
Machine-Thought and the Political Order

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Abstract:

The most widespread statement of political philosophy is presented here in the simplified and trivialised form of “man is X; he must become Y.” Man must do so at the same time for himself, for his own survival, but also for the good of all, of the Community, of the City: the plurality must absolutely, in any way whatsoever, give way to unity, subject to [sous peine] and under threat of chaos. The essential question found confronting political doctrines, moreover since the prominence of the idea of democracy is the following: how to bring about the existence of a united society across a heterogeneous social body? The response from philosophy articulates itself around three principle schemas: the theoretical construction of a unified community under the order of similar laws to those of nature (Platonic schema); the search for the best regime, which will have as its ultimate end the moderation and perpetual regulation of conflicts, by an optimal combination of freedom and stability (Aristotelian schema); and the theorisation of the “end of politics” by the locating of a “social wrong” inscribed in a structure doomed to collapse by the practical negation of its ideological foundations (Marxian schema and derivatives). The mode of thought which imposes itself here is decisional. Beyond the third schema which constitutes in some way a meta-political critique, and necessitates that it alone has a particular analysis, in the two preceding, man constitutes a kind of material – raw or primary, depending – that philosophy will work on, and sculpt to give it a form that harmonises fully with the Whole that it prescribes. In political philosophy, we always turn more or less around the “Let’s make man” of Hobbes, that is, around the technical transformation of a material given. Or to say it otherwise: the creation of an oeuvre from crude and imperfect elements, an oeuvre thought like a masterpiece – that is to say, one that contains within it an idea of perfection and permanence – but doomed here to serial reproduction.

Keywords:

Community, City, political philosophy, Political Machine, cybernetics, democracy

1 Originally published as “Pensée-machine et ordre politique,” in *Homo ex machina*, ed. François Laruelle (Paris: L’Harmattan, “Nous, les sans-philosophie” 2005), 251–274. The translators wish to thank Sophie Lesueur for her support and encouragement, as well as Gilles Grelet for his approval. All footnotes are Lesueur’s unless noted otherwise. – Trans.

Introduction

The most widespread statement of political philosophy is presented here in the simplified and trivialised form of “man is X; he *must* become Y. ” Man must do so at the same time for himself, for his own survival, but also for the good of all, of the Community, of the City: the plurality must absolutely, in any way whatsoever, give way to unity, subject to [*sous peine*] and under threat of chaos. The essential question found confronting political doctrines, moreover since the prominence of the idea of democracy, is the following: how to bring about the existence of a united society across a heterogeneous social body? The response from philosophy articulates itself around three principle schemas²: the theoretical construction of a unified community under the order of similar laws to those of nature (Platonic schema); the search for the best regime, which will have as its ultimate end the moderation and perpetual regulation of conflicts, by an optimal combination of freedom and stability (Aristotelian schema); and the theorisation of the “end of politics” by the locating of a “social wrong” inscribed in a structure doomed to collapse by the practical negation of its ideological foundations (Marxian schema and derivatives). The mode of thought which imposes itself here is decisional. Beyond the third schema which constitutes in some way a *meta-political* critique, and necessitates that it alone has a particular analysis, in the two preceding, man constitutes a kind of material—raw or primary, depending—that philosophy will work on, and sculpt to give it a form that harmonises fully with the Whole that it prescribes. In political philosophy, we always turn more or less around the “*Let’s make man*”³ of Hobbes, that is, around the technical transformation of a material given. Or to say it otherwise: the creation of an oeuvre from crude and imperfect elements, an oeuvre thought like a masterpiece – that is to say, one that contains within it an idea of perfection and permanence—but doomed here to serial reproduction.

The notion of finality is thus omnipresent in the statements of political philosophy: whether explicitly or implicitly, the declared goal is to describe and to put in place the best form of government possible with a view to install an enduring safe and pacifist social order. Most political theories are rooted in the background of the Greek Cosmos where disorder is voluntarily outlawed. Nothing is left to chance, to the aleatory on the earth of philosophy, and what is more, in all that concerns thought and the organisation

2 Let us note that the self-proclaimed discipline “political science” demands, for its part, the suspension of these aspects of closure and the foreclosure of the concrete, in its analysis that it broadly wants to issue from the realised studies by disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, political economy, the history of institutions and social or international relations, etc. It could be demonstrated that, thanks to the non-philosophical approach, this claim to scientificity and independence vis-à-vis any philosophical characteristic of the discipline are theoretically and practically invalid – but this will be the object of another work.

3 In English in the original. – Trans.

of the City. In addition, before any synonym of fossilisation and efficient determination of relations of forces, under the permanent alibi of necessity, the government of men in this framework transforms human existence into destiny. A destiny that has no name other than progress: man evolves in a prefixed framework, by degrees, towards an ideal and desired eternal term. It is always the community which takes precedence over the individual in a conception of time where the present is totally subordinate to the future, until this ultimate term is reached; so time will have to stop in one way or another. Thus, in politics, if philosophy collides with degeneration – of regimes or of institutions – and intends to treat it, it forecloses regression only to consider progress, which contradicts a great part of historical, social, and cultural human experience.

Moving from general philosophy to political philosophy is a movement from *knowing* [*savoir*] the definition of what is Good, to *willing* [*vouloir*] to ensure that it reigns at all times and theorises the means to reach its goal. But this movement requires the unification of the diversity of the human society in question with the view of giving it a global orientation, the direction [*sens*] which will lead to its harmonious development. Political philosophical thought is thus, like all philosophy, desiring of the One. This quest for identity is in large part issued from the heritage of the Western theological and monotheistic approach, which postulates that the idea of man is in the image of God; the plurality of men is therefore steered back towards an identity. And to achieve this end that it gives itself, it constitutes itself doubly as *metaphysics*. On the one hand, because it begins by reflecting on its object and establishing laws which account for it. Then, after having also studied the forces at work in the society in question and decided on a point of equilibrium from which they can be mastered, it reaches towards a control of these parameters in a theoretical response that it wants to be definitive. This is what allows it to reorient them in the service of the fabrication of a new community doomed to the ends which it itself has fixed. On the other hand, because the “cement” of this unifying edifice is none other than value, value which must become the blood of man and more than his blood: it must distil in him in the form of a permanent infusion so that he becomes one with philosophy, that he incorporates in his body politic the values of any such doctrine that will have been pre-determinately decided as fundamental.

