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Allergologies Versus Homeopathies

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Abstract This paper is a reconstruction of Levinas' reading of Hegel and his understanding of violence (of the enemy and the war). Combining Franz Rosenzweig's reflections which concern the sick philosopher and Hegel's state, as well as Derrida's interpretation of the different attributes of violence, our aim is also to give full evidence of Derrida's critical reading of Levinas. The first part illustrates the various classifications of the figures of violence from the different periods of Hegel's life and the traces that these figures have left in Levinas' texts beginning with 'Liberté et commandement' in 1953. In the second part we discuss Hegel's well-known analogy from his *Rechtsphilosophie* on sovereignty and the organism—that is to say the parallel reading of some paragraphs of *Naturphilosophie* too—and the relation between totality and violence, in Levinas' 'ontology as allergy' and in Derrida's autoimmunology.

Keywords Allergy · Homeopathy · Immunology · Other · Philosopher · Sovereignty · Sickness · Violence

I insist upon the word 'other', *o allos*,¹ a foreigner and the other who is left behind, who is an other, another. How should (I hesitate to speak about thematisation and

¹ Allergy was first spoken of in Vienna, in German. *Der Wiener Kinderarzt*, Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet, published a text about allergy in the journal *Müncher Medizinische Wochenschrift* in 1906. The Greek root of this word is, of course, made up. Through an analogy with the word *en-érgeia* (internal bodily force), von Pirquet makes the word *all-érgeia*, 'als Ausdruck von Reaktionen auf körperfremde Stoffe'.

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researching) action [*ergon*] directed towards the other and speaking [*logos*] of that other (or the work or actions of that other) be pursued; that is, how should we maintain resistance towards the other and the resistance of the other, in a complicated context and on a path beginning with an analogy of sovereignty and ending with attributes of violence?

The possibility of the figures of the ‘other’, ‘violence’, ‘sovereignty’, ‘war’ or ‘enemy’ being thematised and imagined through a new, more developed, and future bio-analogy, always slightly more precise, should decide if there is justification for the task I am undertaking. Nuance, and it is precisely within nuance that my hopes lie, assumes that a more promising form, foreshadowing and bringing greater security and greater protection for the other, may be found and always can be found.

But how can the detection of one or many violent acts in relation to the other, which every allergology or immunology presupposes (and does allergy not already belong to autoimmune strategies?), protect the other? Not protect me, nor us, nor the same, nor my relations with the other (proving the same, or rendering the other benign and non-threatening) but precisely, and most importantly, the other. Does perhaps the protection of the other, certainly protection from me and from my assimilation, conversely, presume the acceptance of allergy, of distance, and of prevention? Does then an allergy or immunity to the other protect the other from us? In the same way, can delicacy and a possible transformation of allergologies into (auto) immunology, surpass all the problems associated with a change of meaning and context (in the 1970s, ‘allergy’ was colloquially used to signify a reaction to the other, even a ‘instinctive hostility’ or an ‘animosity before enmity’)? Does (auto) immunology lead to greater protection of the other, because it retreats before the other, or leaves it alone; because the same (me or us) clashes with itself as the other; because the same divides itself; because it brings itself into question, it recognises itself as the enemy and the other; because it fights with itself and with its own fictitious fantasies of hostility and allergies?

Levinas asks:

Can the Same [*le Même*] welcome the other [*l’Autre*], not by giving the other to itself as a theme [*en se le donnant pour theme*] (that is to say, as being) but by putting itself in question? Does not this putting in question [*mise on question*] occur precisely when the other has nothing in common with me, when the other is wholly other, that is to say, a human other [*lorsqu’il est tout autre, c’est-à-dire Autrui*]? (Levinas 1996, p. 16).

Despite the fact that chronic sickness has for centuries had a controversial status and the advantage of differing elements which produce this (bio)analogy (and counter analogy)—i.e., the whole, totality, the state, the community, the organism, the body—I insist that it is precisely the secret condition and factor for the existence of the analogy.

Sickness is the beginning, end, and the limiting frame of my words: Hegel’s sickness of sovereignty and his homeopathic strategy, Rosenzweig’s therapy and infusion into the sick and paralysed body of the philosopher [*alle Symptome von akuter Apoplexia philosophica*] (Rosenzweig 1999, p. 59), Levinas’ discovery that the source and birth of philosophy is in allergy [*‘...that philosophy is truly born of*

