and *autonomy* – *cf.* Popescu, 2001, Popescu, 2011, and the graphic below). All *poles* (to take this name and metaphor from physics) thus are obscurely yet essentially and rigorously linked to their respective counterparts.

The principle of legitimacy



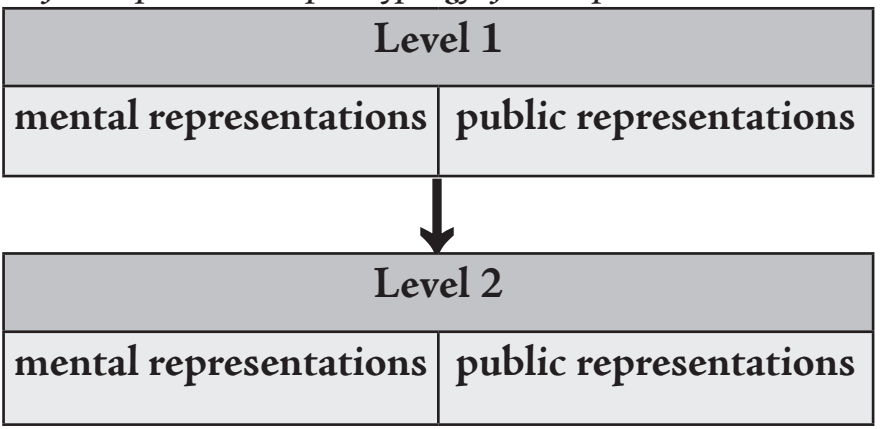
Professor MacCallum's (1967) definition of freedom as "*of* something, *from* something, *to* do something" sheds light on diverse species of freedom. Among the more important, one could fruitfully connect for instance freedom of thought to freedom of speech. But then, can one connect speech and thought themselves?

Thought and speech

In order to answer this question, let us explore the concept of *metarepresentation*. Metarepresentation as *representation of representation* involves in turn mental and/ or public representations[44]: see also the graphic below. "Internal or mental representations" on the one hand, such as for instance memories, beliefs, hypotheses, intentions, inferences, preferences, desires, fears – are all grounded in the brain; whereas "external or public representations" on the other hand, such as for instance signals, statements, texts, pictures – are all grounded in the brain's environment. Both represent something to someone: this is their fundamental similarity. Their fundamental difference then is that *mental representations* only mean something to someone whereas *public representations* also are meant to mean that something too to someone else.

44 See, *e. g.*, Sperber, 1995, Sperber, 1996, Sperber, 1997a, Sperber, 1997b, Sperber & Wilson, 1998, Sperber, 2000a, Sperber, 2000b, and Sperber, 2001.

Professor Sperber's descriptive typology of metarepresentations



Why so much talk about *metarepresentation*? Simply because Professor Sperber contends that it is the single most important *and* the specifically human ability[45]. Sperber defines indeed us humans as heavy metarepresentation-users. Yes, as virtually only humans use metarepresentations; and also virtually all humans; quantitatively then, we use them all day long, year after year; qualitatively also, it is them that made us humans what we have become.

Metarepresentation is the only key to all human communication, and cognition, and conflict, and cooperation. Metarepresentation is essential to our humanity. Metarepresentation strongly drives and deeply shapes the course of human evolution. Metarepresentation makes a major impact on us all. So Sperber argues. And advances a full-fledged "epidemiological theory" explanatory of the whole human culture, and of all these parts and processes of it – as grounded in his fundamental distinction between mental *and* public representations. Both are indeed inserted, in so very wide and varied ways, socially into what Sperber calls complex cognitive causal chains[46], endless in scope, and purpose, and endless in number: where *mental representations* trigger *public representations*, and in turn *public representations* trigger *mental representations* (see the graphic below for instance); providing thus the "cement of society" (to borrow Elster's title of his famous 1989 book). Without doubt then metarepresentation is essential, pivotal in this

45 See Sperber, 2000a: 117 & 121-127, Sperber, 1997, Sperber, 2000b, and Sperber, 1995.

46 See, *e. g.*, Sperber, 2001.

endless process of relentless production, reproduction, and transmission, and transformation of representations – through their insertion in a complex, to wit potentially a worldwide, web[47].

Sperber's typology of metarepresentations as an object of epidemiology

mental representations of mental representations (I hope you like this paper.)	**public representations of mental representations** ("I hope you like this paper".)
mental representations of public representations (He wrote: "I hope you like this paper".)	**public representations of public representations** ("As an answer to your question /"..."/- we wait to see more of it to say".)

Public representations have been studied extensively, maybe because also they are much easier to study than counterpart *mental representations*. Therefore, let me as well begin with them. By very far the most important and most current public representations are for us humans embedded in our speech. The natural function of speech throughout our history was commonly considered to be nothing but the mere representation (meaning reproduction, may I say therefore *restitution*) of reality: describing thoughts by means of words, describing things by means of words; thoughts, things in past, in present, and in future, as faithfully as possible.

And this traditional conception was still prevalent half a century ago, in 1955 when Professor Austin delivered his now famous Harvard lectures – making the groundbreaking distinction between *constatives* and *performatives*[48]. As Professor Searle later noted in his wake: "in institutional reality, language is not used merely to *describe* the facts but, in an odd way, is partly *constitutive* of the facts"[49]. Because, as Wittgenstein had put it shortly before Austin – "*Wörte sind Taten*", words are deeds[50]…

47 I take of course the name and metaphor from the Internet; which is however only one specific instance of this process.

48 Austin, 1962.

49 Searle, 1999: 115; *cf.* Searle, 1995: 83-106.

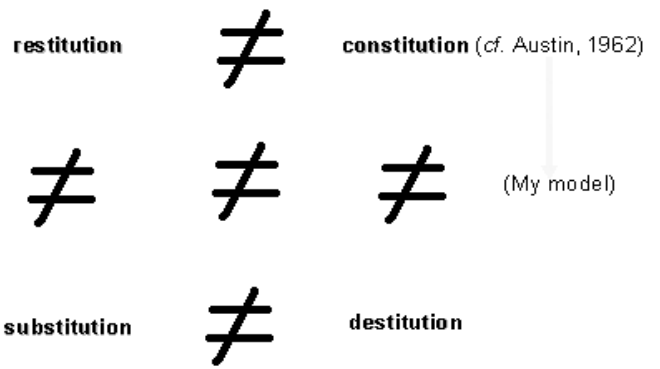
50 Wittgenstein, 1998: 53.

All the subsequent *analytical philosophy of language* can then legitimately claim this revolutionary intuition to be its proud and proper motto[51].

Now, I would also like to notice that Austin's 1962 abovementioned book title (*How to Do Things with Words*) could largely be restated as – "How to Undo Things with Words", may I say. Because not all speech acts (the so-called "speech act theory" is Austin's major legacy to us) are used in order to *create* facts. Quite on the contrary indeed – many of them are used in order to *destroy* facts. As the continuous construction of reality in and through speech needs both of them.

While the representation of reality sometimes – often! – also involves its (dare I say it?): *falsification*… And not only because speech in itself is fallible. But also because to falsify may be the speaker's very intention actually: for instance, think of fiction very broadly; or, not quite rarely too, think of political discourse. Therefore, I will draw a distinction on the one hand between what I will call the *constitutive* function (that is, creating facts) *vs* the *destitutive* function (that is, destroying facts) – and on the other hand between what I will call the *restitutive* function (that is, reproducing facts) *vs* the *substitutive* function (that is, falsifying facts). More briefly yet, among the four: say, *constitution/ destitution/ restitution/ substitution* (see the graphic below).

An explanatory typology of representations



And now please notice that the "≠" mathematical operator so obvious in the graphic above is surely very useful to convey a certain sense of difference – yet much less useful to *explain* that certain difference in itself. Indeed,

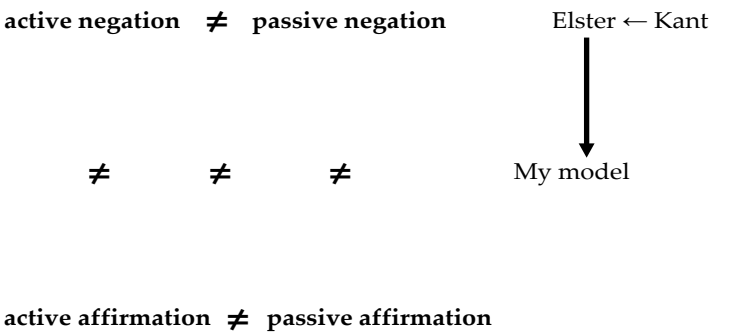
51 *Cf.* Searle, 1979, Searle, 1995, Searle, 1999: 135-161, Tully, 1988, Skinner, 1978: I, IX-XV and Skinner, 1998: 101-120.

among the four so different classes of representations that I theorize: what matters, what makes each be different from one another, what makes all come in the end together? What is their *charge* (if I may take this other name and metaphor from physics)? To sum it up: what is the logical and psychological structure of their compellingly complex relationship?

Let us start with Elster, who both applies his new conceptual distinction between "active negation" and "passive negation" to Soviet communism – and traces back its origin to Kant. Things are a lot more complex actually with Kant, and his distinction between "deprivation" and "lack" also is slightly different[52]. Without detailing here his rich heuristic insights, and focusing instead on Elster: let us note, broadly speaking, that the *active negation* has to do with being opposed; whereas the *passive negation* has to do with being indifferent (for instance, "the distinction between atheism, active negation of God, and agnosticism, passive negation")[53]. Therefore, giving a fully *political* as well as *psychological* meaning to what was purely philosophical with Kant – Elster extensively draws on this fundamental distinction, demonstrating in the end that the deliberate confusion between *active negation* and *passive negation* is in the Soviet minds the covert cornerstone of communism.

Now, I would like to notice that not only *negation* can be active *vs* passive. I mean that *affirmation* can be both. For me then active affirmation has to do with being enthusiastic; whereas passive affirmation has to do with being accepting. Which, once more, are quite very different things

Typology of dialogical relations

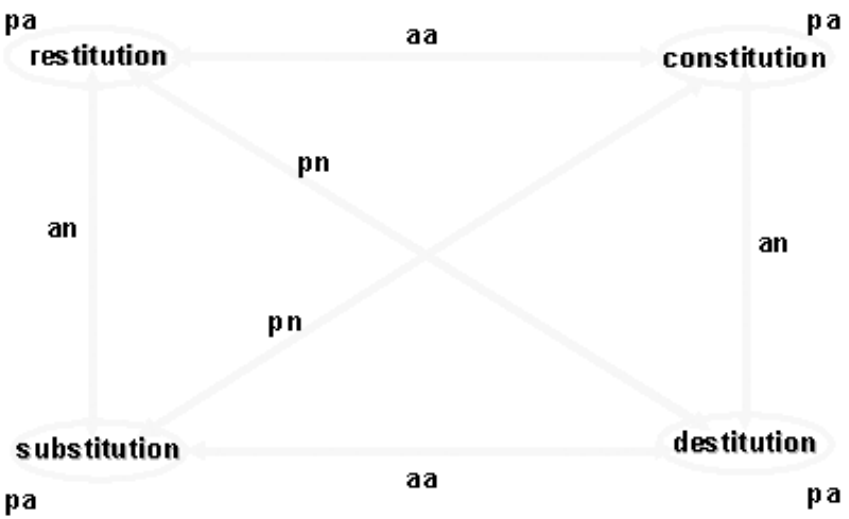


52 See Kant, 2003: 217 *sqq*. (in his "Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy").

53 My own translation. The original text is :*"la distinction entre l'athéisme, négation active de Dieu, et l'agnosticisme, négation passive"* (Elster, 1980: 331).

And I contend indeed, much more significantly yet, that all these types of logical relations are also psychological. I mean, that they do not only refer to representations' content in its structure. But much more broadly yet that they refer too to representations' relations in their structure just as well. And I will therefore say that restitution *vs* substitution are in a relation of active negation – and so are constitution *vs* destitution; that restitution *vs* constitution are in a relation of active affirmation – and so are substitution *vs* destitution; that restitution *vs* destitution are in a relation of passive negation – and so are constitution *vs* substitution; and in the end that each of all four to itself is not quite so surprisingly in a relation of passive affirmation (see the graphic below).