We can only think the decisive evolution that is carried out in the comprehension of the relation of man with the World and with Being because the Greek origins had consequences for the specifically political aspects. The tendency towards the standardisation of the Western system of thought, inseparable from the advent of representation as a guiding and constitutive scheme of this thought, has progressively reduced multiplicity. This tendency has been lived in the political field as the necessity for a better management of the City. Therefore, it has imposed itself all the more, for it brings to light the intrinsic link between the notion of representation and the efficiency that it hopes ensues. Behind all

representative thought hides the shadow of finality and the relation of the two meanings of this term, namely that of the product [*compte rendu*] (or to produce [*à rendre*]) and that of productivity [*rendement*] of production. Efficiency constitutes the keystone of the edifice of Western political philosophy from its Greek origins: the abstraction of ideal forms, built on models, are projected upon the world and the will seizes them as a goal to be realised. This traditional thought is that of the plan drawn up in advance, of a combat strategy, where the heroism of action plays a fundamental role. Philosophy here is revealed more specifically as the thought of causality, that of the relation means-end or theory-practice.

I. On the Political as a Machine

This schema is likely constitutive of our vision, which we are unable to let go of unless by—precisely—radically changing terrain or the posture of thought. In the submissive relation of practice to theory, the aim for perfection is the supreme norm that determines all others, instituting a systematic modelling extended to all domains, including politics, where it would paradoxically seem unable to intervene, considering the unpredictability of the Radical Immanence of human relations. However, this datum is far from hindering the machinic progression of philosophy.

It is machinic and calculative, for we are here in the presence of all the constitutive elements of a System: a gathering of objects or parts of reality that are *presented* and that must be *grasped* in their *reciprocal* articulation, and wherein each acquires the *significance* of the place that it occupies in this whole. The *relation* in question is then defined exactly: these elements are related to one another according to *the order* of a *circular interdependency*. The nuance that is most commonly attached to the use of the term “system” is that of an *enclosure* together with a *prevalence of the theoretical and perfectly specified dimension* over the suppleness and instability of concrete experience. Moreover, the system is presented as a rational construction, as an ensemble of *norms* that is imposed within their *complete figure*, *willed* dispositions, and *programmed procedures towards reaching an end*. From a particularly political point of view, this concept reflects an ensemble of functions: these functions define the needs and exigencies that constitute the identity of the system. The particularity of political doctrines overall is to conceive it as the most autonomous one possible vis-à-vis the constraints and exchanges with the outside, namely with concrete society. The social environment is only accounted for under the form of *information* that it emits from the system address; the whole objective is to construct it in a way that it can maintain itself, notwithstanding the tensions, demands or critiques to which effects it is susceptible.

From that moment on, it concerns a schema of generalised foreclosure, one recognised as such, for it is voluntarily conceived to give order the absolute primacy over any other consideration of life in

society. Order is, in a plurality of terms, the emergence of an intelligible relation through a classing and hierarchy of these terms according to the principles of causality and finality, in view of the elaboration of a norm, injunction, and rules. The narrow link that unites the system with order in philosophy, and, moreover, when it is declared political, results directly from what we have previously described as its abhorrence of chaos; thus, the system-form is quite naturally the only way in which philosophy can apprehend the Real, taking account of its intrinsic—obviously unacknowledged—presuppositions. For us, the stakes are to give ourselves the theoretical conditions to be able to envisage and think politics and/or the political—we do not decide on this question of kind for the moment, for it is also the bearer of heavy presuppositions—otherwise than under the philosophical mode, that is, under the system-form. We start from the refusal to define the political term, essential in this approach, and we maintain this refusal. We now utter a first hypothesis issued from the overall previous observations:

Hypothesis 1: The system-form is symptomatic of the primacy of a certain type of thought over politics/the political, namely a thought in the heart of which the desire for order, issued by the fear of chaos, exercises a Tyranny: this is its theoretical angle. The essential characteristic of this thought, its practical angle, is that it can *only* generate politics on the overriding mode of order, under its Tyranny, that is, where any other consideration—for example distribution [*partage*] or solidarity—even theoretically stated and reclaimed is immediately and definitively second, even excluded. Hence the following formulation: there is a convertibility between the thought that imposes order in politics/the political and the way in which order appears in politics, the overriding place that is assigned to it; or, said otherwise: philosophical thought in politics intrinsically contains the Tyranny(-form).⁴

We call this particular configuration of philosophical thought “machine” due to all the criteria that we educated previously: the theoretical and practical arrangement of elements with a view to, on the one hand, an overall functioning with a precise finality in order to respond to a necessity – here considered as vital – and, on the other hand, the creation of a work [*oeuvre*] that can be reproduced as identical in a sustainable fashion thanks to a technical procedure. In order to be able to decrypt the functioning and implications of this machine, in order to render them explicit for those who are submitted to it; and in order to have the posture to discover a new relation to it, and thus a new mode of political being, we postulate that we must be “within and outside of the system.” This signifies the utilisation of this machine as the material for a disposition of thought that could also appear as the order of the machine, but that is radically foreclosed, and stranger, to it. We are still *within* the philosophical system to the extent that we work from its structure and its presuppositions. The automatism of philosophy can

4 The first consequence stating this hypothesis concerns the possibility of a Democracy—a real Democracy—that we hold as untenable in the mode of philosophical thought.

only be carried out through the hierarchy issued by the permanent invocation of a transcendence *qua* exterior determination, whether it be of the order of some pseudo-divine will or power or the order of a political contract between individuals. In the framework of social and political organisation, it is the occupied position that dictates the propensity towards obedience. Philosophy does not address life in society uniquely as a problem to which it must bring about a solution. It is entirely blended with thought and calculation. It is the notion of performance or efficacy that is imposed as the criterion of identification of two terms by reducing the first to the second: to predict so as not to be surprised by disorder and caught up by chaos. All of philosophical thoughts' mechanisms are here tribute to the service of performance. That our path to discovery through hypotheses seems, in the same way and according to its vocabulary, also in the machinic form, would not be more than an appearance. Non-Philosophy, only thinking "once each time," renders the mechanism of reproduction that subtends the idea of performance impossible. Substituting the radicality of the Lived Experience for the concept—calculation is supposed to enclose and determine the probability of a phenomenon—thought according to the One is practised outside of any principle superior to experience. It is the Lived-in-Man that makes the difference between non-philosophical practice and the machine: humanity escapes from any automatisisation whose most essential *raison d'être* is the systematic reproduction or recurrent procuring of such and such an effect through such and such cause. And it is the Lived-in-Man that escapes from it all the more so because it is the Lived that is being written at all times and, because of this fact, it is radically unpredictable.