an allergy' (Levinas 1996, p. 16)], Derrida's epithets and attributes of violence (Derrida 1978, pp. 79–153) and his construction of immunity and autoimmunity as the foundations of the community. I would first divide these four analogous interventions, four disparate actions, into two columns. That is, I would like to classify four differing thoughts on violence into just two divisions: on one side is Hegel, 'the mystic of violence' (*eine Mystiker der Gewalt*), as Benjamin defines him, and his moderator Rosenzweig (one of his most important readers); on the other side are Emmanuel Levinas and his reader, the sometimes severe corrector and moderator, Jacques Derrida. This division should resemble a series of common breaks and unequal pauses in the chronology of one column. If, as a preliminary, I had to formulate a new and different division on this same axis, where texts overlap and continue one into the other, I would experiment and formulate things in a completely different way. I would choose between two options: either I would declare all four of these great undertakings and readings, these 'great books of violence and hostility', as having a moderating intention—all of them attempt to moderate or diminish the 'extreme' elements and differences which precede them (even Hegel or, rather, Hegel more than any of the others); or I would set aside the joint action of Rosenzweig and Levinas as the first and only true incident in the history of Western thought. These are not merely a small episode or *intermezzo*, nor a short respite in the histories of violence and trust arguing that violence is necessary if a goal is to be attained; meaning that there is no justice, right, or law without the use of violence and without war. This second option would then require that this *incident* be an unrepeatable and rare occurrence *par excellence*, because it stands strongly against the context it originates from and all that precedes it and because, paradoxically, it owes its influence and persistence, I would say its 'survival,' to all that will proceed and occur after it. Therefore, between Hegel and Derrida, Rosenzweig (with all of Levinas' exaggerated caution and reservation in his reading of Hegel) and Levinas himself would stand together. This sort of option would present two problems and several levels of uncertainty and differing types of responsibility.

First, following some of Derrida's comments in the text 'Violence and Metaphysics', the position, either of Rosenzweig or Levinas (I dare say that they complement each other perfectly as both read different Hegelian texts), should always be able, in every situation of a renewed belief in violence (meaning today, immediately, now), to prove its adaptability and its contradiction in relation to Hegel. The request that, for example, Levinas does not repeat, nor confirm, nor hide his immanent Hegelianism ['Levinas is very close to Hegel, much closer than he admits, and at the very moment when he is apparently opposed to Hegel in the most radical fashion' (Derrida 1978, p. 99)], could be realised through the continual evaluation of this position by means of Hegel's differing formulas and combinations.

The second point or responsibility produces the first and is found in what follows from Derrida and *his (Auto) immunology* (I have pointed out that what is necessary, for my proposed division to be justified, is at least a slight belief in its potential and future). In order for the Rosenzweig–Levinas intervention, which speaks to the principles of violence and war (therefore, the first institutes of philosophy) to

survive, to become an exemplary incident, it would have to manifest its precision readily and its advantage in opposing the great mystifications of violence before Hegel. I am, for example, speaking of Kant, of the new tendency to inaugurate Kant's fantasies of peace, originating more than 200 years ago, as humanity's most effective answer to a crisis of international law and to a new justification for violence and war.

Three of Hegel's gestures from his lectures on the philosophy of right, three steps in the construction of a *fatal* analogy, could perhaps formulate the first condition for the construction of a strategy which encompasses several elements: war, violence, sacrifice, sovereignty, negation, the enemy and the other. But before we get to Hegel's gestures and to a 'Hegelian construction' (this is what I would like to call it, because it is exclusively Hegel's and could be a condition for every theory of violence, war, sacrifice, the enemy, etc... for Hegel), here are two parameters I make use of and which serve as preambles of 'Hegel's construction':

(a) I am trying to find Hegel through my reading of Rosenzweig and Levinas, that is, the elementary 'construction' which the two of them immediately recognise as Hegelian and instantly oppose. Rosenzweig uses the analogy of a sick philosopher, a patient, as an idealism which should be turned around. So, what is it in Hegel that should be turned around? Or, conversely, what is it that is sick and upside down in Hegel? What is it in Hegel that is already in Rosenzweig's sanatorium?

As we have observed, our patient suffers from a radical inversion [*einer vollkommenen Umkehrung*] of his normal functions. It may be necessary to reverse the inversion, that is, turn matters upside-down [*dass es also notwendig ist, diese Umkehr ihrerseits wieder umzukehren*] (Rosenzweig 1999, p. 55).

(b) I am trying to find the 'construction' which has within itself, and also implies, all Hegel's possible theories of violence, negations, enemies, war, etc. One such always problematic and disputable reduction of Hegel's differing ideas and fragments must cover, for example, two instances from *Science of Logic*, which concern violence coming from the outside, about the other and the reaction to the other and about the end and 'mechanical violence' (*die mechanische Gewalt*) (Hegel 1969, pp. 567, 746); determination about determination, negation, the border and the absolute other from *Encyclopaedia* (just like *Die Wissenschaft der Logik*) (Hegel 1991, pp. 147–150)²; argumentation about the other as evil, about self-recognition within the other from the 1805/1806 semester (*Jenenser Realphilosophie*; Hegel 1931, pp. 200–203); differing versions of the 'struggle for recognition' (*der Kampf des Anerkennens*), wars and confrontations among states, but also positions concerning 'external or apparent beginning of states' (*äusserliche oder erscheinende Anfang*), despite understanding violence as the 'basis of right' (*Grund des Rechts*) or violence as a 'substantial principle' of the states (Hegel 1978, pp. 57–65); followed by Hegel's muddled suggestions concerning first violence (*erste Gewalt*), about the violence of

² Paragraphs 91, 92 and 93 directly inspired Levinas. In them he could find the concepts of the same, the other, the third and infinity.

the hero, about the conversion of violence into right and about the battle for right, etc.