Consolidating the explanatory typology of representations



Representations interact relentlessly and endlessly. The point is that they come together associated as metarepresentations. The observation is indeed a very simple, unsophisticated one: *i. e.*, I do contend that any representation from one class can be embedded in some representation from another class, regardless of which they belong to, regardless of latent confusion and potentially deceit, regardless of a rigid understanding of their authentic inner nature… A fundamental fact that gives human communication much of its actual complexity (see the graphic below).

The two levels of an explanatory typology of metarepresentations

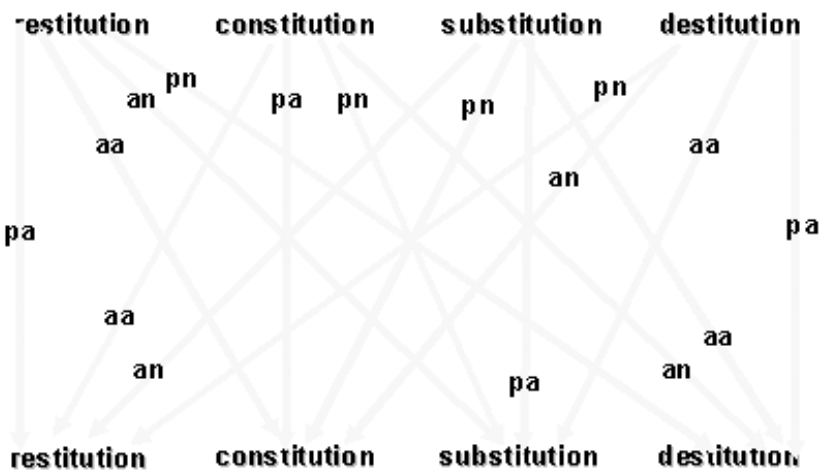
Level 1			
restitution	**constitution**	**substitution**	**destitution**

↓

Level 2			
restitution	**constitution**	**substitution**	**destitution**

The point therefore is not only that *anyone* among the four *can be* embedded in some other – but also, and much more importantly, that **everyone actually is.** Four times four different classes of metarepresentations thus arise. And all these sixteen classes of metarepresentations arise indeed through active *vs* passive negation *vs* affirmation (see the graphic below). To sum it up. Four different classes of representations combine with all the same four classes of representations – but in four different ways: and thus create sixteen new different classes of metarepresentations in effect.

An explanatory typology of metarepresentations



All these sixteen new different classes of metarepresentations indeed can be explained through active *vs* passive negation *vs* affirmation; four of the first out of each of the latter four… Indeed can be described as *direct/ latent/ paradoxical/ oblique*: which correspond in turn to passive affirmation, active affirmation, active negation, and passive negation. Each of these final clusters of metarepresentations is derived through permutation for a sequence length of 2 from my four fundamental classes of representations, *i. e.*, from *constitution/ destitution/ restitution/ substitution*. And therefrom their whole set of sixteen classes of metarepresentations is obtained through computation (see *Table 1* below).

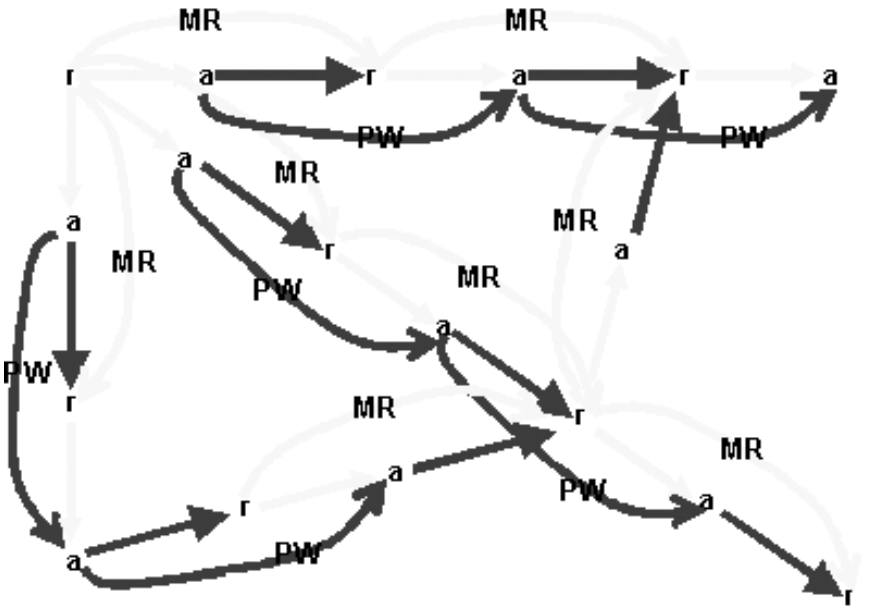
Table 1: A computational model of metarepresentations

Metarepresentations	*Restitution*	*Constitution*	*Substitution*	*Destitution*
Restitution	direct restitution	latent constitution	paradoxical substitution	oblique destitution
Constitution	latent restitution	direct constitution	oblique substitution	paradoxical destitution
Substitution	paradoxical restitution	oblique constitution	direct substitution	latent destitution
Destitution	oblique restitution	paradoxical constitution	latent substitution	direct destitution

One last thing now about both these core concepts of *power* and *metarepresentation*, about their real relationship, and so in sum about their likely mutual potential for a rapid "growth of scientific knowledge"[54]. To be true, time to move towards an integrated and explanatory macro-model. To put it in a nutshell then; action, representation – action upon action, representation of representation – therefore, *and* power *and* metarepresentation: in truth interrelate (see the graphic below).

54 To borrow Popper's subtitle of his groundbreaking 1963 famous book.

My enlarged version of Sperber's "epidemiological model"



Both power and metarepresentation effectively out in the real world are indeed endless in scope, endless in purpose, and endless in number. As metarepresentation can be also an *n*-representation (that is, a representation of representation of representation of representation, etc.); and power can be also an *n*-action (that is, an action upon action upon action upon action, etc.): they can be – and they often are! They often are all sorts of things and also they are things of sorts that my typologies describe, and countless instances for each of their respective and distinctive boxes. To wrap it up: if power and metarepresentation are the basic building blocks of our reality – they also are the basic building blocks then of the context of the concept of freedom…

One last thing on the dialogue of *freedom* and *power* in the context of metarepresentation. Advancing from the level of representation onto the level of relation, I contend that *violence* has a function of *destitution* (because it aims to destroy a constraint) – that *purchase* has a function of *substitution* (because it aims to alter a constraint) – that *persuasion* has a function of *constitution* (because it aims to create a constraint) – and in the end that *authority* has a function of *restitution* (because it aims to use

a constraint). The four techniques of power fulfill these four functions in the service of the agent's freedom. I conversely contend that *anarchy* has a function of *destitution* (because it aims to destroy a constraint) – that *privilege* has a function of *substitution* (because it aims to alter a constraint) – that *right* has a function of *constitution* (because it aims to create a constraint) – and in the end that *autonomy* has a function of *restitution* (because it aims to use a constraint). The four practices of freedom fulfill these four functions in the service of the patient's power. And now advancing from the level of relation onto the level of reality, I conjecture that *the four functions that I have suggested are not only particular properties of human representations, and of human relations, but they also are general properties of the things of this world as open to the human mind*. Hence, these four functions are not only constitutive operators of the human mind, but also constitutive operations of the human mind. I mean constitutive operations not only of reality, but also of the construction of reality.

One thing at least is missing in this still very impressionistic picture, the biggest thing indeed of all: our *self*.

Conscience and self

"The Self: psychology's most puzzling puzzle", as aptly quipped Professor James[55]. James's one-time student, (at the time already) Professor Calkins argued forcefully in her *Case of Self against Soul*, a century ago, why "the soul must go"[56]. "The reasons for this expulsion of the soul from psychology – and indeed from philosophy – need hardly be re-stated"[57]. And indeed, today, in our age of victorious science, the *self* rather than the *soul* is actually the object of psychology and of philosophy. *Consciousness* rather than *conscience*, if I may take this further step. The soul is but a concept from religion, conscience a concept from morality – and what do both religion and morality have to do anymore with modern science? And yet, there is a fundamental sense in which Kant relates consciousness to conscience: "consciousness of an *internal*

55 James, 1890: vol. I, 330.

56 "This study, therefore, culminates in one insistent conclusion: the soul must go. As a historic concept of immense influence it will always retain its prominent place in the history of ideas; as a term of modern psychology it has outlived any use it may once have had and has become a source of mischievous confusion" (Calkins, 1917: 300). *Cf.* Calkins, 1908.

57 Calkins, 1917: 299.

court in the human being ('before which his thoughts accuse or excuse one another') is conscience"[58]. This "internal court" brings irrepressibly to my mind not only what Assmann called "certainly the most frequently cited Egyptian text outside the field of Egyptology"[59] (and arguably in the field of Egyptology as well[60]), and its elaborate expression of the "conflict

58 "Every human being has a conscience and finds himself observed, threatened, and, in general, kept in awe (respect coupled with fear) by an internal judge; and this authority watching over the law in him is not something that he himself (voluntarily) *makes*, but something incorporated in his being. It follows him like his shadow when he plans to escape. He can indeed stun himself or put himself to sleep by pleasures and distractions, but he cannot help coming to himself or waking up from time to time; and when he does, he hears at once its fearful voice. He can at most, in extreme depravity, bring himself to *heed* it no longer, but he still cannot help *hearing* it. Now, this original intellectual and (since it is the thought of duty) moral predisposition called *conscience* is peculiar in that, although its business is a business of a human being with himself, one constrained by his reason sees himself constrained to carry it on as at the bidding *of another person*. For the affair here is that of trying *a case* (*causa*) before a court. But to think of a human being who is *accused* by his conscience as *one and the same person* as the judge is an absurd way of representing a court, since then the prosecutor would always lose. – For all duties a human being's conscience will, accordingly, have to think of *someone other* than himself (i.e., other than the human being as such) as the judge of his actions, if conscience is not to be in contradiction with itself. This other may be an actual person or a merely ideal person that reason creates for itself. Such an ideal person (the authorized judge of conscience) must be a scrutinizer of hearts, since the court is set up *within* the human being. But he must also *impose all obligation*, that is, he must be, or be thought as, a person in relation to whom all duties whatsoever are to be regarded as also his commands; for conscience is the inner judge of all free actions. – Now since such a moral being must also have all power (in heaven and on earth) in order to give effect to his laws (as is necessarily required for the office of judge), and since such an omnipotent moral being is called **God**, conscience must be thought of as the subjective principle of being accountable to God for all one's deeds. In fact the latter concept is always contained (even if only in an obscure way) in the moral self-awareness of conscience. This is not to say that a human being is entitled, through the idea to which his conscience unavoidably guides him, to *assume* that such a supreme being *actually exists* outside himself – still less that he is *bound* by his conscience to do so. For the idea is not given to him *objectively*, by theoretical reason, but only *subjectively*, by practical reason, putting itself under obligation to act in keeping with this idea; and through using practical reason, but *only in following out the analogy* with a lawgiver for all rational beings in the world, human beings are merely pointed in the direction of thinking of conscientiousness (which is also called *religio*) as accountability to a holy being (morally lawgiving reason) distinct from us yet present in our inmost being, and of submitting to the will of this being, as the rule of justice. The concept of religion is here for us only 'a principle of estimating all our duties as divine commands'" (Kant, 1996: 560-561; from his *Metaphysics of Morals*).

59 *I. e.*, Berlin Papyrus 3024 (Assmann, 1998: 387).