Therein, Non-Philosophy is the uni-maton—and not the automaton. If Non-Philosophy simulates something, it is only the system-form of philosophy, which allows it: on the one hand, to disassemble the system by establishing the same type of relation that it has with the object but through a completely different Vision; and, on the other hand, to disengage the Real-in-person, the Existent-Stranger-Subject, the one who simulates the machine all by being the enunciator of their theory—differently from the philosophical Subject. Simulation always remains the philosopher's perspective over an entirely other type of thought than their own because philosophy is incapable of seeing a thing other than itself in any kind of object of its analysis or contemplation: it copies exactly its own (concept-) form.

Therefore, what is the style of the theoretical (calculative) response given to the problem that philosophy poses in politics? It is the globalising unitarianism of the social plurality in view of an effective government of the City. This response is inscribed in the framework of the general evolution of the system of Western thought under two essential aspects: on the one hand, the exacerbation of a desire for perfection in the image of the scientific advancements at the end of the 17th century, which favoured the idea, along with the great universal cosmological cogs, of immovable laws that could be valuable for all levels and in all domains, particularly in politics (which largely explains the omnipresence of

the term “law” in the corpus of political philosophy); and, on the other hand, the uniformisation of this system, indissociable from the advent of representation as the directing schema of this thought, tending towards the progressive reabsorption of multiplicities. In order to get out of this system of thought, we must go further in the analysis of terms that constitute and subtend it, and the relations that they maintain with them in a declared or more obscure fashion. Let us take these two essential terms of political philosophy: law and representation. One like the other establishes itself [*s'imposent*] as mechanisms aiming for the maximal reduction of the Multiple to the One.

The law brings into play the notion of reasoned order *qua* rule imposed by the “force of things” (the circumstances), or according to a certain noted logic (the necessity or the property of a body, of a being...), or willed logic (conforming to an established object, notably in political philosophy). As a result, what is more or less indirectly conforming to reason is legitimate, hence the notion of Right—or, if we want to go further, ortho-doxy. Precisely from its political angle, the law is thus an ensemble of technical procedures, a dispositive established by the sovereign authority of a society, a mechanism necessary for the realisation of its “work” [*oeuvre*] and the obtaining of the result that it fixes for itself, and which is nothing other than maintaining order and its preeminence in the best possible conditions. Thus, the law turns out to be one of the keys for the passage from philosophical *knowing* to philosophico-political *doing* through the intermediary of the will fully oriented towards a *telos*.

As for representation, it has occupied a central place in political reflection due to the impossibility of *philosophically* thinking the social unity without it. Indeed, representation has appeared as the only way of making an invisible being (the unity of the political body) appear thanks to a being visible in the public sphere (the representatives, who are less numerous, are potentially more likely to extricate a common will). It has also appeared as the only way of making the social whole pass into a reductive funnel that allows one to better control the relations of force, the step towards the postulated and sought-for unity. Nevertheless, even under the most general sense of the term, there always remains a distance between what one represents and the represented thing. We are in the register of Alterity, but always in tension towards a desired and impossible Identity; because to reach this Identity, philosophy still superposes the mechanisms of the definition of the represented to its own mechanisms of representation in order to make sure that representation would be possible. Why mechanisms? Because here, what is in priority is the possibility of an overall functioning that is in play. Behind every representative thought hides the shadow of a finality – here the efficacy and interest of the reduction of the Multiple to the One – and relation, in both senses of the term, namely as the product [*compte rendu*] (or to produce [*à rendre*]) and that of productivity [*rendement*] of production in view of reproduction. This leads us to consider the pragmatic aspect of this notion. In effect, what is representation in politics if it is not the substitution of one person for another, because they are allegedly more qualified or wiser, at the very least more

effective from the perspective of the functioning and objectives of the system? Thus, there is also a notion of know-how [*savoir-faire*] within representation, a notion derived from representation, but one to which it is intrinsically bound.

The proclaimed necessity in which any society is found giving itself a certain image, in which it can “identify itself,” or represent itself in a model, is the foundation of any socio-political creation. The institution of such a society is the creation of a World, one that is more or less restrained, with its own particular rules, its reality, its language, values, and its mode of life. This creation is a whole position—the auto-position—of meaning and essence, form and place. It constitutes a new fundamental determination of society translated first and foremost by the laws of a certain mode of representation. Why? Because a society, whatever it may be, conveys with it a collective way of thinking and acting so that it rests upon a certain vision of the world—*Weltanschauung*— that is supposed to be shared by the members of this community. This involves the obligatory ways of acting in the social and physical world. The absolute priority of any auto-constituted society is, from the raw material [*matériau brut*] of the human being, the creation of an individual in which the institution of society is “massively incorporated.”⁵ It is for this reason, and all reasons that we have previously stated, that the principle of Sovereignty is imposed as the coronation of the development of political thought of the philosophical type. It condenses into a single synthesised term the whole ontology of the unifying One that is the reducer of multiplicities, under which the relations of force *must* organise themselves harmoniously, that they exercise among individuals (the Subject-People dyad) or among powers at work in social relations and phenomena (the Law-Representation dyad). If I read “Sovereignty,” I know for sure that I situate myself in a scheme of thought within which one cause can produce one effect alone. Sovereignty is The Principle of Subjection, more or less finely elaborated, according to the concerned doctrines: the name of domination by the authority of philosophy in politics; even in human institutions, philosophy has brought its fear of death to its climax.