Here are the three fragments which, I believe, construct the fastest path towards Rosenzweig and Levinas.

After two paragraphs (§ 160 and § 161) in which Hegel speaks in detail of war and sacrifice for the state, at the very end of the following paragraph (§ 162) in the lectures on *Natural Right* in Heidelberg (semester 1817/1818), the philosopher speaks about Kant's project of perpetual peace which began with the idea that there should be no war. However, Hegel says that war is 'something ethically necessary', because without war peoples would be *drawn into* their private lives, 'in security and weakness', and would thus be easy prey for other peoples. Hegel plays with this idea in several places in texts from differing years. Hegel continues:

It is also a well-meaning thought, advanced some 30 years ago, that the human race should form a single state.³ What holds the individual states together in such a league of all states is merely an 'ought', and the whole league is based on free choice [*Willkür*]. At all events the individual must desire the opposite of war; but war is a philosophically essential element of nature [*aber der Krieg ist ein philosophisch wesentliches Naturmoment*] (Hegel 1995, pp. 303–304).

Levinas himself could have formulated these two syntagma which do not exist in this form in any other of Hegel's texts—the 'ethical necessity' of war and war as something 'essentially philosophical'. War is not an element but is rather *der Naturmoment*, just as states are small natural individuals which unite and gravitate towards one whole. This movement towards one whole is always natural, essential, and philosophical. This is war.

A two years later, in *Die 'Rechtsphilosophie' von 1820* [named so by the editor of these lectures Karl-Heinz Ilting (Hegel 1974a)], in a note to § 278 '*Der Staat als Subjekt der Souveränität*' (Hegel added these notes in the next several years), Hegel explains the sovereignty. The third point, out of five, is called '*Der Idealismus der Souveränität*'.

The idealism which constitutes sovereignty is the same characteristic as that in accordance with which the so-called 'parts' of an animal organism are not parts but members, moments in an organic whole, whose isolation and independence spell disease [*organische Momente sind und deren Isolieren und Für-sich-Bestehen die Krankheit ist*] (Hegel 1991, p. 738).⁴

Hegel probably wrote this sentence, in this form, in 1825. Since then it has remained unchanged and has been identically reproduced in all the publications of his *Philosophy of Right* at the beginning of § 278. Today, it is possible to follow the

³ In question is Kant's text 'Über den Gemeinspruch' (1793) in which he speaks of his 'proposal for an international state' and at the same time of the 'impracticability' of such a project.

⁴ See also Hegel (1942), p. 180.

genesis of Hegel's argument as the crystallisation of the analogy between sovereignty and the organism (organisation, body), and as the revelation of a sickness which connects two differing levels of Hegel's system. Before this 1825 version, there is no sickness in the lectures on right, despite the fact that sickness as a latent metaphor is present from the beginning in Hegel's political and juridical texts. On the other hand, in an early text concerning *Natural Right*, sickness is mentioned and the analogy is set in the same form as it will be later, but at that time Hegel lacks the figures of sovereignty and the organism.

Sickness and the onset of death are there when one part organizes itself and eludes the dominion of the whole. By this isolation the part affects the whole negatively or even compels it to organize itself for this sphere alone—as, for example, when the vitality of the entrails, in obedience to the whole, develops into individual animals, or the liver makes itself into the ruling organ and forces the whole organism to do its bidding (Hegel 1975, p. 123).

For Hegel sickness (as well as differing versions of hypochondria⁵) is something much greater than a simple trauma which marked his life and which was, after all, a frequent follower of philosophers and philosophy. Hegel proclaims the unity of a state or the health and completeness of an organism through openness and the possibility of war (§ 321–324). Hegel continues that only through sacrifice (*Aufopferung*) is idealism attained and the real arrived at (as a spirit or national spirit; Hegel 1974b, p. 669).

Hegel's third gesture is also quite difficult to locate in time. That fragment is also the result of Ilting's work. In question is certainly a later or perhaps even final Hegel, and a part of his commentary in § 273 *Philosophy of Right* ('*Die drei Gewalten*') called '*Eine naturphilosophische Analogie*' (Hegel 1974b, p. 662). Hegel differentiates between the abstract moments of a state (*gesetzgebende Gewalt, Regierungsgewalt, individuelle Gewalt*) and a concrete concept of a state, as a living whole in which every moment, in itself, organises totality. Hegel defines the philosophical-natural analogy as a living body (*lebendige Körper*) in possession of three determinations. The second determination, as Hegel writes (the first being sensibility, that is perception, and the third reproduction) is *Irritibilität* or *Irratibilität*.

Diese Momente bestimmen sich nun als Systeme... das der Irratibilität ein abstraktes System welches das Herz zu seinem Mittelpunkte hat, das System der Andern.

The system of the other, or the other's system, is found in the centre of a living body or living organism. The other's system is at the heart of the state.

