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FROM PROTO-ETHICAL COMPASSION TO RESPONSIBILITY: BESIDENESS AND THE THREE *PRIMAL* MOTHER- PHANTASIES OF NOT-ENOUGHNESS, DEVOURING AND ABANDONMENT

I

We have to imagine Isaac's compassion for his father, Abraham. This compassion is primary; it starts before, and always also beyond, any possibility of empathy that entails understanding, before any economy of exchange, before any cognition or recognition, before any reactive forgiveness or integrative reparation. It is woven with-in primordial trans-sensitivity and co-re-naissance. Quite early in life such compassion might go into hiding and be covered over by stronger survival tools, as it is too fragile on any non-matrixial survival scale. Its repression is originary. To return beyond originary repression to primary compassion in adulthood is a long long journey within matrixial initiative voyages, unless it has never undergone such repression at all.

Can you imagine Isaac's compassion for his father? Can you keep this idea in your heart's mind as you are reading along this essay? In my view such primary compassion could be a kind of psycho-aesthetical and psycho-ethical archaic unconscious basis for the Levinasian "an-archic" and feminine kernel of the ethical sphere. It is first revealed, though, in the presubject's transconnectivity to its m/Other as a subjectivizing agency.

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In “Subjectivité et vulnérabilité”, a short chapter in Levinas’ *Humanism de l’autre homme*, in a footnote explaining the connection between *misericord* and *preliminary vulnerability* (Lévinas 1972: 122, 105), Levinas refers to the Hebrew word for *misericord* that signifies pity: *Rakhamim*. *Rakhamim* contains a reference to the word *rekhem* – uterus (from which as a root *Rakhamim* is composed.) Via the Hebrew, Levinas points to *misericord* as *emotion of the maternal womb*. (For my comments on the *God full of Mercy* see Ettinger 2000 (1997): 202-203). *Misericord* echoes the relation of *hospitality* which is feminine by the exemplary way of the maternal womb and links *hospitality* to the *absolutely future* and to *vulnerability*: approaching the Other who is *infinitely Other* by such (womb-like?) *proximity* is *traumatic* to the *I* who may thus become *self-sacrificial*. For Levinas, the maternal-womb emotion can’t be erotic, since *vulnerability* and *misericord* denotes *passivity* while *Eros* denotes *virility* (Lévinas 1972: 88). The subjectivity of the *irreplaceable singular individual unit* is inaugurated in *originary responsibility*, while *preliminary vulnerability* that founds this *an-archic* pre-ethical position and is related to the maternal womb by the notion of the maternal instance of *misericord* and by *passivity* and *mystery*, is considered to have no *Eros*. The feminine here is *Otherness*, while *Eros* and subjectivity are on the masculine side. Like for Freud, *Eros* and Subject for Levinas implies *activity* and *libido*, and therefore the active generative (creative) principle is referred to *virility* and *paternity*. However, in my view such *vulnerability* in a *misericordial* approach *must* turn *sacrificial only* when the woman-as-feminine stands, as she does for Levinas (and for Lacan 1973), for *absolute Otherness* and infinite *disappearance from light*. From the perspective of the feminine-maternal sphere I have named *matrixial* (womb-matrix), the *binding* and *connecting potentiality* of *Eros* lies at the heart of *subjectivizing* feminine-maternal *misericord*. Here, “woman” is an almost-Other and partial-subject in-between appearance and disappearance by way of *jouissance* and *trauma* in real and phantasmatic psychic and mental transconnectedness of *I* and *non-I*. This subverts the Levinasian connection between generating-begetting and *paternity* and also deconstructs the fatal link between death and the maternal, and infiltrates *Ethics* with a perspective concerning femininity where life is linked to the maternal, as pregnancy assumes being alive in giving life. This perspective enters the father/son relationship (Ettinger with Levinas 1991-1993) and offers a basis for the transformational working-through from sacrifice to solace and grace. The paradigmatic mythical story of the *Akeda* (the *Sacrifice of Abraham*), as we shall see later, receives by the matrixial twist a new meaning, where absolute feminine *Otherness* and disappearance (*versus* subject’s Being), that leads to thinking along an *I or non-I* axis, is dissolved in favor of feminine almost-*Otherness* and *side-by-side-ness*: a *besidedness* that

permits to think coemergence of I *and* non-I. The phallic knot composed of sacrifice, death and the feminine dissolves in favor of the co-incident of death and life, sacrifice and solace with-in the feminine.