60 "Since 1859, when its sole surviving copy was first published, it has been transliterated, discussed, and debated possibly more than any other Egyptian literary text" (Allen, 2011: XI). "The text is unique not only because of its theme but also because of its dialogue between the narrator and his soul (*b3*). Elsewhere, an internal conversation is with the mind (*jb*) or heart (*ḥ3tj*), and the soul's realm of activity is the afterlife. The text is also one of the most consciously poetic Middle Egyptian compositions, with language and imagery that are at the pinnacle of Middle Kingdom literature" (Allen, 2015: 327).

of self and soul" within the "constellative" concept of person[61]. But also ongoing research in psychology refining Calkins' insights[62] on the

61 "The ancient Egyptian speaks of 'his djet-body', 'his ḥa˙u-body', 'his belly', 'his heart', 'his Ba-soul', 'his Ka-soul', 'his shadow', 'his name' as a multiplicity of constituents or aspects of his person. The possessive "his" refers to the "self that owns, governs, and controls this multiplicity. In normal life, the unity or unanimous cooperation of these different components is no problem. Death, however, dissolves this interior community. Yet there are ritual means to overcome this critical situation and to achieve a new and even more powerful state of personality where the different constituents or aspects of the person are brought into new forms of interaction and cooperation. The Egyptian concepts of death and immortality are based on this idea of the person as a community that is threatened with dissolution but is capable of reintegration. This explains why the Egyptians were as concerned with preserving the body by mummification as with equipping the soul with knowledge about the hereafter and building a tomb in order to keep the name remembered in the world of the living. Also life after death was believed to succeed only in a 'constellative' way" (Assmann, 1998, 384). "The Egyptian person is not only conceived of as an 'interior community or constellation' composed of members that are equally referred to as 'his': his dresses, ornaments, insignia, staff, scepter, weapons, house, tomb and, above all, social relations – husband or wife, father and mother, children and children's children, servants, clients, admirers, enemies, etc. A person comes into being, lives, grows, and exists by building up such a sphere of social and bodily 'constellations', and is annihilated if this sphere is destroyed. Therefore, I propose to call this concept of person 'constellative'. A constellative anthropology stresses the ties, roles, and functions that bind the constituent parts together. It abhors the ideas of isolation, solitude, self-sufficiency, and independence, and considers them symptoms of death, dissolution, and destruction. Life is interdependence, interconnection, and communication within those webs of interaction and interlocution that constitute reality. One lives only with and by others or, as the Egyptian proverb puts it: 'One lives if one is led by another'" (*ibid*., 386).

62 "On the contrary, the self is a highly complex being which may be described by an enumeration of its characters. Among these characters of the self the following are surely fundamental: First, the self of each of us to some extent persists: I am in a true sense of the word the 'same' self who cut a philosophy class in her senior days at college in order to take a drive behind a pair of Vermont horses. In the second place, however, the self, with all its persistence, truly changes, develops: though an outgrowth from that frivolous self, and identical with her, I am yet a changed self. Third, and very significantly, I am a unique self: there is only one of me; I am an individual; no one, however, closely she resembles me, *is* I. The possibility of this enumeration shows, in the fourth place, that I am a complex self, a unity of present with past – yes, and with future – self and a totality, also, of many different experiences; I am a perceiving and remembering and thinking and feeling self. These different experiences or aspects of me do not, however, exist apart from me; I obviously am not what Hume called me, a bundle of perceptions, but each of the perceptions or emotions or thoughts is the expression of me who am inclusive of them. Finally, I am a self related to the world in which I seem to myself to be placed; my fundamental relation to the world I call my consciousness of it, and within my consciousness I distinguish different forms of relation, as activity and passivity, and different complexes of relation, as perception, emotion, and the rest. All these characters, it must be added, are immediately experienced. The self, thus described, is observed and not merely inferred; is, therefore, a psychological datum which is taken over into philosophy when reflection discloses that it is the unique fact which can neither be denied nor even doubted without being at the same time asserted" (Calkins, 1917: 279-280).

fundamental plurality and plasticity of the self[63]. Professor Berlin construes thus the connection among conscience, and consciousness, and freedom of the self (or is it really freedom of the soul?):

> There is, of course, a sense, with which all moral philosophers are well acquainted, in which the slave Epictetus is more free than his master or the Emperor who forced him to die in exile; or that in which stone walls do not a prison make. Nevertheless, such statements derive their rhetorical force from the fact that there is a more familiar sense in which a slave is the least free of men, and stone walls and iron bars are serious impediments to freedom; nor are moral and physical or political or legal freedoms mere homonyms. Unless some kernel of common meaning – whether a single common characteristic or a "family resemblance" – is kept in mind, there is the danger that one or other of these senses will be represented as fundamental, and the others will be tortured into conformity with it, or dismissed as trivial or superficial[64].

Indeed, Berlin contrasts what one might call *inner freedom* and *outer freedom*. But can there not also be any *other freedom*? This other freedom is the freedom familiar to the believer. It certainly is *not* a scientific concept. For those who have it, it is "only" a religious experience. Of all the self's (is it the soul's?) diverse dynamic dialogues[65] – the fundamental one for her or him who *believes* is without doubt the dialogue with God. Hence, our search starts (and should not end soon) for a structure and a strategy of the self that actually can articulate the *inner reality* with the *outer reality* and with the *other reality*. Freedom of conscience bolsters freedom of religion.

Religion and reality

But freedom of religion also bolsters freedom of conscience. In so far as religion has a fundamental function in the construction of reality, society, and man. This fundamental function does not *define* religion in its divine

63 *Cf.*, for instance, Elster, 1985, Markus & Nurius, 1986, Markus & Wurf, 1987, Higgins, 1987, Markus & Kitayama, 1991, and Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007. *Cf.* also Markus, 1977, and Greenwald, 1980.

64 Berlin, 2002: 274.

65 In so far as one may legitimately articulate Markus & Nurius's "dynamic self" (1987) with Hermans & Dimaggio's "dialogical self" (2007).

dimension. It does not even define religion in its human dimension. However, like all human phenomena, religion has a variety of functions in a variety of societies, some of these functions being fundamental, including the fundamental fact that religion is the cornerstone of the construction of reality, society, and man. Again, this is not *the* fundamental function of religion; the fundamental function of religion is to articulate the divine dimension and the human dimension; and the historical variability of this articulation properly describes the historical variety of religious phenomena. The fundamental function of religion in the construction of reality, society, and man derives from the fact that religion is a fundamental phenomenon of society. Indeed I contend that religion is *the* fundamental phenomenon of society. It is only natural that this fundamental phenomenon should have fundamental functions in a societal context.

Moreover, starting from Professor Eliade's provisional definition of religion as "the experience of the sacred"[66] – we should perhaps distinguish at this point between (monotheistic) religion and non-monotheistic "religion" (*i. e.*, with the qualification of quotation marks), the latter including on the one hand the experiences specific to archaic or to polytheistic societies, and on the other hand the experiences proper to atheistic societies, where the sacred is either "camouflaged" by the profane in Eliade's sense or imitated by what Professor Voegelin labelled "political religions". Variable from one society to any other, we will discuss thus the fundamental function of either religion or "religion" (or of both, in mixed societies, such as our own, for instance) in the construction of reality, society, and man. And I contend that the fourth case, the case of neither religion nor "religion" having a function in the construction of reality, society, and man, has not yet been noticed throughout history.

The present paper is *not* a paper in theology (intrinsically interdisciplinary indeed, or rather "hybrid" in the sense of Professors Dogan & Pahre[67], given its complex topic and its comprehensive treatment, this paper is instead a paper in religious studies). As such, it does not consider the objective construction of reality by a creator God (or god, or gods). It considers instead the intersubjective construction of reality at the human level, *i. e.*, the construction of a shared reality enabling further meaningful intersubjective experiences. It is at this

66 Eliade, 1969: V.

67 Dogan & Pahre, 1990.

human level that religion and/or "religion" has a fundamental function in the construction of reality, society, and man. Indeed I contend that religion and/ or "religion" has *the* fundamental function in the construction of reality, society, and man.

This we can clearly see, or can we? "We", *i. e.*, as members of a society historically formed and informed by the monotheistic tradition. And it is precisely at this level, between the divine dimension of the objective construction of reality by the creator God (or god, or gods, in non-monotheistic "religions") and the human dimension of the intersubjective construction of reality among us humans (created, from both a religious and a "religious" perspective), that the specific religious, and "religious", construction of a *real* reality, essential, beyond speech and reason, bridges the abyss between God and man. It is here that we all can finally return *in illo tempore* and *live*, deeply live, live with all our being, what we can otherwise but contemplate (*i. e.*, God's creation) or emulate (*i. e.*, man's creation). In this place, in this deepest place, between that unspeakable, unthinkable dimension where God alone creates and this dimension filled with speech and thought where man alone creates – man can meet God within religion (or "religion"). Religion or "religion"? Let us start for now from *"religion"* and progressively return to *religion* later in this paper and hopefully also in future research. For, after all, this is the chronological progression. The Mesopotamian or the Egyptian or the Indian or the Chinese, again, who once experienced the return to real reality *is* us and *is not* us. Alterity will lead us to identity once more, as it has always done. So that identity in turn can lead us to essential alterity, transcendence, to essential identity, *imago Dei*, and to essential reality. Is it not this return to our battered, bettered selves after a long voyage on ancient or on alien seas indeed what Professor Brague labeled the specific European *double secondarité culturelle*[68]?

68 *"Ce n'est que par le détour de l'antérieur et de l'étranger que l'Européen accède à ce qui lui est propre"* (Brague, 1992: 119). *Cf.* Professor Zimmer: "Now the real treasure, to end our misery and trials, is never far away; it is not to be sought in any distant region; it lies buried in the innermost recess of our own home, that is to say, our own being. And it lies behind the stove, the life-and-warmth giving center of the structure of our existence, our heart of hearts – if we could only dig. But there is the odd and persistent fact that it is only after a faithful journey to a distant region, a foreign country, a strange land, that the meaning of the inner voice that is to guide our quest can be revealed to us. And together with this odd and persistent fact there goes another, namely, that the one who reveals to us the meaning of our cryptic inner message must be a stranger, of another creed and a foreign race" (1946: 221).

Religion, then. Religion in a single, simple word, with or without the convoluted qualification of quotation marks – a single, simple concept that includes "religion" and religion in its actual denotation. Religion as relation building a bridge between Word and world. Between the inner reality and the outer reality; between the outer reality and the other reality; between the other reality and the inner reality. What is religion, to begin with? Father Professor Dancă provides the following working definition:

> Accordingly, we suggest a definition of religion which considers man in his totality, ontological and ontic, and highlights the nature of the sacred, transcendent and incarnated in history: "*religion is the link allowing man contact with the Ultimate and Transcendent Reality, that man believes that he existentially depends upon, and the cultic and theoretical relations that the believer forges with this reality*". Our definition distinguishes, without radically separating them, the sacred from the divine, the ontological and ontic dimensions[69].

Thus, religion would be one particular type of relation with reality. Or should we rather say that religion is relation with one particular type of reality? The nuance is *not* neutral. Indeed, Professor Rossano argues for a related concept of *religion* in the context of the recent "wars" for or against God in the American academia:

> Relationships, after all, are transformational. The world often looks very different from "inside" a relationship than from "outside" it.
>
> Since religion is fundamentally relational, you can't simply talk people outside of it using objective, third-person evidence. Relationships are experienced subjectively, in the first person, and it is this subjective, first-person experience that actually constitutes the evidence for the relationship. Furthermore, it is from the context of the relationship that people define key terms such as "God", "religion", and "evidence". Often the bottom

69 My own translation. In the original: "În sensul acesta, propunem o definiție a religiei care consideră omul în totalitatea sa, ontologică și ontică, și evidențiază natura sacrului transcendent și întrupat în istorie: 'religia este legătura care permite omului un contact cu Realitatea Ultimă și Transcendentă, de care omul crede că depinde în mod existențial, și raporturile cultuale și teoretice pe care omul credincios le stabilește cu realitatea aceasta'. *Definiția noastră deosebește, dar nu separă în mod radical sacrul de divin, dimensiunea ontologică de cea ontică*" (Dancă, 1998: 108).

> line is that you can't prove to somebody that they don't have a relationship. If their experience is of having a relationship, then it is that experience itself that is the evidence for the existence of the relationship (and therefore the relationship partner). Likewise, you can't impose a relationship on someone who is perfectly content as is. Thus, we are often left with opposing camps that have a hard time talking to each other[70].