II. The Political Machine and *Technē*

These notions and principles in the service of the reduction of the Multiple to the One, therefore, make reference (to) politics *qua technē*—the art of the use of things or know-how, what we have envisaged above under the more general term creation. The appearance here of the term *technē* is not random: it has been imposed in political philosophy since Hobbes. Hobbesian philosophy is the archetype of

5 Cf., on this point, Cornelius Castoriadis, *Domaines de l'homme, Les carrefours du labyrinthe II* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1986), 264.

the will to surmount finitude by ontology and art; the problematic of space, common to aesthetics and political philosophy, finds here its most complete expression. For Hobbes, reason is attained through art; the only way to surmount finitude or death is the “artifice,” namely the constitution of an entirely artificial man constituted in the Sovereign Body. This conception remains predominant even in the contemporary epoch where it begins to encounter some detractors (Arendt, Strauss)⁶ without ceasing from developing itself in different directions. And this is because of one essential reason: the reduction of the Multiple to the One is nothing but a second finality in relation to what consists in preventing the destruction and death of humanity. If the fear of chaos haunts the whole history of political philosophy since its origins, then moreover, in the background, the *raison d'être* and the perpetuation of the modern State is its finitude. Like any other living being, the modern State seeks to keep itself alive and constantly attempts to defeat what could cause its demise. The Modern State is constantly confronted with the possibility of its violent death from internal or external causes; in the minds of men who found it, as in the minds of those who conserve it, the State is the means of force that one historical group gives itself to strongly maintain its existence. In this sense, the State is human through and through, it is a human institution. Hence, our second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: There is a convertibility between Man and the State in modern political philosophy, subsisting in contemporary political philosophy under the creation/representation form, within which the human is foreclosed, reduced to the state of a procedure or mechanism. For we utter the hypothesis according to which there is an In-Man that escapes from any convertibility, in the same way that it escapes from any systemic thought of the philosophical type, escaping from any thought according to order, finding its apogee in the principle of Sovereignty. Said otherwise: this In-Man or Stranger, the Identity of the Last Instance of the Man of philosophy, is a non-representable *political* Real, the Rebel to any attempt at unitary or globalising appropriation and manipulation.

The possibility that is offered to us here is double: on the one hand, it breaks with the omnipresence of convertibility in philosophical political systems—the convertibility of Man with either a principle that is unitary or a positioning principle, depending on the doctrines; and, on the other hand, it proposes an opening towards another political thought within which the totalising uniformisation would be absent to leave place neither to the Multiple nor the One exclusively, but to their Last-Identity. Non-Philosophy sets an end to the reign of terror in politics such that it has been imposed tyrannically in a philosophical mode; it picks out “the worm from the fruit” by breaking both the circle and the system. Non-Philosophy substitutes thought according to the Real for thought according to order. We

⁶ The very controversial Arendtian position seems to me to be effectively not devoid of certain “obscurities” as to the development of its path of thought and puts her philosophy in the service of the *a posteriori* legitimization of a certain type of political practice, parliamentary so as to not name it.

have made the hypothesis of an In-Man or Rebel-Stranger towards any possession, globalisation, or manipulation. Hence:

First Theorem: The Force-(of)-Rebellion is the specification of the Stranger in the non-philosophical political mode; if politics must be defined subsequently, it will be so determined in the Last-Identity through this Uni-versal Rebel-Stranger, another name for the Existent-in-struggle, Uni-versal according to the Vision-in-One.

The Rebel-Stranger is a rupture with any hegemonic order; they are so, not through decision, but because they are radically indifferent to any ortho-doxy, to any system of Right such that it was previously defined. Non-Philosophically “in heresy” does not mean that they are an anarchist. What is at play in a political thought according to the Real is a space of thought in which the multiple, movement, evolution and the aleatory would no longer be foreclosed, and this does not necessarily mean chaos, war, or incoherence. It is a matter of a new illumination of the exploitation of Man where philosophical theory claims to serve him; by breaking the monopoly of philosophy in the domain of political thought, we make the hypothesis that it will be possible to undermine the foundations of all variants of absolutism and totalitarianism that it generates in part through its machine-structure, but also the perverse effects that no philosopher today can boast of knowing how to curb.

Let us now see what the operative validity of our hypotheses can be through all the points that we have stated previously and what has allowed us to make the overriding theoretical bond that philosophy establishes between art-*technē*, creation and politics appear. We take as material different assertions from Deleuze on this same subject. According to our progression, what has been updated, on the one hand recurrent in political philosophy, is a fear [*hantise*] of death, the fear of the end of humanity by destruction, the victory of the darkest aspects of Man over his benevolent qualities. To sum up pithily, Evil over Good. To alleviate this danger, philosophy has put in place different systems across the elaboration of doctrines but whose form and finality remain identical to one another: order. It has little by little constituted a world of ideal forms, archetypes or pure essences, separated from reality but having the power to inform it. Order ultimately passes through the supremacy of the unitary and passes through the creation of an individual in which the philosophical system is incarnated, physically incorporated by the intermediary of a know-how or *technē*. The particular social environment, therefore, is only taken into account under the form of information that it emits by a system address. The first objective is that the system address can be maintained, notwithstanding all that is likely to affect it. To do this, it will send back to the social environment its own information, always oriented towards the same double end: order and its sustainability. In a system, information thus makes a circle: but if the first flow of the environment (E) towards the system (S) is multiple, varied and aleatory, the second

flow, from S towards E, is unified and finalised. In this sense, we follow Deleuze in his definition of the term “information” as an ensemble of orderwords, but towards what the second flow is concerned with alone.⁷ Information is the means for the system to pass the predominant message to society about what it is supposed to believe. According to Deleuze, this is the essential spring that has allowed us to pass from societies of discipline – primarily repressive societies – to societies of control (both also described by Foucault). Then, Deleuze continues his remarks in the following way: the only possible act of resistance vis-à-vis this system (the primacy of the order and control of its persistence) would be the work of art, for it is not the instrument of communication; it does not convey information. The work of art would be the only effective counter-information *qua* act of resistance because “the work of art has a fundamental affinity with the act of resistance” and Deleuze cites Malraux: “art is the only thing that resists death.”⁸