All of Hegel's conditions (and there are certainly more than the three which I sketched here) make the final construction more comprehensible. Hegel himself says—and we saw his signal—that it is found in § 293 of the first edition of *Encyclopaedia* 'The disease of the Individual' (or § 371) or somewhere nearby. Hegel's request that we look at his demonstrations of the latest theories of sickness,

⁵ The notion of hypochondria is present in Hegel's system since his 1803/1804 lectures in Jena (Hegel 1931, pp. 200–203). See also Rosenzweig (1962a, pp. 101–102).

pharmacology and alternative therapies, while we try to understand the figures of the state, sovereignty, war, enemy, the other or sacrifice and violence, paradoxically represents a danger to the consistency of the system. ‘Homeopathy’,⁶ one more invented Greek word used twice and explained in detail by Hegel, is a strategy which resolves one of the greatest dilemmas of his political philosophy. However, homeopathy introduces magic into dialectics, broadening the importance of analogy (the analogy becomes not only the regulative but also the constitutive instrument of a system, as analogy is in itself therapy), it gives an advantage to the same, and not to the different or the other (homeopathy presumes a negation through the same, and not with the other or different or opposite, which would be a characteristic of allopathy), etc.

What then are we to find in the therapies for a sick organism, which can only explain the secret poison which has suddenly appeared in a sick state and a state without war?⁷ Can, equipped only with this insight into medicine, into fatal sickness, the secret of that strange strategy and fantastic power of one sovereign government to organise a war for its own sovereignty (its own people), be revealed? Levinas analyses Hegel’s famous fragment from *Phenomenology of Spirit*, on 5 March 1976 in his lecture on Hegel’s *Logic* (Levinas 1993, pp. 93–97). Hegel says:

But Spirit is at the same time the power of the whole, which brings these parts together again into a negative unity, giving them the feeling of their lack of independence, and keeping them aware, that they have their life only in the whole. [...] The Spirit of universal assembly and association is the simple and negative essence of those systems which tend to isolate themselves. In order not to let them become rooted and set in this isolation, thereby breaking up the whole and letting the [communal] spirit evaporate, government has from time to time to shake them to their core by war. By this means the government upsets their established order, and violates their right to independence, while the individuals who, absorbed in their own way of life, break loose from the whole and strive after the inviolable independence and security of the person, are made to feel in the task laid on them their lord and master, death (Hegel 1977, pp. 272–273).

But how is this possible? How does the government of one state or a sovereign, order a war? How is the ‘sovereign conserver’ (this was Hahnemann’s favourite metaphor) able to risk his own body’s death and dose itself with war? What part of sovereignty is always apart from itself? Is the government in secret contact with the enemy? Is a virtual enemy or virtual danger in question? What has happened to the

⁶ Its creator, Samuel Friedrich Christian Hahnemann, a contemporary of Hegel, arrived in Berlin in January 1831, only a month after Hegel’s death. Hahnemann’s students are spread across Europe taking care of Cholera victims, a disease which arrived in Western Europe from India through Russia.

⁷ ‘Secret poison’ is a secret for Hegel, and he cites Gibbon: ‘This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire [*geheimen Gift in die Lebenskräfte des Reichs*]. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated...’ (Hegel 1975, pp. 101–102). Derrida mentions this fragment in his book *Glas* (1974, p. 117).

victims and sacrifices? How large a part (an amount, number, dose) must be taken away from the whole for it still to be a whole?

It seems as if in Hegel, the ghost of the analogy (and sickness) circulates between (his) body and the state, and as if these lines from the book *Phenomenology of Spirit* are preceded by Hegel's thoughts concerning medicine and therapy, and Hegel's intuition and the suggestions of an eternal patient. In the addition to §373, which concerns various therapies, Hegel finally finds affirmation. This paragraph begins with sentences bearing a striking resemblance to the understanding of sickness and medicine in the Jena lectures (Hegel 1932, pp. 174–187; Hegel 1931, pp. 167–174):

It is by means of the healing agent [*Heilmittel*] that the organism is excited into annulling the particular excitement in which the formal activity of the whole is fixed, and restoring the fluidity of the particular organ or system within the whole. [...] In so far as they are negative stimuli, medicaments are poisons [*Die Arzneimittel sind insofern negative Reize, Gifte*]. When the external and alien substance of an indigestible stimulant is administered to an organism alienated from itself by disease, this organism is forced to counter its effect by drawing itself together and entering into a process, by means of which it regains its sentience and subjectivity [*Selbstgefühl und zu seiner Subjektivität wieder gelange*] (Hegel 1970, p. 202).

This is followed by the above-mentioned addition:

Homoeopathic theory [*homöopathischen Theorie*] in particular treats illness by prescribing an agent capable of bringing forth the same disease in a healthy body. The effect of introducing this poison into the organism, and in general, of confronting it with something obnoxious, is that the particularity in which the organism is fixed becomes something external for it. When the organism is diseased, however, this particularity is still one of its own properties. (Hegel 1970, p. 205) [...] Every disease, and especially acute disease, is a hypochondria of the organism [*Hypochondrie des Organismus*], in which the organism loathes the external world and repulses it. The reason for this is that it is restricted to itself while containing its own negative. As the medicine now stimulates it into digesting this negative, however, the organism is restored to the general activity of assimilation. The precise way in which this effect is obtained is by administering to the organism something which is much more potently indigestible than its disease, and so forcing it to draw itself together in order to overcome it. This results in the internal division of the organism; for us the initially immanent indisposition has now become external, the organism has been duplicated internally into its vital force and its diseased parts. This effect of medicine may well be regarded as magical. It resembles the effect of mesmerism in bringing the organism under the power of another person, for it is by means of the medicament that the whole organism is subjected to this specific determination succumbing as it were to the power of a magician [*der Gewalt eines Zauberers*] (Hegel 1970, p. 206).