I contend that religion is one particular type of relation with reality for they who are "outside this relationship". And conversely, that religion is relation with one particular type of reality for they who are "inside this relationship". Indeed, for the former, reality remains one while the relation breaks down in adequate vs inadequate varieties. Instead, for the latter, the relation remains one while reality breaks down in authentic vs inauthentic varieties. I further contend that Dancă's definition (who obviously is an "insider") should be read not only through the lens of Aristotle and in terms of *being*, but also through the lens of those "genuine genetic definitions" (to borrow Professor Cassirer's phrase) and in terms of *becoming*. Indeed, for Dancă, the "Ultimate and Transcendent Reality" certainly is the first cause of religion, of all types of relation, and of all types of reality. "God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him" (1 John 4, 16[71]). "Let us love, then, because he first loved us" (1 John 4, 19[72]).

"In general, to be divine is not to be human"[73], quips Smith upon surveying the concept of *god* in the Ancient Near Eastern context. I contend that the inner tension between the concepts of *divine* and *sacred* gives Dancă's definition of religion its explanatory breadth and depth. Religion *lato sensu* is relation with reality; or more precisely, as he writes, relation with the Ultimate and Transcendent Reality; alternatively, as I read him through the lens of Eliade's core concept[74], relation between the sacred and man ("experience of the sacred", insists indeed Eliade). Religion *communi sensu* is relation between god and man. Religion *stricto*

70 Rossano, 2010: 21.

71 "Ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μένει, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει".

72 "Ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς".

73 Smith, 2001: 6.

74 *"Sacru – categoria centrală a operelor sale"* (Dancă, 1998: 7).

sensu is relation between God and man. And Dancă's definition covers all the three as three concentric circles of a tree. However, his book title also puts forward the following, implicit, question: can one define the sacred? Furthermore, can one define the divine? Finally, can one define God? *Definitio Dei*? I for my part believe that one cannot define God. One can always try. And err. For God is essentially incomprehensible to us[75]. What about man? Can one define this other pole of the relation of religion between reality – and *man*? Can we define ourselves?

Recent research in paleoanthropology, published last year by Professor Hublin and colleagues[76], pushed back the recorded age of our species by some 120,000 years, from approximately 195,000 years ago[77] to approximately 315,000 years ago[78]. "Until now, the common wisdom was that our species emerged probably rather quickly somewhere in a 'Garden of Eden' that was located most likely in sub-Saharan Africa", quips Hublin; "I would say the Garden of Eden in Africa is probably Africa – and it's a big, big garden"[79]. This game-changing claim prompts us to both refine and redefine Professor Tomasello's "basic puzzle"[80]: *religion is the basic puzzle*. As the importance of religion for human societies, including ours, cannot be overestimated.

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75 "In revealing his mysterious name, YHWH ('I AM HE WHO IS', 'I AM WHO AM' or 'I AM WHO I AM'), God says who he is and by what name he is to be called. This divine name is mysterious just as God is mystery. It is at once a name revealed and something like the refusal of a name, and hence it better expresses God as what he is – infinitely above everything that we can understand or say: he is the 'hidden God', his name is ineffable, and he is the God who makes himself close to men" (*Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 206).

76 Hublin *et al*., 2017.

77 *Cf*. McDougall, Brown, & Fleagle, 2005; McDougall, Brown, & Fleagle, 2008; and Brown, McDougall, & Fleagle, 2012.

78 Richter *et al*., 2017. This (very) early date is not particularly perplexing: indeed, recent research in genetics, published less than two years ago by Professor Meyer and colleagues, suggests that "the population split between archaic and modern humans occurred between 550,000 and 765,000 years ago" (Meyer *et al*., 2016: 506). More perplexing perhaps is the location of Hublin's find-spot in the Jebel Irhoud massif near the Atlantic coast of Morocco.

79 Quoted in Callaway, 2017.

80 "The basic puzzle is this. The 6 million years that separates human beings from other great apes is a very short time evolutionarily, with modern humans and chimpanzees sharing something on the order of 99 percent of their genetic material – the same degree of relatedness as that of other sister genera such as lions and tigers, horses and zebras, and rats and mice. ...

"Religion made us human", quips in turn Rossano[81]. Religion is indeed the basic puzzle because it prompts us to rephrase Professor Nagel's famous question[82] in these terms: *what is it like to be a pre-religious human*[83] (there is a world of difference, incidentally, between a pre-religious human and an irreligious human[84])? Or should I rather say: is there *at all* a pre-religious human? The Holy Father Benedict XVI said fifty years ago indeed:

...80 The fact is, there simply has not been enough time for normal processes of biological evolution involving genetic variation and natural selection to have created, one by one, each of the cognitive skills necessary for modern humans to invent and maintain complex tool-use industries and technologies, complex forms of symbolic communication and representation, and complex social organizations and institutions. And the puzzle is only magnified if we take seriously current research in paleoanthropology suggesting that (a) for all but the last 2 million years the human lineage showed no signs of anything other than typical great ape cognitive skills, and (b) the first dramatic signs of species-unique cognitive skills emerged only in the last one-quarter of a million years with modern *Homo sapiens*" (Tomasello, 2000: 2-4).

81 "The evidence I present and the evolutionary scenario I outline lead to an important conclusion about the nature of religion: Religion is about relationships. In other words, religion is a way that humans relate to each other and to the world around them. Our ancestors half-devised and half-stumbled-upon this way of relating about 70,000 years ago because it offered significant survival and reproductive advantages. Thus, contrary to what most researchers believe, I strongly contend that religion is (or maybe was) an adaptation. It emerged as our ancestors' first health care system, and a critical part of that health care system was social support. This had important ramifications for group solidarity and cooperation. As we shall see, religiously bonded groups tend to be far more cohesive and competitive than 'secular' ones. I'm well aware that, for some folks, calling religion an adaptation amounts to nothing less than heresy. But I think the evidence warrants even stronger conclusions. For example, religion is vitally important to morality. No, religion is not the origin of morality, but religion does make us more moral (of course, here it is critically important to define 'morality'). I will also make the case that religious ritual was critical in the evolution of our uniquely human cognitive endowment. To put it (too) simply, but (intentionally) provocatively: Religion made us human" (Rossano, 2010: 2). *Cf.* Eliade (1969: VI): "in other words, to be – or, rather, to become – a man means to be 'religious'".

82 Nagel, 1974.

83 Award-winning novelists, *e. g.*, William Golding (in *The Inheritors*), and film directors, *e. g.*, Jacques Malaterre (in *Ao, le dernier Néandertal*), went so far as to depict what it is like to be a member of another species, *Homo neanderthalensis* – but I need hardly say that these depictions are highly fictional. What it is like to be a pre-religious human already defies comprehension because human culture during tens of thousands of years (at least) has been deeply shaped by religion, and as we see things through the lens of embedded culture, we also see things through the lens of embedded religion. To travel back in time before religion is to travel back in time before both history and an unknown proportion of prehistory, and to *forget* everything that we have ever learnt. This, personally, I find difficult. And then, there certainly is the compounding difficulty not of the voyage itself but of its destination: perhaps elusive anyway.

84 An irreligious human is as much the result of those tens of thousands of years (at least) of human culture, and religion, as a religious human.

> The clay became man at that moment in which a being for the first time was capable of forming, however dimly, the thought "God". The first Thou that, however stammeringly, was said by humans lips to God marks the moment in which spirit arose in the world. Here the Rubicon of anthropogenesis was crossed. For it is not the use of weapons or fire, not new methods of cruelty or of useful activity, that constitute man, but rather his ability to be immediately in relation to God[85].

Man has a soul. But this belief[86], that one may share or not, is *not* a scientific hypothesis. Not in the modern sense of "science"[87]. And this is where science ends indeed and in its stead philosophy and further still theology begin. And yet, let us better refrain from going farther than we should, and rather remain within the confines of science, or more precisely of *religious studies*. Let us then try and study *religion* scientifically. To begin, both logically and chronologically, with its prehistory. And let us already note also that Professor Lewontin would contend that such a thing is actually impossible, impossible to sum it up for any form of cognition, in so far as we cannot test our hypotheses:

> Finally, I must say that the best lesson our readers can learn is to give up the childish notion that everything that is interesting about nature can be understood. History, and evolution is a form of history, simply does not leave sufficient traces, especially when it is the forces that are at issue. Form and even behavior may leave fossil remains, but forces like natural selection do not. It might be interesting to know how cognition (whatever that is) arose and spread and changed, but we cannot know. Tough luck[88].

85 Radio talk broadcast by the *Süddeutscher Rundfunk* in 1968 (excerpted in Horn & Wiedenhofer, 11-16, here 15).

86 "Endowed with 'a spiritual and immortal' soul, the human person is 'the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake'" (*Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 1703).

87 "*Astfel, ca știință a credinței, teologia are legături comune cu filosofia și știința sub aspectul fie al conținutului fie al metodei, iar acestea constituie contextul teologiei. Aceste legături între filosofie, știință și teologie erau vizibile în timpul Evului Mediu; astăzi nu mai sunt la fel de vizibile, pentru că știința s-a despărțit de filosofie*" (Dancă, 2015: 30).

88 Lewontin, 1998: 130. *Cf.* Professor Barrett: "One difficulty in determining when and how metarepresentational ToM and its alleged products such as religiousness might have evolved in humans is that they do not necessarily leave the kind of material traces that archaeologists use as evidence. I can believe in the existence and activity of forest spirits without leaving any material trace. If I pray devoutly five times a day, no distinctive material trace need be left behind. ...

If such is the case for cognition – then *a fortiori* for religion. Right? Wrong, answers Eliade to all this persuasive line of reasoning:

> As has often been said: beliefs and ideas cannot be fossilized. Hence certain scholars have preferred to say nothing about the ideas and beliefs of the Paleanthropians, instead of reconstructing them by the help of comparisons with the hunting civilizations. This radical methodological position is not without its dangers. To leave an immense part of the history of the human mind a blank runs the risk of encouraging the idea that during all those millennia the activity of the mind was confined to the preservation and transmission of technology. Such an opinion is not only erroneous, it is fatal to a knowledge of man[89].

And also:

> If the Paleanthropians are regarded as complete men, it follows that they also possessed a certain number of beliefs and practiced certain rites. For, as we stated before, the experience of the sacred constitutes an element in the structure of consciousness. In other words, if the question of the religiosity or nonreligiosity of prehistoric men is raised, it falls to the defenders of nonreligiosity to adduce proofs in support of their hypothesis90.

However, it remains that they who do *not* trust the word of either Eliade ("the experience of the sacred constitutes an element in the structure of consciousness") or the Holy Father ("the clay became man at that moment in which a being for the first time was capable of forming, however dimly, the thought 'God'") are not compelled by logic to "adduce proofs in support of their hypothesis". They can still claim that the believers rather do that. For after all the way of modern science is to test hypotheses rather than trust authorities. It seems that we still talk, if I may say so, past each other ("thus, we are often left with opposing

... 88 If I have a rich belief in afterlife and reincarnation that prompts me to burn dead bodies, the bodies and the evidence of the ritual is unlikely to be found. Symbolism presents similar difficulties. If I wear shell beads around my neck, I might be symbolizing my clan membership, my group rank, or my marital status. But I might just find them aesthetically pleasing and am encouraged to wear them by the positive attention they garner. If my symbolism is manifest through utterances or gestures, they may leave no material trace. Artefact evidence, then, may not be sufficient for determining the evolution of metarepresentation, symbolism, and religion" (2011: 221).

89 Eliade, 1978-1985: vol. 1, 8.

90 *Ibid*., vol. 1, 5.

camps that have a hard time talking to each other", in Rossano's words). But this does *not* need to be so. For after all, on strictly scientific bases, both Rossano and Professor Barrett have pushed back the evidence for religion for many dozens of thousands of years (some 60,000 years for the former[91], and far earlier for the latter[92]). Yet, there remains however a long way to walk to 315,000 years ago, or to whenever man was born. But here a perhaps unexpected source in science suggests a perhaps unexpected solution to this perennial problem of the origin of religion, and of man. "A son was also born to Seth, and he named him Enosh. This man was the first to invoke the name Yahweh" (Genesis 4, 26).