Let us stop for a moment to consider what is at play here, precisely in the field that concerns us and that consists in discovering a posture that allows for us to suspend the primacy of the system-form over the thought of/from politics. We have seen at what point the creation of “another man” as a work, here, of a *technē* is perfectly inserted into the scheme of political philosophical thought and moreover the thought of Modernity. Moreover, resistance consists in opposing one force with another or not yielding under the effect of a force. This term seems rather inappropriate when facing death, for if there is something in which one does not resist, it is death; we can resist illness, predict dangers that we know endanger our life – acts of resistance vis-à-vis inconsiderate or passionate behaviours—but death, no. Death is the Real *par excellence*: what we speak of, what we attempt to avoid the pangs of—suffering—but what is and will remain for any human unknowable, unrepresentable, and unavoidable. We can just as well write “philosophy fears death” as “philosophy fears the Real”: death and the Real, despite their if not semantic, at least latent omnipresence, are victims to philosophical foreclosure. By contrast, intrinsically bound to this foreclosure of the Real-One, there is a resistance of a philosophical origin imposed by Non-Philosophy *qua* heretical thought. Therefore, the term resistance employed here by Deleuze is symptomatic for us, and following this path, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There is the Real-death [*Il y a du Réel-mort*]. Philosophy flees in the face of it or forecloses it. It subjugates Man and makes him the Subject by taking advantage of the risk of death. Breaking with this mode of thought implies thinking through the Real-death, not resisting it, but welcoming

7 We do not think we betray Deleuze’s thought because he himself in his development – at his talk on May 17, 1987, on “Qu’est-ce que la création ?” [“What is the Creative Act?”], trans. Ames Hodge and Mike Taormina, in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 312-324. - Trans.] – defines information as a system of control.

8 Deleuze, “What is the Creative Act,” 323 – Trans.

it without wanting to grasp it, which is, in any case, totally vain. This means leaving place for the potential of the discovery and creation of the In-Man, radically heterogenous to the system-form, and therefore a vector of Real Rebellion.

For us, the term resistance evokes nothing other than an entirely relative autonomy for a thought that will still circle with philosophy and its presuppositions. The thought according to the Real takes account of this resistance faced with the One and determines it, far from seeking to annul it. In this case, it is much more the Force-(of)-Rebellion than an act of resistance, for the Rebel-Stranger is the one who simply does not recognise authority. The Stranger, indifferent to the World and all the hinter-worlds of philosophy, is this Rebel who is always and already directly engaged and in-Struggle, rather than the possible resistor of the first or last hour.

Deleuze continues:

Every act of resistance is not a work of art even though, in a certain way, it is. Every work of art is not an act of resistance and yet, in a certain way, it is. It seems to me that the act of resistance has two faces: it is human, and it is also the act of art.⁹

These remarks corroborate our own intuition, namely, on the one hand, that there is art, in politics notably, that does not exclusively emerge from the art-ificial and technical know-how, and, on the other hand, a Force-(of)-Rebellion that also emerges no longer from reaction but from creation, precisely in the same sense; that there thus exists an Identity of the Last-Instance between an act of resistance and a work of art, that we thus formulate:

Hypothesis 4: The Force-(of)-Rebellion of the Stranger or the In-Man is the Identity of the Last-Instance of the act of creation (the art angle) and the act of resistance (the political angle). The Force-(of)-Rebellion is the aspect of a resource of Man that political philosophy voluntarily forecloses because it is unpredictable and irreducible to the institutional incorporation and any will to systematic control.

As Deleuze foresees it, there will be two faces in the act of resistance as in the act of art. The first face is directly inscribed in a systemic perspective of order. This is the face of the technical procedure, the method, fabrication, and this is so even if the point is to oppose ourselves to the system, in the case of the act of resistance, but the system itself entails an aspect of intrinsic resistance and one that makes up a part of its functioning. And there is a second face, what we rather name Rebellion and that we recognise as the face of Inspiration whose particularity is to be in rupture with any form of domination.

9 Deleuze, "What is the Creative Act," 323 – Trans.

If Inspiration appears to us as evident in creative activity, it can be less so in what concerns the Force-(of)-Rebellion; nevertheless, Rebellion is Inspiration as much to the extent where it does not ground its acting upon certainties as to the issue of its engagement. The discovery-form precedes and determines resistance and art, as well as their reciprocal relations, in the Last-Identity. What the theoretical presuppositions of philosophy prevent us from formulating is that the work of art has no potential of real resistance, that is, of a heretical posture, except under the Inspiration of the In-Man, on this creative and rebellious part of the Human who is radically indifferent and foreign to any system-form, order and technical procedure in view of a *telos*. Hence:

Second theorem: The Inspired is the other name of the Rebel-Stranger, the Source-(of)-Identity and discovery of a non-philosophical *political* thought.

This non-philosophical *political* thought is radically foreign and indifferent to the system-form of political philosophy and any Tyranny of order. Man is no longer reduced to the state of the mechanism and the technical procedure in the view of a determined, reproducible and therefore exchangeable end.

And Deleuze ends his lecture on these words:

Paul Klee said, “You know, the people are missing.” The people are missing and at the same time, they are not. The people are missing means that this fundamental affinity between the work of art and a people does not yet exist, is not, and will never be clear. There is no work of art that does not call on a people who do not yet exist.¹⁰

The Inspired- or Rebel-Stranger awakens us to the Vision-in-One of what Deleuze names “the fundamental affinity between a work of art and a people,” the one that for us would emerge rather from an Identity of the Last-Instance.

III. The Hero, this Machine-Subject

“This fundamental affinity between the work of art and a people that does not exist yet, is not, will never be clear” affirms Deleuze,¹¹ for philosophy perhaps, perhaps not for Non-Philosophy. Since the Greeks, the thought of the act is bound to the abstraction of Being and to a certain conception of the