Deciding which remedies are the right ones now presents us with a difficulty (*Zu sagen, welches nun die rechten Mittel seien, ist schwer*). In general, it may be said that the relationship between disease and medicine is a magical one (*Das Verhältnis der Krankheit zur Arznei ist überhaupt ein magisches*).

This magical fragment which Jacques Derrida notices and partially analyses in the book *Glas* [he only mentions and does not focus on ‘l’homéopathie, l’hypocondrie, l’hypnose, le sommeil réparateur’ (Derrida 1974, pp. 132–134)] is one of the final novelties of the system. Homeopathy is an addition to the system and a paradigm change, despite the fact that Hegel has no more time, nor gives it any special status. Homeopathy is just another form of therapy; but it is not the one and only therapy replacing all others, nor can any other therapy take its place. However, its significance, its militancy and at the same time its greatness, and its magic, is comprised of the influence of the other (or the influence of another man; here *autre* becomes *Autrui*).⁸ The problem now is the misrecognition and misinterpretation of the same and the other, the transformation of the same into the other and, conversely, the internal divisions into the same and the other, the infinite production of the other, the negation of the other and the power of the other to be the carrier of this negation.

Homeopathy, as the final addition to the system, deconstructs his system in several stages. I would like to note and list several moments:

- Homeopathy enters the system as therapy, in place of the organism’s sickness, unsuccessful treatment, death and the appearance of the spirit;
- Homeopathy is the kind of therapy that counts on the unity and wholeness of the entire organism (this is its main difference in relation to allopathy);
- As therapy, as something artificial, its strategies and consequences are necessarily political—meaning that this strategy requires a subject or sovereign (the brain, ratio, philosopher, statesman) who can take care of body, organism, text, system, sovereignty, people;
- Just as Hegel sends the readers of *Philosophy of Right* to read his *Philosophy of Nature*, so his first student, and the first to deconstruct his text, makes a counter analogy. In the margins of Hegel’s book *System der Philosophie* (1841), written by Karl Ludwig Michelet, he adds the following note to Hegel’s addition §373:

This does not contradict the statement made just previously, that poison is more powerful, the form in which it makes itself effective is less potent [*denn eben weil das stärkere Gift in minder mächtiger Form*], being a merely external hostility [*äußerer Feind*], which is more easily overcome than the internal hostility of the disease itself [*als der innere Feind, welcher die Krankheit selber ist*] (Hegel 1970, p. 205).

- The homeopathic strategy corrects Hegel’s understanding of sickness, which had generally remained the same from his earliest texts: the sickness of an organism

⁸ Hegel already writes about violence and power [*Gewalt*] of magic over the organism or power [*Macht*] of the foreign over the organism in his 1818/1819 lectures (Hegel 1982, § 295, pp. 144–145).

is a result of, in the last instance, the inorganic that an organism still contains within itself (*‘Der Organismus hat nun seine unorganische Potenz an sich selbst, so bezieht er sich als ein Unorganisches auf sich’*).⁹ The drama of sickness, and then death, occurs because the inorganic has not been completely overcome. Symptoms of the inorganic are a division of the organism, hypochondria and the isolation of parts of the organism. The homeopathic intervention which is to follow is multilayered: it uncovers (a) that the other (with the inorganic as its prototype) cannot be fully incorporated and assimilated; (b) that there exists an excess or waste or negation which is not calculated into the system or into the organism and which is useless; (c) that there is an external (*‘das Äusserliche ist so für mich ein Anderes aber ein ideelles Anderes’*) (Hegel 2000, p. 248) an other, a spiritual [*Geistiges*] (Hegel 1982, §295, p. 144), medicine, foreigner, poison, enemy, that is supremely indigestible by the organism, and which is just as hard to incorporate (this is how the idea of an absolute other, who can only initiate or whose purpose is to provoke an entity into being, but not be a part of it, was discovered; this is the other as a *laxatif*, the other who cannot be eaten, or the other who cannot not be *Exkretion*);¹⁰ (d) that the exterior is analogous to (and not the same as) the interior, hence the other (the same) which is added to the sick organism is analogous to the inorganic, already present in the organism; (e) that it is the other, or that the enemy is a function and that it is virtual.

‘Was den Menschen interessirt ist sein Anderes’, says Hegel (Hegel 2000, p. 251). The other is not, but its silhouette is already framed, clear; its place has been discovered, its independence is on its way. Despite the other completely functioning in order to constitute the organism, despite the other not bringing life—life and vital energy are not within it—its task in forming a subject was never before as it is in this homeopathic construction.