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For Freud, the primary Other (mother) is “object”; libidinal relations to the other are relations to the other as *object relation*, and, within this same logic, the first recognition of the Other is by *rejection* and a kind of hate (Freud 1914). In other words, what the I rejects (in the maternal) is what mentally and affectively becomes an *unconscious not-me*. Rejection informs the I in terms of identity and difference from the other and allows differentiating. It is precisely in such (rejected) Other that *libidinal Eros*, active and destructive, is first invested with the aim of satisfying the I's *needs*. Such erotic access to an Other-object wouldn't fit the approach to the Other sought after by Levinas by way of the feminine vulnerability, and it therefore makes sense that when he articulates the space of misericord with vulnerability he renounces on the potential (power) of Eros. Yet, it can be argued that it is not Eros that had to be exiled from the feminine-maternal but rather, it is the *phallic perspective* on Eros itself that must be problematized. In my matrixial perspective, than, another kind of Eros – not male, not libidinal and ungoverned by activity as potency is conceived of (Ettinger 1994-1999 (2006a) Moreover, and paradoxically even, though for Levinas the originary hospitality is connected to the feminine by way of receptivity, an-archic passivity, and finally by what we can name *futurity in the now*: by inviting with *rakhamim* what is *not yet here* (Lévinas 1971: 274) to become, he finally articulates this originary cluster in terms of a “phallic” moment of birth. In thinking this cluster in terms of pregnancy rather than the moment of birth-giving, an *originary jointness-in-differentiating and besidedness*, rather than disappearance and death, becomes the kernel of the *feminine-maternal*. It is qualified by special kind of non-relating relationality by connectivity and by reattunement of approximations in originary jointness.

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In Levinas, this futurity, a Time inaugurated by vulnerability, was first fatally connected to the father/son relation, sublimated to stand for relation between the paternal and *absolute youth* through the concept of *Fecundity* which indicates by definition paternal participation in *the time of the absolutely Other* which is *absolutely future*. Thus, subjectivity had remained at the male-paternal side, keeping femininity as its absolute Other while seeking ways to participate in it: Fecundity “irreducible to power and

possibility” marks a kind of participation of the subject in the absolute time of the Other, in spite of a basic *discontinuity* between them. In the Seventies, Levinas indeed calls “fecundity” precisely the *relations to the “future without me”* through a masculine-paternal principle (Lévinas 1971: 294-312). Femininity attached to this futurity itself is a non-relational Other. This articulation of the paternal goes hand in hand, in my view, with the Freudian idea of *the paternal primary and direct pre-objectal love-identification with the primordial father*: “an individual’s first and most important identification, his identification with the father in his own personal prehistory” (Freud 1923: 31) echoed by Lacan’s figure of *SI* that stands for the originary repression of enigmatic paternal love-identification via an originary unconscious signifier. The paternal thus comes to stand not only for the guaranty of the symbolic order but also for the principle of love and life-giving in the subject, and the infant (as masculine subject by definition) loves (“love” being love by and for the father by definition) through originary pre-objective identificatory direct link to the paternal. In parallel to this, in Freud, a fatal connection between maternity and “hate” is established at the originary level, and the individual subject (mostly female individuals) originarily and then also secondarily (in the post Oedipal position) hates her first object mother/Other, fears her devouring tendencies and blames her for what I call *not-enoughness*. Both devouring and not-enoughness are phantasmatic qualities for whose persistence in girls Freud endlessly tries to find “causes” in the female girl’s *sexual inferiority* in relation to boys (Freud 1933: 124; Freud 1931: 232) in terms of “penis envy” and “castration”, that is, in terms of a *feminine sexual difference that starts from the masculine and returns to the masculine*. (We shall return to this problematic later; it was also treated in Ettinger 2006b, 2006c). Though, for Levinas, the feminine-maternal corresponds to home and *accueil* – welcoming reception, ingathering and hospitality, it is the paternal that corresponds to that which in fecundity surpasses power and possibility and plants “me” in “other”, though in “discontinuity”. *I* is inside Other *in discontinuity*. Since for Levinas the womb finally represents the moment of birth, and the pick of the maternal womb vulnerability is the *dying* in giving-life (Ettinger with Levinas 1991-1993), womb-misericordiality can’t stand for pregnancy where for the process of life-giving, the *living* of the m/Other and a *living-with-in and beside* must be articulated. In my matrixial perspective, womb-misericordiality as pregnancy-emotion stands for *com-passionate hospitality in living-inter-with-in the almost-Other*. The matrixial principle works as long as the feminine-maternal agent lives in mental and psychic besidedness to its non-I. The womb-misericord with-in the almost-m/Other does participate in subjectivity as *transsubjectivity* since it is precisely between conception and birth, in the real, imaginary