Adam famously talked to God in the Garden of Eden. But he did not engage in worship. His grandson did. And this suggests that we can have religion *without* religion, so to speak. Or, more precisely, we can have "the thought 'God'" (as the Holy Father says) without its corresponding cultic and cultural output. This surely seems almost incomprehensible to us. Yet I contend that we, formed and informed by dozens of thousands of years of organized religion, are not in a position to properly perceive and/ or conceive, to properly *experience*, that is, the "primitive" experience. Hence, it is my hypothesis that man first experienced the sacred (let me stick here with Eliade's central concept), and only then experienced the sacred in an organized manner. Cooperative principles and practices embodied thus in religion later on gave our human species its competitive advantage, as Rossano argues. Yet, man was man before men stormed the earth. Man thought of God before men thought of God together. (And the believer will certainly add that God thought of man before man thought of God.) My hypothesis is that the experience of the sacred is, both logically and chronologically, first an individual experience, and only second it becomes a collective experience. Professor Jacobsen likewise elaborates:

91 Rossano, 2010.

92 "Though we cannot yet be certain when in our evolutionary history metarepresentation emerged and gave rise to religion and symbolism, if the analysis presented above is correct, we can be confident that when evidence of either symbolic or religious activity is discovered, capacity for the other is present. Further, evidence of cumulative cultural evolution suggests the presence of metarepresentation, the factor that makes both religion and symbolism possible. Metarepresentation transforms a host of disparate conceptual biases and predilections into a natural propensity toward religious thought and expression. Likewise, metarepresentation transforms gestures, utterances, and other signs into symbolism and language. If metarepresentation is the lynch-pin that holds together these forms of cultural expression, then its evolution, even if only a small modification on previous theory of mind capacities, could lead to a radical break in behavioural possibilities for its possessors" (Barrett, 2011: 222).

> Basic to all religion – and so also to ancient Mesopotamian religion – is, we believe, a unique experience of confrontation with power not of this world. Rudolph Otto called this confrontation "Numinous" and analyzed it as the experience of a *mysterium tremendum et fascinosum*, a confrontation with a "Wholly Other" outside of normal experience and indescribable in its terms; terrifying, ranging from sheer demonic dread through awe to sublime majesty; and fascinating, with irresistible attraction, demanding unconditional allegiance. It is the positive human response to this experience in thought (myth and theology) and action (cult and worship) that constitutes religion[93].

If I may say so, the *experience* triggers the *response*, rather than the reverse. And it might be a long time evolutionarily between the individual and spontaneous response and the *collective*, *organized* response. It might be a long time evolutionarily between *homo religiosus* (to use Eliade's concept) and any organized religious community. *Any* community? Now it might be the right time to start doubting any monolithic concept of *religion*. Dancă indeed strives and succeeds to make it as flexible and as fluid as ever possible while striking the right balance between proper extension and proper intension. Religion as relation with the Ultimate and Transcendent Reality is one definition that actually achieves explanatory power. And yet, it does not tell the story of religion in full detail. No definition does. As Smith elaborates, for instance:

> Modern students of ancient Middle Eastern societies and religions stand on one side of an incalculable divide, while the subject they study stands on the other. Standing between the two is the Bible and the three "religions of the Book" that it influenced. Almost all, if not all, students of the Bible have been long exposed directly or indirectly to either Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, traditions that have anchored their identity in the belief in only a single deity, however differently these three religions may define this deity. This belief, labeled "monotheism" in the modern era, separates modern scholars from the "polytheistic" religions of the ancient Middle East that they study[94].

93 Jacobsen, 1976: 3.

94 Smith, 2001: 10. "Because of this great historical divide, it is difficult to remember that comparing ancient polytheistic religions with a monotheistic one is anachronistic, as the term 'polytheism' only has any meaning or sense because it is contrasted with monotheism. ...

His conclusion also is worth quoting: "in sum, earlier generations of biblical scholars championed – as historical judgments – the very religious views to which they largely subscribed personally"[95]. While psychologically understandable, the perspective that Smith critically

... 94 Accordingly, monotheism and polytheism in themselves hold little meaning for the ancients apart from the identity of the deities whom they revered and served. No polytheist thought of his belief-system as polytheistic per se. If you asked ancient Mesopotamians if they were polytheists, the question would make no sense. If you asked them if they or other people they knew acknowledge a variety of deities, that's a different question, because for them the deities in question mattered, not the theoretical question of polytheism. The point applies to monotheism as well. If you asked ancient Israelites around the Exilic period (587-538) if they were monotheists, they would not have understood the question. If you asked them if there is any deity apart from Yahweh, then that's also another question, because for them what mattered was the exclusive claim and relationship of the Israelite people and their deity. The concept of monotheism reflects our modern situation as much as the circumstances of ancient Israel or the Bible, for monotheism is largely a modern concern. Monotheism's importance perhaps derived in part from contact between modern Europeans and non-Westerners, as a way of defining the Western religious traditions in contrast to non-European cultures. There is a further aspect to monotheism's prominence in Western religious discourse. In the wake of the great religious conflicts since the Reformation, Western culture has learned to live with religious plurality as well as nonreligious sensibilities. Even if Christianity plays a decreasing role in people's beliefs or practice, its monotheism has continued to play a crucial role. On one hand, it has served an apparently positive social role in binding members of different Western religions and increasingly secularized people formerly of Christian backgrounds to a common 'civil religion'. Monotheism has served as the 'sublime idea' in Western civilization in contrast to (or to avoid?) the contentious differences in actual beliefs and practices. For an increasingly secularized culture, monotheism could serve as a substitute for religious beliefs and rituals, some of which might be seen as primitive for some highly 'cultured' Westerners. In the important works of the biblical scholars T. Frymer-Kensky, E. Gerstenberger, and R. Gnuse, monotheism in part serves as an essentially liberal point of view (theologically and politically speaking), with little connection to explicit religious tradition or praxis. On the other hand, perhaps as part of the effects of secularity, monotheism in itself has come to be blamed for the religious problems in the West. In the twentieth century, monotheism has been criticized as a totalizing discourse that tends toward an exclusivity of others and consequently a potential for inducing violence. These viewpoints, no matter where they stand on the merits and deficiencies of monotheism, assume that monotheism is a cultural or religious phenomenon in itself. These discussions have reified the idea of monotheism and disconnected it from its larger religious context. As a result, monotheism has apparently achieved a status in modern discourse that it never held in ancient Israel, where it functioned as a rhetoric expressing and advancing the cause of Israelite monolatrous practice. The specifics of the practice and the accompanying dimensions of belief were considered every bit as important, if not more so, as the monotheistic rhetoric. The theoretical terms polytheism and monotheism then represent a way to pose some of the theoretical issues, and we should remain aware of this point" (*ibid.*, 11-12).

95 *Ibid.*, 12. "In all of these presentations polytheism stands not only as the backdrop to biblical monotheism; it serves further as a negative foil to the biblical monotheism championed by these authors. This is apologetics, not history (or history of religion). Fortunately, things have improved in recent decades. Many scholars now recognize their religious suppositions and try to set aside their own views. Accordingly, they attempt to study polytheism on its own terms" (*ibid.*).

presents – *i. e.*, to see polytheism through the eyes of monotheism – is historically untenable, as it amounts to putting the cart before the horse. Indeed, to see monotheism through the eyes of polytheism is methodologically defective, because culturally insensitive; to see polytheism through the eyes of monotheism is methodologically defective to an even greater extent, because both culturally insensitive *and* anachronistic. For it is culturally insensitive to see an alien phenomenon through one's own culture's eyes – as well as a phenomenon of one's own culture through alien eyes. The solution to this methodological problem is *not* to have no eyes, no personal view, no perspective (which would be an impossibility, and an impairment in itself) – but rather to strive to rise instead above both partial perspectives by sharing in yet another perspective that intimately encompasses them. That is, in our case, the perspective of *religious experience*, wherefrom one will be able to judge both polytheism and monotheism on their own terms – albeit with difficulty, and therefore effort.

Putting the horse before the cart then, and eschewing anachronism through embracing a historically sound perspective, amounts to taking Assmann's sensible advice: "Any reflection on the nature of those new religious movements that since the eighteenth century have been subsumed under the term 'monotheism' should be preceded by an attempt at a better understanding of the term 'polytheism'. Up to now there has been no valid theory of polytheism"[96]. Similarly, I suggest that any reflection on the nature of those new political movements that since the twentieth century have been subsumed under the term "atheism" should be preceded by an attempt at a better understanding of the term "monotheism". These "Gnostic" movements[97], these "political religions" (to adopt and adapt two concepts coined by Voegelin) keep unfolding in the present.

96 "There are, of course, many descriptions and histories of such polytheistic religions as the Indian, Greek, Babylonian, and Egyptian, but nowhere can one find a coherent theory, a systematic 'theology' of polytheism – at least of one particular polytheistic religion. The only exception is that of ancient Greece, but Greece, with its elaborate aestheticized mythology, seems to be a rather special case that does not lend itself to generalizations. In studying ancient Egyptian religious texts (mostly hymns), my ambition has always been to detect the system behind this vast amount of material. These studies first led me to a more systematic understanding of what Egyptian polytheism – and, to a certain degree, polytheism in general – is all about, and from there to a new appraisal of its counterpart and opposite, namely, monotheism" (Assmann, 2008: 9).

97 *Cf.* Voegelin, 1952 and Voegelin, 1997. *Cf.* also Besançon, 1977. The standard translation of the Gnostic gospels is Meyer, 2007.

The future is not ours to see. Focusing on the past instead, the fundamental fact that monotheism rose to power in a polytheistic context, and that later atheism rose to power in a monotheistic context – does not entail either that monotheism is a prerequisite of atheism, nor that polytheism is a prerequisite of monotheism. Indeed, Asian polytheistic societies such as China, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos stepped directly into communism; Islam and Christianity spread in African animistic societies. Rather, then, than an evolutionary process that would entail a strict succession of logical stages – there is at work a revolutionary process that, in the causally complex contexts that really are the "stuff of history" (to borrow Professor Gruman's concept [98]), replaces logical progression with chronological disruption. The fact remains however that, both logically *and* chronologically, polytheism pre-dates the "revolution" of monotheism, which pre-dates in turn the "revolution" of atheism. The concepts of *polytheism*, *monotheism*, *atheism*, are themselves historically dated, and far from neutral, to be sure. As Assmann notes, "the eighteenth century was also the time when the terms 'monotheism', 'polytheism', 'pantheism', and 'atheism' – which are still in use today – were coined"[99]. This simple fact suggests that they are partly arbitrary. And this is not because it is unlikely that phenomena might span millennia before finally being given their proper names – but rather because it is unlikely that phenomena so

98 Gruman, 1958.

99 Assmann, 2008: 6. "Monotheism is a general term for religions that confess to and worship only one god. 'One God'! *(Heis Theos)* or 'No other gods!' (first commandment) – these are the central mottos of monotheism. The religions subsumed under the term *polytheism* cannot, however, be reduced to a single motto of opposite meaning, such as 'Many gods'! or 'No exclusion of other gods'! On the contrary, the unity or oneness of the divine is an important topic in Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian, Greek, and other polytheistic traditions. Polytheism is simply a less polemical substitute for what monotheistic traditions formerly called 'idolatry' and 'paganism' (Hebrew *'ăbôdā zārâ,* Arabic *shirk* or *jahiliya).* Whereas monotheism constitutes a self-description of religions subsumed under that term, no such self-description exists for polytheistic religions. Monotheism asserts its identity by opposing itself to polytheism, whereas no polytheistic religion ever asserted itself in contradistinction to monotheism, for the simple reason that polytheism is always the older or 'primary' and monotheism the newer or 'secondary' type of religion. Monotheism is self-description, polytheism is construction of the other. However, although polytheistic religions include a concept of divine unity, these religions undoubtedly do worship a plethora of gods, which justifies applying a word built on the element *poly* (many) to them. Unity in this case does not mean the exclusive worship of one god, but the structure and coherence of the divine world, which is not just an accumulation of deities, but a structured whole, a pantheon" (Assmann, 2004: 17). "The shift from primary to secondary religion takes place in the Bible itself. ...