This construction is implicitly present within the Rosenzweig–Levinas turn; more precisely, their intervention or therapy becomes possible only with Hegel’s late addition, of which they never directly speak. This can be seen in their strong resistance to Hegel and in the insistence on therapy which is always in absolute contradiction to what is in essence and exclusively ‘Hegel’s’ or ‘Hegelian’ in philosophy and in thought. In spite of the correctness of marking the limits of such an inversion of Hegel and in showing reservations towards the achieved outcome (is Derrida not trying to do this all the time, while reading Levinas?), perhaps it is still necessary to defend the future of an action which has only now begun.

Rosenzweig and Levinas add to one another in their resistance to and conversion of Hegel’s position. It is possible to show systematically both the complementary and simultaneous nature of Rosenzweig’s reconstruction and the inversion of Hegel’s figures of sovereignty (their analogies with the organism) (see Rosenzweig 1962b, pp. 130–133, 142–147), Levinas’ transforming of Hegel’s sacrifice for the homeland into a relationship and meeting with the other, Rosenzweig’s modification

⁹ This is one of the formulations from Hegel’s *Lectures* (Hegel 2002a, pp. 185–186).

¹⁰ See the chapter *‘Prozess der Gattung’* in Hegel (2002b, pp. 196–197).

of the relations between violence (*Gewalt*) and right, Levinas' attempt to rethink negation while commending Hegel's efforts, Rosenzweig's insistence on life, and Levinas' pages on war from *Totality and Infinity* (Levinas 1969, pp. 220–232), etc.

Probably, even before these grand themes, there exists an imminent proximity and similarity to their efforts (Derrida would say that this proximity is 'empirical'). Rosenzweig formulates that first act of philosophising and thinking against Hegel with the simple fact that he is alive (and that he is philosophising), while Levinas believes that the first act must be against philosophy, against Hegel, in order to protect the life of the other and in so doing defend subjectivity.

We both know, writes Rosenzweig to a sanatorium director into which a sick philosopher is to be placed (and not only the philosopher, of course; Rosenzweig's idea is that only common sense and the power of life itself can remedy the 'sickness of reason'), that a sick reason can only be cured if it is restored—by an application of some force, if necessary—to its normal environment. The task is not to 'infuse' the patient's reason with something new, but to return it to the condition from which is deviated. We must fight the various mountebank cures, the ointments, the vaccinations, old or new, with the slogan 'Environmental treatment' [...] 'Environmental cure' [*eine reine Terrainkur*] (Rosenzweig 1999, pp. 60–61).

This is Levinas' 'wind', '*une subjectivité libre comme le vent*' (Levinas 1969, p. 22). Opening for the other begins with breathing, with the lungs (lungs are the real subject and the real beginning, a beginning before any other beginning). Resistance to Hegel begins with the mistrust of medicine, with the mistrust of its set practices. Levinas' first gesture must demolish '*l'association de la philosophie et de l'Etat, de la philosophie et de la médecine*'. Only within this context, where philosophy necessarily splits with the state and medicine, can Levinas' sudden engagement and his alternative allergology be understood. More precisely, in question is a speech against allergy ('*d'une insurmontable allergie*'),¹¹ a discourse against allergy, therefore an appeal for relaxation but caution at the same time.

The effort of this book (*Totality and Infinity*) is directed toward apperceiving in discourse a non-allergic relation with alterity [*une relation non allergique avec l'altérité*], toward apperceiving desire—where power, by essence murderous of the other, becomes, faced with the other and 'against all good sense', the impossibility of murder, the consideration of the other, or justice (Levinas 1969, p. 47).

However, does Levinas' call for the destruction of allergies to the other still belong to allergologies? Is an engagement which resists every form of allergy (therefore, engagement which is ethical),¹² in other words, is an allergy to allergies in the domain of allergology? Is an anti-allergy or counter allergy still an allergy? And

¹¹ '*La philosophie est atteinte, depuis son enfance, d'une horreur de l'Autre qui demeure Autre, d'une insurmontable allergie*' (Levinas 2001, p. 263).

¹² 'The relation with the other, or conversation, is a non-allergic relation, an ethical relation'; 'encounter the other without allergy, that is, in justice' (Levinas 2001, pp. 51, 303).

would this leftover allergy, this resistance to every form of allergy towards the other, be the subject's last chance?

Can Levinas' 'defence of subjectivity', from the preface of the book *Totality and Infinity*, be formulated in such a way?

