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Critica dell' oggettivazione e ragione storica: Saggio su P. Yorck von Wartenburg by Francesco Donadio

Flavia Stara

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overall history . . . to show the reasons behind this history and to explain eventually what new image of truth supports it" (xxviii-xxix). The first part of the book examines truth's images in the thinking of selected "great authors" (especially Parmenides, Aristotle, Hegel, and Heidegger) in order to show by these examples that the founding presupposition that constitutes the sense of metaphysics—the absolute identity of thinking and being—contains in all its "images" its own "catastrophe" (lit. *kata-strophe* "over-turning"). In our own age, this holds both of the nihilistic pursuit of unlimited knowledge and power and the 'thinking of being' that is meant to point beyond this fate and to leave metaphysics to itself. Yet such thinking "continues to wander around and within the 'public places' (truth, error, being, nothing) instituted by the public *logos* of metaphysics", without "eyes for the non-metaphysical [and the non-public] 'sense' of experience" (144-45). Sini's own quest for a "new image" is thus not meant to shore up the fated metaphysical project in a new way, but to renew non-metaphysically the philosophical commitment to the sense of experience and to knowing what we are doing and why. In place of the "metaphysical will to dominate experience totally and to 'resolve it' completely in 'public' truths that are functionally effective and symbolically senseless" (153), Sini ventures to discover the original constitutive "finiteness of experience", precisely not as its imperfection but as its "enchantment", that is, its original symbolic character as "finite and perfect part" that "lacks nothing" (123-

24). In this discovery may now lie the origin, justification and destiny of philosophy.

ROBERT BURCH
University of Alberta

Critica dell' oggettivazione e ragione storica: Saggio su P. Yorck von Wartenburg

By Francesco Donadio.

Napoli: Edizione Guida, 1992.

For most philosophers, with the exception of the reader of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, the figure of Count Paul Yorck von Wartenburg (1835-1897) remains little known. In section 77 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger uses some of Yorck's more profound speculative theses concerning the concept of historicity. Heidegger constructs, as we know, his reading of Yorck, utilizing some significant texts from the *Briefwechseln* between Yorck and Wilhelm Dilthey, and Heidegger demonstrates as the programmatic task of a research on historicity, that the study of Dilthey's own work must be undertaken "in the spirit" of Count Yorck.

One could single out in this second half of the 1920s the coming out of anonymity of Yorck and together with this the official and authoritative recognition of his philosophical depth. In fact, within the panorama of traditional academic philosophy, Count Yorck presents himself as an outsider: juriconsult and member of the Prussian senate, administrator of

the family patrimony, and actively engaged Lutheran believer, soldier in the Prussian-Danish, Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian wars. He accomplishes his tasks, "with the nostalgia of the contemplation in his heart", sometimes embittered to find himself, "imprisoned in a milieu opposed to the fundamental dispositions of his soul", and grieved at not being able to reconcile, "the interests of life with a profession", and not having enough time to relish, "the silent dialogue and encounter with the spirit of history". Yorck confesses, however, that the reading in Greek of the New Testament, the reading of Goethe, philosophy, theology or literature, seems to him as, "the light of the sun seen after the grey days of rain."

Now, this very "autodidactic" condition in philosophy represents, in our view, the strength and advantages of his reflections, constrained in not drawing upon the closed academic tradition, but reacting to the "openness" in a close encounter with the great challenges offered by the processes of social and historical transformation in his time. In this sense one comprehends how some questions connected to the cultural debate of the epoch became matter for a productive philosophical dialogue in the encounter with Dilthey, whose friendship was very meaningful for both of them on a human and scientific level.

We would like to bring to attention a final element within the biographical constellation of Yorck: the only writing published by Yorck during his life is a brief work on the theme of "The Catharsis of Aristotle

and Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*", which he presented in order to participate in a competition for civil servant, and his work enjoyed a favorable review in professional journals, reviews which made note of an important fact: "the occasion, the rank of the author and the way in which German culture was preparing to understand and perceive the work of art." Otherwise, there exist no other important documentary materials for reconstructing the spiritual figure of Count Yorck, with the exception of the *Briefwechseln* with his father (1852-1865), and an unfinished manuscript published posthumously (1956) entitled *Bewußtseinsstellung und Geschichte*, of two essays, also published posthumously one on Heraclitus (1959) and one on the Reformation of the Prussian Gymnasium, as well as an *Italian Diary* (1927) which collects letters written during a trip to Italy.

Without doubt, the merit of this work by Francesco Donadio is the felicitous and well-accomplished endeavor to offer to the reader a global and unified interpretive synthesis of reflections and intuitions, confined to the literary genre of correspondence or writings that have come down to us in incomplete and fragmentary form.

One of the most evident phenomenological traits of this hypertrophy of rational objectifying thought becomes, in fact, the eclipse of the meaning of existence and historical experience, and the diffusion of skepticism, which is always a attitude of despair towards life. The power of reason transforms itself into impotence. Instrumental reason which,

with its objectifying analysis, has produced both disenchantment and mastery over the world, has also carried a "naturalistic" interpretation of the human being, a loss of emotional and practical richness as well as a loss of the personal and unavoidable orientation in the world. Here the limits of the power of objectification become evident, as does the necessity of integrating the rights of "thought" with those of "feeling" and "will."

With these three psychic functions, Yorck tries a physiognomic reading of the main historical epochs of Western culture: the Greek epoch, Christianity, and the epoch of modernity, rebuilding spaces and figures of Western philosophical thought, using a sort of cross-bred strategy which allows the rediscovery, through some emblematic figures, of the scenarios and aspirations of an entire epoch, and of a specific constellation of life: "I believe that humans, and not ideas without hands or feet, move history."

We are not able to review here the entire richness of the analyses, themes and suggestions contained in this dense, yet agile study. We have good reason to recognize that we seldom come across books of philosophy so capable of interpreting a work, reopening it to new possibilities of thinking, and practicing a robust and non-ephemeral force of attraction.

FLAVIA STARA

Sexual Difference

By the Milan Women's Collective Bookstore. Translated by Teresa de Lauretis and Patrizia Cicogna. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Sexual Difference is the translation of *Non credere di avere dei diritti*, a 1987 book by the Milan Women's Bookstore Collective (hereafter MWBC). Implied by the difference in titles (literally, *non credere di avere dei diritti* means "don't think you have any rights"), the translation is not a transparent English copy of the original, but a reading of it, and a self-conscious one at that. A triple level of textuality is thus at work in *Sexual Difference*: the Italian original, its translation and de Lauretis's introduction. Furthermore, this triple-layered text has been 'viewed' and is being reviewed by an Italian man employed as a cultural worker in one of the departments of Italian in a North American college. Confessing to my failure to articulate properly these levels all at once, I have opted here for multiple takes. I will summarize (read and rewrite in fast motion) *Non credere di avere dei diritti*, comment on its translation, map my appropriation (as an effect of a text that incites me to keep my maleness in sight) and, finally, report on de Lauretis's dialectical relationship with the original as evinced by her precious introduction. The Italian title *Non credere di avere dei diritti* (after a quote from Simone Weil) is partially contradicted by the subtitle, *La generazione della libertà femminile nell' idea e nelle vicende di un gruppo di donne* (the generation of female free-