... 99 Not one religion but two stand behind the books of the Old Testament. One scarcely differs from the primary religions that coexisted with it at the time in its adoration of a supreme god who dominates and far excels the other gods, without, however, excluding them in any way, a god who, as creator of the world and everything in it, cares for his creatures, increases the fertility of the flocks and fields, tames the elements, and directs the destiny of his people. The books and textual layers ascribed to the 'priestly' traditional and redactional line are particularly shaped by this religion. The other religion, by contrast, sharply distinguishes itself from the religions of its environment by demanding that its One God be worshipped to the exclusion of all others, by banning the production of images, and by making divine favor depend less on sacrificial offerings and rites than on the righteous conduct of the individual and the observance of god-given, scripturally fixed laws. This religion is on display in the prophetic books, as well as in the texts and textual layers of the 'Deuteronomic' line of tradition. As its name suggests, this 'Deuteronomic' line has its center in Deuteronomy, the fifth book of Moses. This book breathes an unmistakably didactic and homiletic spirit that also animates other books and a specific redactional stratum. The texts ascribed to the priestly tradition lack a clear center, such as that represented by Deuteronomy, instead being dispersed throughout the first four books of Moses. Despite that, they have an all the more conspicuous center in the temple of Jerusalem. These texts belong to the cult of the temple and are addressed to a professional sacerdotal caste of readers, whereas the Deuteronomical tradition is pitched at a much wider audience. 'The Deuteronomium', writes Gerhard von Rad, 'has something about it that speaks directly to the heart; but it also satisfies the head through its continual willingness to explain itself. In short, it is perfectly adapted to its readers or listeners and their capacity for theological understanding. This vibrant will to interpretation is entirely missing from the writings of the priests. Their task was essentially limited to compiling, selecting and theologically classifying the relevant material'. Whereas the priestly writings constitute a manual that serves as a foundation for the temple cult, the Deuteronomium is a prescriptive textbook and guidebook that purports to lay the foundation for the practical and social life of the entire community. Over and above these stylistic and functional differences, however, the two lines of tradition appear to derive from two different types of religious experience. Whereas the religion associated with the priestly writings aims to make its people at home in the world, to integrate all things human into the divine order of nature, the religion that announces itself in the Deutoronomic tradition aims to transcend the world, to release its people from the constraints of this world by binding them to the otherworldly order of the law. One religion requires its people to turn towards the world in rituals of cult and sacrifice, giving their rapt assent to the divine order of creation; the other demands, above all, that they turn away from the world by assiduously studying the writings in which god's will and truth have been deposited. These two religions are not just placed side by side in the Hebrew Bible. Rather, they stand opposed to each other in a relationship of tension, since one envisages precisely what the other negates. That this antagonism does not break out into open contradiction is due to the fact that neither religion unfolds in its full purity and rigor in the writings of the Old Testament. The archaic, polytheistic religion that seeks to make its votaries at home in the world is accessible to us only in fragments, having been painted over by the monotheistic redaction. It cannot be reconstructed in anything more than broad outline, with the help of numerous parallels drawn from neighboring religions. The post-archaic, monotheistic religion of world-redemption, for its part, is evident only as a general tendency in the books of the Old Testament, and does not come to full expression, in the severity with which it denounces other religions as idolatrous, until the writings of rabbinical Judaism and patristic Christianity that build upon these books. In the Hebrew Bible, both religions are able to coexist in this state of nonsimultaneous simultaneity, of a 'no longer' and a 'not yet'. Indeed, this highly charged antagonism within the Bible undoubtedly represents one of the secrets of its worldwide success" (Assmann, 2010: 8-9).

complex as "polytheism", "monotheism", "atheism" have actually been given their proper names. Those names capture no "revolution"[100]. They capture no historical complexity, moreover. And more important yet, they capture no essential simplicity of these phenomena.

To take a further, fundamental, step toward a theory of polytheism, Assmann memorably remembers:

100 "At some stage in the course of ancient history – the dates proposed by the experts range from the late Bronze Age to late antiquity – a shift took place that has had a more profound impact on the world we live in today than any political upheaval. This was the shift from 'polytheistic' to 'monotheistic' religions, from cult religions to religions of the book, from culturally specific religions to world religions, in short, from 'primary' to 'secondary' religions, those religions that, at least in their own eyes, have not so much emerged from the primary religions in an evolutionary process as turned away from them in a revolutionary act. The distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' religions goes back to a suggestion made by the scholar of religion Theo Sundermeier. Primary religions evolve historically over hundreds and thousands of years within a single culture, society, and generally also language, with all of which they are inextricably entwined. Religions of this kind include the cultic and divine worlds of Egyptian, Babylonian and Greco-Roman antiquity, among many others. Secondary religions, by contrast, are those that owe their existence to an act of revelation and foundation, build on primary religions, and typically differentiate themselves from the latter by denouncing them as paganism, idolatry and superstition. All secondary religions, which are at the same time book, world, and (with the possible exception of Buddhism) monotheistic religions, look down on the primary religions as pagan. Even though they may have assimilated many elements of primary religions in the course of a 'syncretistic acculturation', they are still marked in their self-understanding by an 'antagonistic acculturation', and they have strong ideas about what is incompatible with the truth (or orthodoxy) they proclaim. This shift does not just have theological repercussions, in the sense that it transforms the way people think about the divine; it also has a properly political dimension, in the sense that it transforms culturally specific religions into world religions. Religion changes from being a system which is ineradicably inscribed in the institutional, linguistic, and cultural conditions of a society – a system that is not just coextensive with culture but practically identical to it – to become an autonomous system that can emancipate itself from these conditions, transcend all political and ethnical borders, and transplant itself into other cultures. Not least, this shift has a media-technological aspect as well. As a shift from cult religion to book religion, it would have been impossible without the invention of writing and the consequent use of writing for the codification of revealed truths. All monotheistic religions, Buddhism included, are based on a canon of sacred texts. Then there is the further, psychohistorical aspect to which Sigmund Freud, in particular, has drawn our attention: the shift to monotheism, with its ethical postulates, its emphasis on the inner self, and its character as 'patriarchal religion', brings with it a new mentality and a new spirituality, which have decisively shaped the Western image of man. Finally, this shift entails a change in worldview, in the way people make sense of their place in the world. The shift has been investigated most thoroughly in these terms, Karl Jaspers's concept of the 'axial age' interpreting it as a breakthrough to transcendence, Max Weber's concept of rationalization, as a process of disenchantment. I use the concept of the 'Mosaic distinction' to designate the most important aspect of this shift. What seems crucial to me is not the distinction between the One God and many gods but the distinction between truth and falsehood in religion, between the true god and false gods, true doctrine and false doctrine, knowledge and ignorance, belief and unbelief" (ibid., 1-2). As far as I am aware, we lack an analysis of comparable complexity for the "shift" from monotheism to atheism.

> Several years later I started writing a book on Egyptian religion. I consciously avoided the term "religion" because I felt very strongly that there was a major difference between the term "religion" as it was understood in the Western tradition, with all its biblical implications, and what I was about to describe with regard to the ancient Egyptian world. These differences seemed to me too decisive to be covered by one and the same term. If we call the biblical tradition and its derivatives – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – "religions", we should substitute another term with respect to ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. In fact, what we commonly understand by the term "religion" is as much an innovation brought into the world by biblical monotheism as the idea of the oneness of god itself. To speak of Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek, and Roman "religions" means to reconfigure – or even distort – the historical phenomena according to a perception of reality proper to monotheism but alien to "paganism". There were no "religions" in pagan societies, only "cults" and "cultures". "Religion", like "paganism", is an invention of monotheism[101].

Likewise Eliade regrets: "it is unfortunate that we do not have at our disposal a more precise word than 'religion' to denote the experience of the sacred"[102]. Before striking a more conciliatory note: "but perhaps it is too late to search for another word, and 'religion' can still be a useful term provided we keep in mind that it does not necessarily imply belief in God, gods, or ghosts, but refers to the experience of the sacred, and, consequently, is related to the ideas of *being*, *meaning*, and *truth*"[103]. Such

101 One oversight of Allen is noteworthy: his text should read indeed "beginning with the Jews" instead of "beginning with the Greek". *Cf.* also: "Though the political courses of ancient Mesopotamian states might have sometimes led them into dire straits, the Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians learned well that what had always to remain stable and unmoved, was the underlying cultural pattern, the 'blueprint' on which their civilization rested, defined, by and large, by religion. Much the same role was played by religion with respect to the set of rules regulating supra-kinship ties within Mesopotamian societies. Bearers of the ancient Mesopotamian civilizations felt no need for any office of high priest, a papal curia, or an Inquisition office, though religious institutions they did know well. To a certain extent, it might be said that for the ancient Mesopotamians, religion was society and society was religion" (Šašková, Pecha, & Charvát, 9-8 :2010).

102 Eliade, 1969: V.

103 *Ibid.*

definition actually is problematic[104]. Instead, Assmann operationalizes his decisive distinction between "cult" and "culture" by identifying in Egypt "three dimensions of divine presence that I called the cultic, the cosmic, and the linguistic", and in Mesopotamia the fourth one: "history, the missing dimension"[105]. For him, these "three spheres or dimensions of divine presence and religious experience" form a "rather general structure of polytheism"[106]. Smith further elaborates:

> Ancient texts, both biblical and nonbiblical, provide pictures of reality in narrative and other forms. We might think of the narratives or myths as communicating a picture of reality through moving pictures, of ritual and prayer as expressing a picture of reality through performative interaction, and of letters manifesting a picture through written monologue. All of these ancient texts presume and, to some extent, express an understanding of reality often couched in terms of gods and goddesses as its main

104 Friar Ockham stated: "*quando propositio verificatur pro rebus, si duae res sufficiunt ad eius veritatem, superfluum est ponere tertiam*" (*Quodlibeta Septem*, IV, 24). Professor Sperber illustrated (*vd*. Sperber, 1997a: 137-139) the "intellectualistic" (*ibid*., 142) tendency, which has gained currency in anthropology, of overinterpreting the empirical evidence to the effect that the construction of general theories becomes befuddled: "*Plus les interprétations sont générales, plus elles sont spéculatives, et moins elles sont fidèles aux représentations mentales ou publiques particulières dont elles font la synthèse. Peu conscients du problème, la plupart des anthropologues, quelles que soient par ailleurs leurs divergences, tentent de construire des théories avec et autour d'interprétations générales*" (*ibid*., 143 ; *cf*. Sartori, 1970). Hence, Eliade's definition is twice questionable, which does not simplify but rather complexifies (an "Ockham-style objection") the problem of "religion" by compounding it with philosophical concepts (a "Sperber-style objection") of "being, meaning, and truth". These concepts, rather, are neither necessary, nor sufficient. Thus his conceptual apparatus proves less operational than his consistent approach aptly focused on the "experience of the sacred".

105 Assmann, 2008: 9-27. "Over thirty years ago I was asked by the editors of the *Lexikon der Aegyptologie* to contribute an article on the entry 'God'. In looking for categories to use in describing an Egyptian deity, I analyzed hundreds of Egyptian hymns and came across a number of texts that distinguished three major forms of divine presence or manifestation: 'shapes' (*iru*), 'transformations' (*kheperu*), and 'names' (*renu*). 'Shape' refers to various cult images and representations of a deity in the temple cult. 'Transformation' refers to such cosmic manifestions as sun, moon, stars, wind, light, fire, water, the Nile and its inundation, fertility, and vegetation. 'Name' refers not only to proper names such as Osiris and Amun but denotes everything that may be said and told about a deity in epithets, titles, pedigrees, genealogies, myths – in short, its entire linguistic representation. I subsequently realized that these three terms referred to three dimensions of divine presence that I called the cultic, the cosmic, and the linguistic. It thus became possible to define a major Egyptian deity as a being equally present or represented in all three dimensions by having its temple and cult image, its characteristic cosmic manifestation, and a proper genealogy and mythology" (*ibid*., 9-10).

106 Assmann, 2004: 18.

> figures. In short, such pictures are expressions of the "theology" of the ancient writers, the theology which they inherited and in some cases expanded to capture the nuances of their understanding of reality. From this point of view, the descriptions of divinities reflect various mappings of reality. Such descriptions afford modern scholars an opportunity to understand how reality worked for the ancients[107].