It is as if there is something inaccurate and suspicious in the thematisation of Levinas' preliminary resistance and dissatisfaction with the status of the other. It is as if there is something dangerous in these questions, something which denounces Levinas, betrays him and immediately troubles us. All these questions—as well as the forced attention I give to a confused moment which precedes, in Levinas, the allergy to the other (this can be an allergy to an allergy to the other or an allergy whose traces remain even when there is no longer an allergy and no longer an other)—I risk qualifying with 'philosophical standard', or 'philosophical mannerism'. This *moment* (again Hegel and his *Momente*) is closely associated with philosophy and with reading which belongs to the 'philosophical regime,' as it thematises the non-thematised (for example, an allergy which precedes the allergy Levinas consistently mentions). This is not all. It is also an objectification, a reduction, an imposing of horizons, and violent revelation of violence (violence of allergies and violence which remains hidden and unnamed as allergy). This is the moment which sustains and generates philosophy, simultaneously degenerating it. Only a philosopher, perhaps only Hegel, can say the sentence which Jacques Derrida spoke: 'Levinas is very close to Hegel, much closer than he admits, and at the very moment when he is apparently opposed to Hegel in the most radical fashion.' The only thing that remains for us is to experiment with this moment; one for which it remains unclear who should take responsibility: I, Levinas, Derrida, Hegel or only Hegel, Hegel, and forever Hegel? How then should we again read, using Derrida's or Hegel's methods (how can we thematise without any thematisations?), the status of allergy in Levinas or in Hegel, and simultaneously maintain radical resistance to Hegel, Levinas, or Derrida? A question such as this can be preceded by new questions and new answers in relation to allergy before allergy or violence before violence or, in general, in connection with the attributes of violence.

If we were now to follow Derrida's readings and philosophical *standards*, completely new consequences would be revealed but, simply put, Hegel, will no longer be so closely associated with Levinas. There are several stages of this one moment:

- Levinas introduces allergy as a negative strategy and calls (us) (in the vocative) to resist, negate or develop an allergy towards it. The other is not thematised or 'placed' in the accusative (Derrida 1978, p. 95), rather, the negation of the other is thematised or the allergy towards the other itself. Thematisation without thematisation is achieved through Levinas' swift change of plan and rapid transition from accusative to vocative, meaning through a call for the negation of negation (that is, an allergy to allergy).
- Levinas will be close to Hegel and within the frames of Hegel's negation of negation only if this call is put aside, if the vocative is pushed aside, and only if the concept of the 'other' is placed back into Hegel's milieu (where the other is my negation, where the other is a negation of the same).
- In this case, and only in this case (this is the case when, in one's reading, we look for oversights, blind spots, ignorance, subconscious, unthematized fields),

the subject will be constituted through the process of revealing the other; that is, through the process of destroying negation or everything that negates the other. The subject confirms himself (the subject is defended) as he destroys all that negates the other, as he becomes allergic to every allergy towards the other. Or, rather, the subject preserves the other only if it destroys what negates the other.

- It now becomes simple to follow two new elements expanded in Levinas, before and after Derrida's intervention: (a) that violence is necessary, that the subject is violent, that necessary violence which precedes every possible violence is set aside; this violence is complementary to the violence of thematisation (Derrida endeavoured to desubstantialise violence in Levinas, to find one or several acceptable attributes of violence; I believe that his intervention was not entirely justified); (b) that the possibility of violence always appears with a third, that is, with one who negates the other—this could be in the place of allergy (over time Levinas recognises the subject of violence or the violent subject who defends its neighbour as the state or as the justified state violence; Derrida's sensitivity, deliberation, and consideration towards Israel and Palestinians is always in dialogue with Levinas).

Despite the fact that between Rosenzweig and Levinas, between two modes of the same intervention on which I am insisting, the figure of the other has changed and become more dangerous than ever, it seems to me that there is no room for hesitation: first, Levinas' allergy definitely refers to Hegel's 'theory of the other'; second, allergy is, for Levinas, an absolute and perfect synonym for Hegel's homeopathy—is the furious reaction and allergy to the other, to medicine/poison, not crucial for Hegel? Is provoking resistance and the allergy of the organism towards the other not the essence of homeopathic therapy? Third, Levinas' substitution of homeopathy with allergy turns Hegel upside-down—what is therapy for Hegel is still sickness for Levinas. Fourth, Levinas' new step, and resistance to allergy is more than the usual resistance to homeopathy—allergy assumes the harmlessness and the innocence of the other, while anti-allergy necessitates the examination of the secret of fiction and fantasy about the dangerous and toxic other. Fifth, the over-occupation with one's own resistance and allergy to the other, frees and relieves the other—the other (*'l'autre inassimilable'* in both Hegel and Levinas), still helps in constituting Levinas' new subjectivity, but not as in a homeopathic construction, as the other who fictitiously bombards and attacks the organism.

The relation with the other—the absolutely other [*absolument autre*—who has no frontier with the same is not exposed to the allergy that afflicts the same in a totality, upon which the Hegelian dialectic rests. The other is not for reason a scandal which launches it into dialectical movement... The alleged scandal of alterity presupposes the tranquil identity of the same [*l'identité tranquille du Même*], a freedom sure of itself which is exercised without scruples, and to whom the foreigner brings only constraint and limitation (Levinas 1969, p. 203).

Levinas' fragment is a good example of his numerous effortless 'turns' of Hegel. If we must sketch a position for a new reader (and a therapist, and immunologist), he

will truly have to confirm and still think this great distance—on the one hand, not having a frontier with the other and the same, and on the other hand ‘*allergie qui afflige le Même*’ (the allergy that afflicts the same).

In a book in which he bids his farewell to Levinas, Derrida circles the concept of allergy many times and in so doing marks a future step which is on the path of forever releasing the other of responsibility for the frontier, for allergy, for affliction and for pain.