10 Deleuze, “What is the Creative Act,” 324 – Trans.

11 Deleuze, “What is the Creative Act,” 324 – Trans.

Subject. In his thought of action, Aristotle highlights the will of the Subject who chooses their action through deliberation. Descartes will make this line of thought the foundation of the freedom of this same subject. Thus, the effective action, resulting from a Decision on the use of such means in the service of such an end, refers to the whole Western theory of the Subject. In other words, there is no Subject without a theory-practice relationship and without supremacy of the first term over the second. Any break with this fundamental schema - that is to say, any previously conceived evolution - dissolves *a contrario* this conception of Man in society. In fact, the Subject constituted by action but fixed in its constitution of submission to the *telos*, only appears as a paradox. For ends and means do not depend on the same faculty: the end, as a goal of perfection, is of a moral as much as a political nature, while the efficiency of the means is a choice of a technical order. It is the *telos* which, at first sight, makes the Subject an institution and a fixed political reference point. However, the relationship of the submission of practice to theory, according to a modelling technique dedicated to identical reproduction, locks out both the possibility of choice of the means and the potential of effective action of the Subject. For at the heart of its theory, the Subject is largely as much a means as an end. It is the instrument, the theoretical vector by which philosophy anchors its authority and its presuppositions in human social life, remaining the guarantor of the stability of the whole System. There is no possible institutional support without a conception of the Subject. It is The Solution found by Western thought to solve "the great Equation,"¹² the problem of the permanent threat that weighs on the equilibrium of human actions. However, as Aristotle already recognised, this model cannot be totally adequate to Man for three essential reasons: first of all, human action takes place in an irreversible time which, unlike mathematical reversibility, does not allow us to indifferently go through the series of moments in one or the other direction (the past is, in the Last-Instance, the radical determining moment); on the other hand, between the means and the end aimed for, unforeseeable events can be interposed at any moment which come to hinder the expected performance of the means and to suspend the realisation of the objective; finally, since the means remain partly unknowable and unrepresentable, there is always the risk of overflow or diversion from the intended ends. The emergence, the unanticipated surge of destabilising factors for the System, is the unconquerable enemy of Western theory. It calls it indetermination, chance, or chaos. In all Greek tragedies and epics, the *technē* constantly tries to compensate the *tuchē* without being able to totally exclude it. Clausewitz humbly recognised that chance could not be eliminated from war, considering the persistent and insurmountable gap between real war and absolute war - according to his conceptual model.

In spite of this obstacle, Western thought perpetuates its automatism and confirms its will to reproduce such an effect from such a cause and its choice to interpret the Real in terms of action. It always constructs

12 *The Matrix Revolutions*, the third entry of the cinematographic trilogy from the Wachowskis, 2003.

its schema from the thought of human conduct as a specific know-how, but which will try to include indetermination, both as a risk and an unpredictability. The Hero (mythological or Judeo-Christian) will take their functions in this context and to substitute themselves momentarily, when necessary, for the Subject in order to finally re-establish the latter in its foundation. The sudden Inspiration of the Agent-Subject in a crisis situation, elevates the latter into the momentary Creator-Hero of a new order. Since the uncertainties of events cannot be eradicated, Western thought, according to its structural mode of functioning, develops the theoretical means to reappropriate them, to dissolve them in order to ultimately transform them back into a System. Plato and Aristotle make room for chance and the inspiration of the Subject; Machiavelli made his *Prince* a praise of risky intervention, marking a turning point in philosophy that would henceforth give a growing place to the indetermination of facts in political theories. All our representations are built on a schema of the Hero who makes their mark on the World by confronting it. History is teeming with such moments: so are children's stories, many novels and films of yesterday and today. The Man-Subject-Hero is thus elevated to the rank of creator of order by an act of political foundation. But, do they leave the system of thought to which they were subjected? Nothing is less certain. This interference of the action of the Subject, now potentially, but not effectively, author of its own theory, represents a great risk for philosophical thought. It remains an untimely and dangerous intruder for the balance of the whole. The spectre of the death of humanity then returns. The intervention of the Hero is certainly necessary and saving, but it disrupts the internal coherence of the process of returning to equilibrium. And for a moment, it also carries the risk of arousing possible but undesirable rebellions to the authority system that generates all political power. The time of heroic intervention must thus be clearly indicated as a punctual moment, frighteningly effective but decisively more effective than frightening. This is how, in order to think the definitively efficient and safe action, philosophy has invented the *kairos*, the occasion, this necessary point that also constitutes a bridge between *tuchē* and *technē*, a junction between chance and technique. It is only thanks to *kairos* that the heroic intervention can remain limited to a simple intrusion in the course of events without becoming part of them in a lasting way. It is this "opportune moment", or time as it is good, that re-establishes, once again, the endorsement of theory over practice.

The importance of the time factor in the Western philosophical system is now taking on a new scope. It is proving to be the essential element to seize for success. Without the ontological background of the opposition between Being and becoming, stable and moving, the opportune moment does not exist. In the same way, the adaptation of instability to the norm, the permanent insertion of theory to practice is unthinkable without this happy encounter between time and action, which re-establishes harmony, the *summetros*, joining the Greek ideal of number, measure, and cosmos. Thus, there is no possible *telos* of the action of a Subject without *kairos*. The intervention being conceived only as punctual, it

certainly opens to the event but also to the possibility that we call History. However, this History, far from representing the chronicle of a flow of chaotic episodes, is much more the reading always oriented towards a goal of harmonisation and comprehension - in the double meaning of the terms - of the facts, aiming ultimately at tuning [*accorder*] the interpretations and attenuating the dissonances.

IV. The Analogy Between the Philosophical Treatment of Man and the Work [*Oeuvre*] through History

It is as if philosophy thought of man exclusively as the means to his end, as an “acting” Subject, essential to his historicization and institutionalisation, but as if this acting Subject did not transform under the repeated fire of his actions, as if he did not evolve. Western philosophy is incapable of thinking about transformation. For in fact, if it were to include this notion, it would be to renounce its claim to grasp the Real, which it cannot do without becoming radically other than itself: a non-philosophy. It is in action that man is said to be *autonomous*, but we have seen how much the structure of philosophy intrinsically denies what it pretends to grant: with one hand, it withdraws what it has given with the other. For what constitutes a philosophical Subject is as much the action as the theory/practice relation in which philosophical authority inscribes it and the *telos* of order and performance in the direction toward which it is oriented. In reality, the philosophical Subject only has autonomy in the exact moment when it is confronted by chaos for philosophy. It is individually the Subject-Hero or collectively the “heroic people” (Michelet), who, by their sacrifice and offering themselves, for the cause or a work, comes to restore order, to re-stabilize a risky situation, that History, tradition, and education will then come to establish in time, to try again to inscribe it in timelessness. Whether it is individual or collective, the important thing is that it is a creator of order, that is, from a concrete social point of view, a political founder. Philosophy, by perpetually fighting against chaos, generates the position of the Subject in the founding action, but also the interruptions, the rebellions that make History. But it is this History which, in return, comes to resupply the possibility of a gift of Identity to Man. Thus revolutions are revolutions only in the strict sense, “returns to”, movements in a closed curve and not radical changes.