The key word in the paragraph above is "interaction". While *cultural* texts do "reflect various mappings of reality", *cultic* texts go beyond everyday reality. The true meaning of cultic texts is in their dialogue with transcendence – or the absence thereof. Indeed, I tentatively suggest a typology of experiences of transcendence in the graphic below:

Four types of experience of transcendence

experience of transcendence			
"first religion" (one realm in two worlds): structural transcendence	**polytheism (two realms in one world): strategic transcendence**	**monotheism (two realms in two worlds): systematic transcendence**	**atheism (one realm in one world): absent transcendence**

In order to briefly present my typology, I begin by quoting Assmann:

> Having lived for hundreds and thousands of years on the terrain of secondary religious experience and in the spiritual space created by the Mosaic distinction, we Jews, Christians, and Muslims (to speak only of the monotheistic world) assume this distinction to be the natural, normal, and universal form of religion. We tend to identify it unthinkingly with religion as such, and then project it onto all the alien and earlier cultures that knew nothing of the distinction between true and false religion. Measured against this concept of religion, the primary religions cannot fail to be found wanting: orthodoxy is unknown to them, they barely differentiate themselves from other cultural fields, and in many cases it remains unclear where exactly the boundary lines between divine and natural phenomena, charismatic teachers and normative

107 Smith, 2001: 13.

> principles are to be drawn. In these and many other respects, they are not yet "proper" religions[108].

I take the liberty to remind my kind reader that Assmann uses the concepts of "primary" versus "secondary" religion as near-synonyms of polytheism versus monotheism – while the "Mosaic distinction" is for him the distinction between true (*i. e.*, orthodox) and false (*i. e.*, heterodox) in religion: the founding moment in the transition from polytheism to monotheism. I am myself in turn reminded by reading Assmann of what Clastres writes[109]. The very concept of "primitive society" is representative of evolutionism-cum-ethnocentrism. Indeed, Clastres prefers instead the concept of "first society"; "*société première*", then, rather than "*société primitive*". (Incidentally, this concept brings to mind the subsequent official designation "First Nations", or "*Premières Nations*", for the American Indians of Canada.) Similarly I suggest the concept of "first religion" in order to refer to pre-polytheistic "religions". "First religion" should not be confused with Assmann's use of "primary religion" (*i. e.*, essentially, polytheism). Indeed, I contend that the concept of "primary religion" is potentially misleading: polytheism only is "primary" insofar as monotheism is "secondary". Instead, I should propose that pre-polytheism would rather be the "primary religion", polytheism "secondary", monotheism "tertiary", and atheism "quaternary" (insofar

108 Assmann, 2010: 11.

109 *"Derrière les formulations modernes, le vieil évolutionnisme demeure, en fait, intact. Plus subtil de se dissimuler dans le langage de l'anthropologie, et non plus de la philosophie, il affleure néanmoins au ras des catégories qui se veulent scientifiques. On s'est déjà aperçu que, presque toujours, les sociétés archaïques sont déterminées négativement, sous les espèces du manque: sociétés sans État, sociétés sans écriture, sociétés sans histoire. Du même ordre apparaît la détermination de ces sociétés sur le plan économique: sociétés à économie de subsistance. Si l'on veut signifier par là que les sociétés primitives ignorent l'économie de marché où s'écoulent les surplus produits, on ne dit strictement rien, on se contente de relever un manque de plus, et toujours par référence à notre propre monde: ces sociétés qui sont sans État, sans écriture, sans histoire, sont également sans marché. Mais, peut objecter le bon sens, à quoi bon un marché s'il n'y a pas de surplus? Or l'idée d'économie de subsistance recèle en soi l'affirmation implicite que, si les sociétés primitives ne produisent pas de surplus, c'est parce qu'elles en sont incapables, entièrement occupées qu'elles seraient à produire le minimum nécessaire à la survie, à la subsistance. Image ancienne, toujours efficace, de la misère des Sauvages. Et, afin d'expliquer cette incapacité des sociétés primitives de s'arracher à la stagnation du vivre au jour le jour, à cette aliénation permanente dans la recherche de la nourriture, on invoque le sous-équipement technique, l'infériorité technologique"* (Clastres, 1974: 162). Conversely, Clastres draws on the work of Sahlins (1968), who had seminally argued that primitive societies represent "the original affluent society". For a critique of Sahlins's theory, *cf.* Kaplan, 2000.

as several of its state versions include cultic aspects, for instance) – but then the whole issue indeed would not only become deeply confusing, but also potentially irrelevant. I rather see this line of argument as *reductio ad absurdum*. And suggest indeed the concept of "first religion" as a loose umbrella awaiting future needed clarification, and that might perhaps include, for instance, the most ancient forms of "religion" identified by Rossano: shamanism, ancestor worship, and animism[110]. However, the very coherence of the concept of "first religion" is in question, as there may well have been a succession of not only *historical*, but also *prehistoric* forms of "religion". This question warrants further research. Specifically, the circumstantial evidence that we have might perhaps suggest that in "first religion" transcendence is experienced as structural, humans being able to navigate in certain conditions two worlds that are essentially linked. However, this suggestion is merely tentative.

Polytheism, I suggest, experiences transcendence instead as a dividing line between the divine and the human realms that runs within one world. Smith notes: "in general, to be divine is not to be human". This also works the other way round. However, these two realms strategically interact (and, as Professor Greenstein poignantly remarks on an Ugaritic text, the *Epic of Kirta*, a mythical king: "the routine interactions of humans and gods in the narrative recall the mythic stories of bygone days in Genesis more than the more mundane stories of relatively recent events in Kings")[111]. Monotheism, a phenomenon of the so-called "Axial Age", or "Age of Transcendence"[112], harmoniously articulates with the systematic

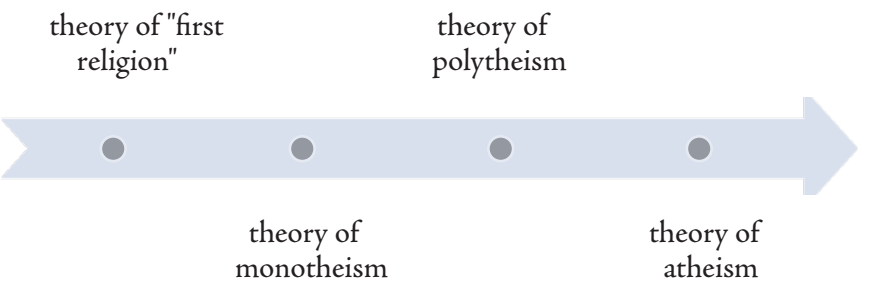
110 Rossano, 2010: 60-78.

111 Greenstein, 1997: 9. *Cf*. Professor Friedman's (1995) treatment of that topic.

112 "This impulse is part of that greater move of 'staying back and looking beyond' which is the hallmark of the 'Axial Age' or, to use Benjamin Schwartz's phrase, the 'Age of Transcendence', the act of going beyond the given. Polytheism, or 'Cosmotheism', may be characterized as a theory of the given capable of making people feel totally at home in the world. It was this principle of 'feeling at home' that made poets, artists, and philosophers of the eighteenth century look back nostalgically to paganism. Monotheism laid the foundations for an alternative principle of 'naturalization', or feeling at home in an invisible world that was not 'given' but rather promised and mysteriously emergent. This holds true both for 'inclusive' (all gods are One) and 'exclusive' (no god but God) monotheism.Monotheism is the response to experiences of estrangement and alienation that made people lose their sense of feeling at home in a world that had turned hostile and inhospitable. These were people who had been deported from their home countries; oppressed by foreign domination; and had suffered various injustices, including corruption, exploitation, wars, conquests, political and economic crises, and instability. Hegel's dictum that the periods of happiness constitute the empty pages in the book of history holds true not only for political history but also for the history of religion. ...

transcendence of two realms in two worlds. Atheism, "religion" of immanence in its political dimension as cult of personality in totalitarian regimes, promotes the radical reduction of one realm in one world, which translates in the absence of translation. I suggest and summarize in the graphic below the needed effort of theorization in order to study "religion" on a solid foundation:

Theory wanted



Moreover, freedom of religion spells loud and clear the complex and compelling issue of *free will*.

Emotion and will

The controversial and compellingly complex issue of free will extends far beyond the scope and purpose of the present paper. Detailed discussion would require, rather, another full-fledged paper, to be true. I will only acknowledge here the mystery of what one believer at least might perhaps all too clumsily describe as the dialogue between divine authority and human autonomy. Let us discuss instead, and indeed as briefly as possible, the distinct possibility that freedom be defined as "will to will". Professor Heidegger, in his four-volume monograph on Nietzsche,

...112 The Bible, it is true, is full of praise for the beauties of the world, which bespeak the greatness of its creator. Moreover, the notion of nature as the other book of God had been prominent in Christian tradition since the twelfth century. There is much to be said in support of even biblical religion being concerned with making human beings feel at home in the world, placing them – being fashioned in the image of God – above all other creatures. The Hebrew Bible is polyphonic, a book of many voices, and the origins of monotheism constitute only one of these voices. It is this voice, however, that changed the Western world and constitutes the greatest cultural event in its long history" (Assmann, 2008: 138-139).

suggests it forcefully enough[113]. I, for my part, prefer to entertain for the time being this possibility as a very tentative research hypothesis, not as much on the authority of Heidegger (or of Nietzsche) as of logic, or the appearance of at least: since I retain the definitions of respectively, power as action upon action[114], metarepresentation as representation of representation[115], metaemotion as emotion about emotion[116] – should I not in turn identify among the major players in the human architecture in the world (action, cognition, emotion, and volition) the last mentioned as the proper realm of freedom?

Kant formalizes the conceptual relation between will and choice and freedom of choice[117]. He famously contributes:

113 "But now, to anticipate the decisive issue, what does Nietzsche himself understand by the phrase 'will to power'? What does 'will' mean? What does 'will to power' mean? For Nietzsche these two questions are but one. For in his view will is nothing else than will to power, and power nothing else than the essence of will. Hence, will to power is will to will, which is to say, willing is self-willing" (Heidegger, 1979-1982: vol. 1, 37). "Here, to be sure, the decisive condition is not mentioned: the *decisive* condition is you *yourself*, that is to say, the manner in which you achieve your self by becoming your own master, and this by seeing to it that when you engage your will essentially you take yourself up into that will and so attain freedom. We are free only when we become free, and we become free only by virtue of our wills. That is what we read in the second section of the second part of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, written in 1883, 'On the Blessed Isles': 'To will is liberating: that is the true teaching concerning will and freedom-thus Zarathustra teaches it to you'" (*ibid*., vol. 2, 138). "Human will '*needs an aim* – and would sooner will *nothingness* than *not* will at all'. For 'will' is will to power: power to power, or as we might also say, *will to will*, will to stay on top and retain command. The will shrinks, not from nothingness, but from *not willing*, from the annihilation of its ownmost possibility. This trepidation before the emptiness of not-willing – this '*horror vacui*' – is 'the fundamental fact of human will'. It is precisely from the '*fundamental fact*' of human will – that it prefers *to will the nothing* rather than *not to will* – that Nietzsche derives the basic proof for his statement that the will is in its essence will to power" (*ibid*., vol. 4, 31). In this perspective, power and freedom appear largely interchangeable. This perspective I do not share.

114 Foucault, 1982.

115 Sperber, 2000.

116 See, *e. g*., Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1997; *cf*. Hooven, Gottman, & Katz, 1995, Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996, Eisenberg, 1996, Katz & Windecker-Nelson, 2004, De Oliveira, Moran, & Pederson, 2005, Hakim-Larson *et al*., 2006 – and Jäger & Bartsch, 2006.

117 "The faculty of desire in accordance with concepts, insofar as the ground determining it to action lies within itself and not in its object, is called a faculty to *do or to refrain from doing as one pleases*. Insofar as it is joined with one's consciousness of the ability to bring about its object by one's action it is called *choice*; if it is not joined with this consciousness its act is called a *wish*. The faculty of desire whose inner determining ground, hence even what pleases it, lies within the subject's reason is called the *will*. The will is therefore the faculty of desire considered not so much in relation to action (as choice is) but rather in relation to the ground determining choice to action...