The introduction or the sketch of an introduction (or simply a ‘sketch of a sketch’) of a name signifying a rare disease, is the perfect addition and substitute for allergy. Namely, it is quite hard to define the precise differences between allergy and autoimmunisation. Is allergy simply one of the many autoimmune illnesses or is autoimmunisation a particular aspect of every allergy? The answer is quite complicated; however, the accent and deciding factor is this ‘*auto*’, and this is also an addition to Levinas. The precision of Derrida’s intervention, as the accuracy of Levinas’ engagement, is truly diverse: *immunis* supposes only a single part of the organism or system; this is a privileged part with a special status (that is why it is called the immune system) whose chief characteristic is not only to protect the whole system, but rather it is the part where the other appears and is recognised as the other;¹³ a part which recognises the other simultaneously recognising its own limits; the immune system can and cannot recognise the other, nor can it differentiate its own destructive elements (cancer or AIDS); this part can protect its own system from the other, but can also tolerate the other; the immune system can be lulled and drugged (‘*la désensibilisation*’)¹⁴ and it can tolerate the other above limits (‘*à faciliter la tolérance de certaines greffes d’organes*’) or above all its own limits; the immune system can also produce the other within itself and from itself (*horror autotoxicus*) and then destroy it.

Derrida rarely uses the nominative (‘*auto-immunité*’), he insists on the process or the logic of *auto-immunitaire* and uses differing excessive descriptions (*la logique terrifiante, fatale, suicidaire, étrange, indispensable*, etc.). He repeats Levinas’s or Michelet’s gesture: returning this logic (or this word) into the political-law space from which it was born, in order to profit from the bio-medical constructions and mechanisms that this illness implies (conversely, Hegel also confirms this tactic: homeopathy did not come from therapeutics into the political logic of the sovereign or philosopher, rather it was the other way around) (Silverstein 1989, p. 1). But it is here, with this change of context, that this rare illness or this rare family of illnesses suddenly becomes something necessary and elementary within one community, society or state. All this seems to be completely imprecise and forceful, including the definition of this logic which Derrida ceaselessly repeats (‘As for the process of auto-immunisation, which interests us particularly here, it consists of a living organism, as is well known and in short, of protecting itself against its

¹³ ‘The immune substances... in the manner of magic bullets, seek out the enemy’, Paul Ehrlich (see Silverstein 1989).

¹⁴ The concept of Paul Ehrlich (see Silverstein 1989, p. 160).

self-protection by destroying its own immune system [*à se protéger en somme contre son autoprotection en détruisant ses propres défenses immunitaires*]).¹⁵ Apart from this, Derrida lacks Levinas' vocative and any sort of call for the negation of this destructive self-negation. There is no call for the isolation and destruction of this logic; rather, Derrida always speaks of it in the accusative, as if speaking of an occurrence which happens continuously and in parallel within the state or anywhere else ('Once again the state is both self-protecting and self-destroying, at once remedy and poison. The *pharmakon* is another name, an old name, for this autoimmunitary logic') (Derrida 2003, p. 124). But what is fatal in this logic, if it can still be thematised and calculated in the 'living system' or 'living organism'? What is it that is fatal to this 'fatal logic' *auto-immunitaire*? An excess of violence or violence which cannot be a part of any sort of economy of violence forces Derrida to correct himself. Here are several sentences from Derrida's book *Voyou*:

For what I call the autoimmune consists not only in harming or ruining oneself [*à se nuire ou à se ruiner*], indeed in destroying one's own protections, and in doing so oneself, committing suicide or threatening to do so [*à se suicider ou à menacer de le faire*], but, more seriously still, and through this, in threatening the I [*moi*] or the self [*soi*], the *ego* or the *autos*, ipseity itself, compromising the immunity of the *autos* itself: it consists not only in compromising oneself [*s'auto-entamer*] but in compromising the self, the *autos*—and thus ipseity. It consists not only in committing suicide but in compromising *sui-* or *self-*referentiality, the *self* or *sui-* of suicide itself. Autoimmunity is more or less suicidal, but, more seriously still, it threatens always to rob suicide itself of its meaning and supposed integrity. (Derrida 2005, p. 45).

It seems that the circle of violence towards the other can only now be completed. Levinas' radical move of bringing himself into question can now be recognised as ringing an end to the border between the same and the other. The foundations of violence which auto-immunology attempts truly to thematise must be thought again in confrontation with hypochondria as auto-assimilation and as the prototype of every illness according to Hegel. But not only this. The success which homeopathy achieves in the therapies of patients with autoimmune illnesses (these sorts of accounts and experiences should never be considered of secondary importance) confirms Hegel's presence and demands from us the discovery of a new radical approach.

Derrida is very close to Hegel, much closer than he admits, and at the very moment...

¹⁵ The police does not destroy the police, just as the immune system does not destroy the immune system. When they receive the wrong information from monitoring cells, the so-called killer cells do not kill themselves; rather they attack other living, healthy cells, of the same living organism. In question is a mix-up of levels, a mix-up of murder with suicide, changes and conflicts with identity, and, of course, complete limitation of the concept of survival (Derrida 1998, p. 80).

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