and symbolic shareable psychic spaces that the *I* and *non-I* – presubject and becoming-*m/Other* – are forming and informing a psychic mental and affective *continuity*, and the womb (as psychic place of coemergence and invisible female corporeality) stands for a subjectivizing potentiality by transgression of affective and mental waves and by sharing in the same mental, affective and sensitive resonance time-space. Here, the feminine-maternal fecundity-as-pregnancy is a *subjectivizing agency*. By transgression and continuity, the Other (as *m/Other*) is not an absolute Other, neither to herself nor to her *non-I(s)*. The Other of the matrixial subjectivizing agency (the feminine inside the maternal, the maternal inside the feminine, the infant as presubject, partial-subject and *non-I* in *transgressive shareability*) is always an almost-Other in encounter with an I. *I* and *non-I* are *borderlinking* (a borderlinking that works in parallel to *borderspacing*) during the matrixial time-space of prolonged encounter-event – a time-space of differentiating and differentiating, experienced as co-emergence and co-fading, in a Levinasian *relation-without-relating* approximation yet in *jointness*. Coemergence is an originary trans-subjective com-position. In matrixial femininity, the not yet *subject-I* that is yet to appear is not in absolute alterity to the *m/Other-I*. Starting from the archaic stage, this dimension accumulates new traces of encounter-events during life. In the matrixial position, traces of coemerging with-in the *m/Other-I* are reawaken to reabsorb new traces of coemergence; transconnecting sensible and sensitive strings re-vibrate; threads composed of shareable traces of joint encounter-events become transformational in and by new fragile proximity and reattunement in vulnerability.

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The necessity in a “phallic” side of the subject for the ethical basic assumption is obvious in the sense that *responsibility* can only be taken (and *freedom* practiced) by identifiable subject who can form *relation of obligation* and fix priorities. Since the human self, the unicity of being, the power to say “I”, is situated for Levinas at the face-to-face relating subject, relationships are by definition ethical as they are immediately engaging responsibility and obligation through the definition of the subject itself. *In the subject*, nothing precedes responsibility. But inasmuch as the subject *qua* responsibility is *informed by* (feminine-maternal) *vulnerability*, *compassion* and *misericord*, the ethical subject can't emerge without being touched, on a presubjective level, by matrixial *openness*, and this openness, now from the *matrixial perspective of continuity*, implies *trans-subjectivity* of presubjectivity. A psychic and mental *transgression of the boundaries of the unicity of being* starting from the *transgressive corporeality of pregnancy* is in-formed by the feminine-maternal presubjective compassion. The matrixial sphere is *supplementary* to the phallic arena both in the

psychic domain of the unconscious and in the ethical domain inasmuch as trans-subjectivity traverses each subject and permeates it, and pre-subjectivity doesn't disappear when the subject appears. Thus, *by its matrixial Eros*, subjectivity in itself transgresses the individual subject. Relation-without-relating leads the subject toward responsibility on the unconscious level of partiality and transgressivity treasured upon traces of the archaic co-implication and co-affectation. And since primordial vulnerability leans on infant's and pre-mother's compassion(s), compassion in the relational present is always an appeal to futurity. "Individual" (infant's, maternal) compassion itself is linked to the *matrixial transgressive com-passion* (as we shall see later on). In this light I would like to interpret Levinas' idea that the Other is a trauma to "me" in the light of my idea that *the trauma of birth is the trauma of the mother* too. For Levinas, the other arrives as "gentleness" and yet as a trauma (Lévinas 1971: 12). This aids me in rethinking the giving birth in terms of *the trauma of maternity* (added alongside the infant's trauma of birth (Rank 1929)). The mother, now as *I*, will *never* get over that trauma of the corporeal, phantasmatic and mental co-incidence with the Other (now: the infant) who is emerging into the world inside her entrails. From the side of the woman-mother as *subject* – a woman in the unicity of her individuality – we must recognize a *triple trauma* of maternity and pre-maternity: the traumatic proximity to the Other during pregnancy, the traumatic regression to a similar archaic sharing (of the mother as infant with her own m/Other) and the traumatic separation from the *non-I* during birth-giving. The consequences of the "normal" pregnancy and "normal" child-birthing *qua* "normal" trauma-plus-jouissance in terms of the in-formation of trans-subjectivity have not been taken into account by psychoanalytical theory which, for that reason, brings forth and further creates traumatic tears in the human matrixial webs. The maternal regression to "symbiosis" immediately after child-birth, as "normal" *and* expected as it may be, is still not less traumatic than a total rejection would be, even though the first kind of regression is beneficial and the second kind is catastrophic to the infant; those are two extreme reactions to the *jouissance and trauma of pregnancy*. The matrixial transsubjectivity of pregnancy imprints both the infant and what I call the *archaic m/Other*. The womb-like compassion is a key to access the Other in its *nude vulnerability*. I see this nude vulnerability as feminine-maternal *openness to fragilizing self-relinquishment*.