So it seems that the *telos* of action, as of creation, would entirely be a *history of time* [*histoire de temps*]. No work can be read or looked at without reference to tradition either, in order to situate it in the history of a register or a movement. Even more so if it concerns a philosophical work. Better still, each author spontaneously refers, either at the beginning or during their work, to other authors, to their predecessors, as a guarantee of their seriousness, of the solidity and theoretical validity of their reflection. In the same way, can Man, within the framework of Western thought, be thought outside

of History? Is there a conception of humanity that would not be historical? A priori, no. From birth, we are even caught up in History, to get out of it only at our death, and yet... Everything contributes to making us aware of it and to orient our actions according to this knowledge, by the weight of traditions and education, the transcendence of values, with responsibility in the forefront. Whether it is man or a work, the philosophical authority is the one that donates identity by reinserting them in the course of history; by giving them a role on stage, which not only flattens them, indifferentiates them, but also “linearises” them, gives them a temporal meaning, to be able to distinguish currents, schools of thought, socio-political types, etc., where one could be tempted to see individualities, with all the danger that this could involve. Danger, because philosophy associates the multiple with chaos, disorder, and the risk of destruction. Philosophy can only think of the multiple under the dogma of union, under the same banner, that of order, harmony, and the quest for perfection. But this donation seems to be organised around a temporal paradox. In fact, on the one hand, a part of the Real is reduced in the discourse of a common *transhistorical* concept, with an appeal to stabilise observed reality, to systematise it, to frame it, in order to better control it; any notion of an arrow of time is excluded here, in favour of a conception of *neutral time*, as in classical or Einsteinian physics, sine qua non of the foundation of any certainty. But on the other hand, this practice induces an insertion of any work in a history—thus a time-oriented arrow, past-present-future—by the possibility of a thematic follow-up of each notion, stable and perennial. Hence the simultaneous non-temporal and temporal character of this donation of the Real. From this observation, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: In philosophy, we are in the presence of a double conception of time: a historical time (means) at the service of a “meta-historical” eternity (end)- the ultimate avatar of the means-end relationship. A historical perspective that allows us to envisage a progress of thought, the permanent reinsertion in a rigid framework that leaves little room for novelty or, in any case, a non-conformist thought.

However, let us not forget the essential role of *kairos*, such that we were able to analyse it. So it seems that we are dealing here with a triad and not only a dyad of time; a triad, but one that would no longer cover the traditional past-present-future conception. This triad is organised around an eternal presence which is the spontaneous time of philosophical thought. It is the time inherited from religion, the time of perpetual perfection, reversible and neutral, the “father of every truth” (Machiavelli). It is divided into two other temporal spaces: on the one hand, the *chronos*, the ordered, determined, and predictable time eminently controllable because irreversible, and, on the other hand, the *kairos*, the chaotic, hazardous time where nothing can be calculated. Philosophy never ceases to want to appropriate the *kairos*, in order to make it “come back” into the *chronos*, the sine qua non of the Greek *cosmos*. Even recognising its inestimable value of potential, even knowing full well that there is no creation strictly speaking in

its absence; however, granting it all the virtues of the sublime and luminous ecstasy, the philosophical thought forecloses this very eccentric and dangerous time with regard to its *telos* of order. Fixing the present to determine the future: philosophy wants to grasp everything, even time. "We lack resistance to the present," says Deleuze.¹³ Yes, because Western thought develops in the belief that things will stabilise at a given moment and that one must also seize this opportunity that may not present itself again. From this point of view, History would essentially have a legitimising function, in the sense that any thought that finds its place in its framework is declared legitimate. If there was no historical perspective, there would be no discipline in the double sense of the term: orthodoxy of/order within thought and the constitution of a field, of a domain of its own knowledge.

Third Theorem: Philosophy is inscribed within a temporal paradox, where History appears as a constitutional means of any donation of identity, that is to say, as an unavoidable and essential source of the constitution of a Subject.

Here, it is History that dictates law. The paradox would then be only apparent: History comes to reinforce the internal structure of philosophy or vice versa. With a common *telos*, not only a donation of identity, but especially with an ultimate horizon, the inscription in a unitary framework, with an orientation, a unique destination, decided on beforehand in the very heart of its presupposed philosophy: progress. Both for Man and for the Work, there resides a strong will of determination, source of appropriation, of control, of aggregation, and, finally, of servitude, for these two entities - which are only two examples. The usurpation reaches its climax or its refinement when the donation of identity becomes omnipresent at all levels of the existence of the Subject, when it insinuates itself in an immanent manner in its very way of life, literally the economy, the administration, the law of the house. From the top (philosophy and its major transcendent mode) to the bottom (the economy today, predominantly capitalist, whose vocation is to substitute the identity it sells for the real Identity of humans), the loop of subjugation is looped. Thus, Man as with the Work constitute kinds of "occupied territories," permanently as objects of colonisation. According to this optic, the Vision-in-One, there would indeed be, by the ordered representation of knowledge headed by philosophy, a *government of thought*, by which this one is constantly oriented, as above - History, Education, hierarchy of disciplines -, so below - criticism of the works, evaluation vis a vis orthodoxy. It is also oriented according to the dogma of progress, to which the present is always right over the past according to a totally arbitrary imperialist presupposition. The problem is that if we think constantly under the dominance of the *telos* imposed by philosophy, we are unable to think it, except within a thought which, precisely, would no longer be of the philosophical structure.

13 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 108. - Trans.

V. Identity of the Last-Instance of the People and the Work: What Is a Non-Subjugated People?

Hypothesis 6: The government as a structure of political power is the mode of philosophical political thought's being.