> In the doctrine of duties a human being can and should be represented in terms of his capacity for freedom, which is wholly supersensible, and so too merely in terms of his *humanity*, his personality independent of physical attributes (*homo noumenon*), as distinguished from the same subject represented as affected by physical attributes, *a human being* (*homo phaenomenon*)[118].

...117 The will itself, strictly speaking, has no determining ground; insofar as it can determine choice, it is instead practical reason itself. Insofar as reason can determine the faculty of desire as such, not only *choice* but also mere *wish* can be included under the will. That choice which can be determined by *pure reason* is called free choice. That which can be determined only by *inclination* (sensible impulse, *stimulus*) would be animal choice (*arbitrium brutum*). Human choice, however, is a choice that can indeed be *affected* but not *determined* by impulses, and is therefore of itself (apart from an acquired proficiency of reason) not pure but can still be determined to actions by pure will. *Freedom* of choice is this independence from being *determined* by sensible impulses; this is the negative concept of freedom. The positive concept of freedom is that of the ability of pure reason to be of itself practical. But this is not possible except by the subjection of the maxim of every action to the condition of its qualifying as universal law" (Kant, 1996: 374-375; in his *Metaphysics of Morals*).

118 *Ibid*., 395. "Now the human being as a *natural being* that has reason (*homo phaenomenon*) can be determined by his reason, as a *cause*, to actions in the sensible world, and so far the concept of obligation does not come into consideration. But the same human being thought in terms of his *personality*, that is, as a being endowed with *inner freedom* (*homo noumenon*), is regarded as a being that can be put under obligation and, indeed, under obligation to himself (to the humanity in his own person). So the human being (taken in these two different senses) can acknowledge a duty to himself without falling into contradiction (because the concept of a human being is not thought in one and the same sense)" (*ibid*., 544). "The human being as a moral being (*homo noumenon*) cannot use himself as a natural being (*homo phaenomenon*) as a mere means (a speaking machine), as if his natural being were not bound to the inner end (of communicating thoughts), but is bound to the condition of using himself as a natural being in agreement with the declaration (*declaratio*) of his moral being and is under obligation to himself to *truthfulness*" (*ibid*., 553). "In the system of nature, a human being (*homo phaenomenon, animal rationale*) is a being of slight importance and shares with the rest of the animals, as offspring of the earth, an ordinary value (*pretium vulgare*). Although a human being has, in his understanding, something more than they and can set himself ends, even this gives him only an *extrinsic* value for his usefulness (*pretium usus*); that is to say, it gives one man a higher value than another, that is, a *price* as of a commodity in exchange with these animals as things, though he still has a lower value than the universal medium of exchange, money, the value of which can therefore be called preeminent (*pretium eminens*). But a human being regarded as a *person*, that is, as the subject of a morally practical reason, is exalted above any price; for as a person (*homo noumenon*) he is not to be valued merely as a means to the ends of others or even to his own ends, but as an end in itself, that is, he possesses a *dignity* (an absolute inner worth) by which he exacts *respect* for himself from all other rational beings in the world. He can measure himself with every other being of this kind and value himself on a footing of equality with them" (*ibid*., 557). "Moreover, the idea of a pure world of understanding as a whole of all intelligences, to which we ourselves belong as rational beings (though on the other side we are also members of the world of sense), remains always a useful and permitted idea for the sake of a rational belief, even if all knowledge stops at its boundary - useful and permitted for producing in us a lively interest in the moral law by means of the noble ideal of a universal kingdom of *ends in themselves* (rational beings) to which we can belong as members only when we carefully conduct ourselves in accordance with maxims of freedom as if they were laws of nature" (*ibid*., 108; in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*).

"Completely alone with his thoughts, as in a prison"[119], in Kant's own words, the human being however, *homo noumenon* regardless, will not so easily prevail. Freedom clashes, and often crashes, against power. The royal road from the atomization of the society to the alienation of the individual that Arendt[120] famously depicted as the defining feature of (communist or national-socialist) totalitarianism, this *specifically modern* phenomenon (and more precisely, a 20th century phenomenon – and also a 21st century phenomenon, I should add), can, I contend, and should be read from Oakeshott's standpoint: "other loves have bewitched us; and to confess to a passion for liberty – not as something worth while in certain circumstances but as the *unum necessarium* – is to admit to a disreputable naivety, excusable only where it masks a desire to rule"[121]. Confucius' *Analects* (XV, 13) record the following excerpt: "The Master said: 'It's all over. I've never seen anyone for whom loving Integrity is like loving a beautiful woman'"[122]. And Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* (in chapter 7): "If you aren't free of yourself/ how will you ever become yourself?"[123] Maybe we should all learn to better love our own true freedom; maybe we should all learn to less love our less-than-true selves.

119 "The human being is a being meant for society (though he is also an unsociable one), and in cultivating the social state he feels strongly the need to *reveal* himself to others (even with no ulterior purpose). But on the other hand, hemmed in and cautioned by fear of the misuse others may make of his disclosing his thoughts, he finds himself constrained *to lock up* in himself a good part of his judgments (especially those about other people). He would like to discuss with someone what he thinks about his associates, the government, religion and so forth, but he cannot risk it: partly because the other person, while prudently keeping back his own judgments, might use this to harm him, and partly because, as regards disclosing his faults, the other person may conceal his own, so that he would lose something of the other's respect by presenting himself quite candidly to him. If he finds someone intelligent – someone who, moreover, shares his general outlook on things – with whom he need not be anxious about this danger but can reveal himself with complete confidence, he can then air his views. He is not completely alone with his thoughts, as in a prison, but enjoys a freedom he cannot have with the masses, among whom he must shut himself up in himself. Every human being has his secrets and dare not confide blindly in others, partly because of a base cast of mind in most human beings to use them to one's disadvantage and partly because many people are indiscreet or incapable of judging and distinguishing what may or may not be repeated. The necessary combination of qualities is seldom found in one person (*rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno*)" (*ibid*., 586-587; in his *Metaphysics of Morals*).

120 Arendt, 1953.

121 Oakeshott, 1962: 39.

122 Hinton, 2008: 335.

123 *Ibid*., 41.

Is freedom mastery?

What does it mean to listen *carefully*? Let us, by way of illustration, pit Confucius yet again against the legendary Lao Tzu. There are so many commonalities indeed becoming obvious even at a cursory reading between Confucianism on the one hand and Taoism on the other hand that both may perhaps be likened, rather, to two twin rivers flowing from one single source. Consequently, is Confucianism yet but another name for Taoism? Conversely, is Taoism yet but another name for Confucianism? Confucius' *Analects* (VII, 8) record the following excerpt: "The Master said: 'I never instruct those who aren't full of passion, and I never enlighten those who aren't struggling to explain themselves. If I show you one corner and you can't show me the other three, I'll say nothing more'"[124]. This brief examination brings again to my mind Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* (in chapter 56): "Those who know don't talk,/ and those who talk don't know"[125].

And this is where Confucius and the legendary Lao Tzu part ways. Is freedom then indeed self-mastery or not (as with Berlin's world-famous *positive concept of liberty*, and as with Kant, Nietzsche, Heidegger in the previous section of the present paper)[126]? As Lincoln wrote: "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy"[127]. Confucius would teach us freedom if only we listened carefully. The legendary Lao Tzu would teach us how to teach nothing whatsoever – but this would claim from us far more than

124 *Ibid*., 272.

125 "Block the senses/ and close the mind,/ blunt edges,/ loosen tangles,/ soften glare,/ mingle dust:// this is called *dark-enigma union*.// It can't be embraced/ and can't be ignored,/ can't be enhanced/ and can't be harmed,/ can't be treasured/ and can't be despised,// for it's the treasure of all beneath heaven" (*ibid*., 96).

126 "But the 'positive' conception of freedom as self-mastery, with its suggestion of a man divided against himself, has in fact, and as a matter of history, of doctrine and of practice, lent itself more easily to this splitting of personality into two: the transcendent, dominant controller, and the empirical bundle of desires and passions to be disciplined and brought to heel. It is this historical fact that has been influential. This demonstrates (if demonstration of so obvious a truth is needed) that conceptions of freedom directly derive from views of what constitutes a self, a person, a man. Enough manipulation of the definition of man, and freedom can be made to mean whatever the manipulator wishes. Recent history has made it only too clear that the issue is not merely academic" (Berlin, 2002: 181).

127 Basler, 1953: vol. 2, 533.

Confucius does. Despite deep differences among denominations within and across cultures – both Confucianism and Taoism (and Christianity above all) propose a *new man in a new society in a new reality*. What sort and what degree of freedom should a woman or a man enjoy? How should community, how should society be organized in order to protect and to promote its members' freedom? Why should reality be formed and informed within the framework of a fierce fight between secular and religious values? Is this indeed the only way? Do they not share a common heritage?

The clarification and classification of the manifold manifestations pertaining to the pervasive and perpetual interplay among freedom, power, cognition, emotion, volition, and the self, and among the self and the significant others is, I contend, a condition of possibility for the systematic study of freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of religion. And I contend that in so far as religious studies *are* science, falsification of hypotheses is part and parcel of their way of life. As Professor Hallo says in his Presidential Address (delivered on 14 March 1989 at the 199th annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in New Orleans): "Must we wait until all the evidence is in before we construct hypotheses? Or can we not rather base such hypotheses on the data already in hand and analyzed and then modify hypotheses in light of subsequent discoveries? I would argue that we not only can, we must!"[128] I contend that Hallo captures in this excerpt a distinct dimension of religious studies research (good) practice. Indeed, as Merton notes: "Fruitful empirical research not only tests theoretically derived hypotheses; it also originates new hypotheses. This might be termed the 'serendipity' component of research, *i. e.*, the discovery, by chance or sagacity, of valid results that were not sought for"[129]. More in detail, "the serendipity pattern refers to the fairly common experience of observing an *unanticipated, anomalous and strategic* datum which becomes the occasion for developing a new theory or for extending an existing theory"[130]. Thus writes for instance Professor Friedman in his momentous *Hidden Book in the Bible*: "that was the question that I set out to answer, but, as sometimes

128 Hallo, 1990: 192.

129 Merton, 1968: 150, n. 18.

130 *Ibid.*, 158.

happens in research, the path that I took to answer this question led me to something much bigger than I had set out to find"[131].

"Finally, to specialists it will need not stressing that what is advanced here is entirely provisional and put up for discussion", writes Professor Lambert[132]. As Professor Edzard writes, "there is no end of addenda – and corrigenda"[133]. And, as Professor Hornung writes:

> Anyone who takes history seriously will not accept a single method as definitive; the same should be true of anyone who studies belief seriously. Modesty is appropriate to these age-old problems of mankind. Every "final" insight is only a signpost on a road that leads farther and may be trodden in the company of others who think differently[134].

Therefore, all that a simple student of freedom can reasonably hope from her or his exploratory and explanatory paper is that it be a stepping stone for future *better* work by others on the topic. Smith notes:

> As I hope this study shows, the ancient story anticipates aspects of the situation in the world today. It is my hope that by reflecting on the ancient situation, we might be able to understand our world and ourselves better. Otherwise, there is the risk of something of our humanity – and perhaps of our divinity – getting lost in translation[135].

An ancient, alien text goes: "In the poem, '*Under the deep snows in the last village/ Last night numerous branches of plum blossomed*', the opulence of the phrase 'numerous branches' was changed to 'a single branch'. It is said that this 'single branch' contains true tranquillity"[136]. But it is more appropriate perhaps to conclude our voyage in the land of concepts with Wittgenstein's laconic last proposition of his landmark *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*: "what we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence"[137]. To listen carefully stops at the point of contact where our careful humanity and our caring divinity work out our life in concert.

131 Friedman, 1998: 9.
132 Lambert, 1989: 1, n. 3.
133 Edzard, 2003: 179.
134 Hornung, 1982: 11.
135 Smith, *God in Translation*, X.
136 Yamamoto, 1979: 91.
137 Wittgenstein, 2001: 89.

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