Whether the government be of one alone, a group or—solely theoretically—of everyone, modifies nothing in this structure that is intrinsically bound to the structure of philosophy itself and to the hegemony of theory over practice. However, the term that designates the action of governing comes from the Greek *kubernêsis*: this is cybernetics. And this term was employed for the first time by Ampère to signify the art of government, before being used in its current sense in the field of mathematics and technology in the last 40 years. Cybernetics is now a science formed by an ensemble of theories pertaining to communication, the regulation of the living being and the machine. It is the discipline under which the analogy Man-Machine is enshrined. In the manner of philosophy, cybernetics is only interested in the functioning logical structure of a concrete system, not in its own identity. In particular, it is curious to note that an automaton is a *quintuplet* according to the principles of cybernetics. However, five is the figure of completion of all philosophical foundations: “As soon as philosophy undertakes to destroy the false unity of opinion, to regain the founding unity of thought, transcendent to its own grasp, it must substitute for the latter the inequality of the triad, or of the *pentad* characteristic of the dialectical approach.”¹⁴ Logos functions from Plato to Heidegger and even in some contemporary work, around the closure of five. The link between cybernetics, automation, and politics appears thus very clearly, through the term government. However, the governed is the Subject: the one who is subjected to authority, to power, to force or to strength, depending on the context. In this sense, each People is a collective subjected-Subject. In fact, the volatility and the equivocity of this notion are symptomatic: here again, it is History which determines, together with People who localise and define it, responding to the requirement of unity in Western thought. The People are disposable, made available or exploitable at will to ultimately serve the *telos* of the performance and relation of theory/practice.

Hypothesis 7: It is the gaze of philosophy on Man which historically makes him Subject: at one and the same time the People-Subject. (In the same way, is it not also the gaze of philosophy on the work of art that makes it capable of style in History?)

“The people are missing,” said Klee. But “at the same time, they are not missing,” adds Deleuze.¹⁵ And certainly, the People is the banner waved by any political regime, whether it be democratic or totalitarian. It is the alibi of legitimacy, of conformity, of orthodoxy, but an alibi only. Because, yes, the people are

14 J.F. Mattéi, *L'étranger et le simulacre* (Paris: PUF, « Epiméthée », 1983), 373.

15 Deleuze, “What is the Creative Act?” 324. – Trans.

missing; or rather we barely know where to find them. Alongside a historical people—organicist in its fetishistic use but with barely a trace of reality—there co-exist at least two much more concrete aspects than the people that haunt the political: the people as a citizen Body, that remains phantom enough given the number of those who do not wish to participate or who simply do not have access to it; and precisely the people, the invisible of the excluded, whose political power is only remembered if it is conjuncturally obliged. So, more exactly, the People-Identity is missing. The violence that is done to its heterogeneous reality by the donation of a global identity, is obviously anything but truly democratic.¹⁶ To hear the diverse, and to respect it, is not the prerogative of philosophy or its derivative disciplines. It is always this same gaze that decides a priori which among the people is the People, without leaving their identity any right to speech [*parole*], if not any right to existence. It is the mediation of politics, as a joint project of philosophy and History, which forecloses the People-Identity. This is because any point of view that wants to think about a People must necessarily pass through the state, the highest level of fossilisation of relations of forces and the negation of diversity. The difference between political doctrines often originates from the solution to the question: what kind of knowledge is the most efficient for the government of the City, rational or contingent knowledge? The two sources of political philosophy are held to be that of human experience and theoretical reflection; as we have seen, both are summed up in a single word, History, whether of humanity or of philosophy. On either side, it is the same relation between theory/practice to the work, the same automation of thought that generates subjugating institutions for the Human. Politics essentially consists in constituting the People (however it may be defined) in a Sovereign Body, that is, to create from scratch an art-ifice, whose function is to close once and for all the lived (the foreclosure of the Lived) and to lock on a single basis alone the potential of the future. However, this operation is not any more concretely realisable for the People as it was for Man. In this, we agree with Deleuze to say that a fundamental affinity probably exists between the work of art and people. We try to clarify this by repeating what our “Hypothesis 4” and our “Second Theorem” have put forward.

Fourth Theorem: The Inspired is the other name of the People-Identity, as much as the Rebel-Stranger. It is foreclosed by philosophical thought, always, still and already radically imprevisible and irreducible to any institutional incorporation, and to any will of systematic appropriation.

The People-Identity defeats this mythology constructed by supposedly objective reason (the History-Philosophy dyad), entirely preoccupied with “machining” the Real and based on precise mechanisms, the principal of which, as we have seen, is that of the representation through which Man, by servi-tude

16 Sophie Lesueur, *Non-philosophie du sujet politique*, “L’alibi démocratique au service de l’assujettissement,” (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2022), 165. – Trans.

[a-service-ment] becomes the object of theoretical exploitation, leaving far behind the illusion born from the philosophical claim of being a service to humanity.

We hoped to show that all social formations and even more so political philosophical systems contain machinic processes and mechanisms; that philosophy, both by its unspoken assumptions and its structure, comes to reinforce them, and makes it impossible to overcome certain theoretical and practical impasses, which today concretely pose humanly crucial problems. The non-philosophical approach or posture, by its operation, has the look of a machine of this type; it has the look, simply of being able to penetrate and use the system as material, in order to dismantle it and stop its perverse effects. We cannot have a just vision of a system, and even less a critique of it, if we do not know it – in the sense of making use of, or practising – if in some way, we do not have the competence of it. However, Non-Philosophy has this very particular, unique way of knowing [*connaitre*]: it has the theoretical means of a practice that is certainly within competence and has a certain form of use but never that of manipulation. The Vision-in-One, this thought according to Identity, is the posture that radically suspends the participation in any mechanism of power and subjugation; in this, Non-Philosophy is and remains radically foreign and indifferent to what constitutes the essence of a mechanical process. If it is a machine, it is only in the transcendental sense of the term, that is to say, as a “tool” that allows both the integration of the elements essential to the comprehension of one/many system(s), but also and above all to discover – precisely from the Inspired as a Source, an elsewhere of the political that no longer belongs to the tyrannically ordered topos of the philosophical.

Besides, the use of the term “politics”, open without any precision to all the spheres of our existence, gives way to a totalitarian slip that the nebulous semantics and etymology of the word already makes us fear. There is no politics without philosophy, such is our conviction. Also, the use of this term in Non-Philosophy seems to us at present largely compromised. It seems to us essential to explore the possibility that is offered to us here: that of an opening to a Vision-in-One of Man in society, within which the totalising uniformity would be absent to make space for a multiple order of difference but also of the same from certain angles, that is to say of their Identity-in-the-Last-Instance; a multiple order of movement and the aleatory, but not anarchy or incoherence. It is a thought which moreover allows the recognition of the “blind spot” that representative technique entails and thus to put an end to the foreclosure of certain phenomena or aspects of the reality of human behaviour in society that continue to be problematic, and *that philosophical thinking remains globally incapable of considering*.

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