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In our Western Post-Freudian psychotherapeutic theory and clinical atmosphere starting with Ferenczi and followed by Winnicott (shared beyond different psychoanalytical schools, with exceptions like Klein, Balint, Bion, the Lacanian theory, Deleuze-Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* and Jessica Benjamin's

inter-subjective attitude that considers the mother *as subject*), a semi-automatic *mother-blaming* and *mother-hating* is produced. Unless an obvious trauma is found in the real life history, a *mother-monster readymade* is offered to the patient *qua* the major “cause” for almost any anxiety and psychic pain. The prefabricated mother-monster readymade is always in stand-by readiness as the cause for any infantile suffering arising to consciousness. The prevalence of the imaginary *mother-monster readymade* figure testifies in my view to a major lacuna in the psychoanalytical theory and to the major narcissistic trap of the transferential relationships, due to a systematic *disrecognition* that particular kinds of recurring phantasmatic and imaginary complaints, arising in almost each and every reported case of regressive therapy, represent in fact **primal phantasies**, and have no other “cause”. I have suggested (Ettinger 2006b, 2006c, 2006d) to add to the classical shortlist of primal phantasies: Origin in terms of Birth or Primal Scene, Seduction, Castration, and Oedipus, these three recurrent phantasies (disguised as “memories” of the unremembered period): a. **Not-enoughness** – regrouping representations of the originary disattunement with the outside into phantasmatic *originary not-enough mother*, b. **Abandonment** – the *primal phantasy of the abandoning mother*, and c. **Devouring** – the *primal phantasy of the devouring mother*. The characteristics of these phantasies correspond to all the basic requirements of primality (See Laplanche & Pontalis 1967: 157-159). Freud as well as Lacan and many other analysts did of course notice the prevalence of these phantasies, and mainly that of the devouring mother. For example, Freud remarks “the surprising, yet *regular*, fear of being killed (*devoured?*) by the mother” (Freud 1931: 227, italics added) and Lacan remarks that “there is no other real relation with the mother than that which all present psychoanalytical theory puts in relief, that is, the relation of devouring” (Lacan 1994: 380). Yet both authors didn’t make this perhaps radical step of realizing that these phantasies correspond in each and every criteria to the requirements of primal phantasy. As primal phantasies they correspond to the basic human enigmas of existence regarding the source of anxiety and the source of psychic pain (tristess). Following their irruption in transferential relationships, an endless search for their “causes” begins, targeting the real mother of unremembered times and repeatedly reproducing her as monster. We must recognize each of the three phantasies on its own and also recognize their various appearances in clusters. It makes sense to think of a generalized *originary not-enoughness* that accompanies the primal phantasies of *devouring* and *abandonment*. Even though these phantasies are not less prevailing than those previously recognized, neither Freud nor later analysts realized their primordality. This disrealization caused maternity, feminine sexuality and most of all the daughter/mother relation a catastrophic damage over more than a century of psychoanalytical theory and practice.

Three of the major primal phantasies: Seduction, Castration, and Oedipus, are reconstructed or redesigned to regulate smoothly male subjectivizing processes vis-à-vis a paternal loving figure with regard to primordial source-less enigmas. The lack of recognition of the three phantasies of Not-enoughness, Abandonment and Devouring *as primal* destroys mainly the mother/daughter relationship since it systematically rechannels hate toward the mother and destroys the daughter's desire for identification with the parent of her own sex, with catastrophic results for females, whereas the paternal figure of originary repression constituted as a figure of identificatory love, regulates, together with the establishment of Seduction, Castration and Oedipus as phantasmatic primal complexes, the parallel same-sex father/son identification problem, for the actual son/father relationship. This disrecognition stands in a huge contradiction to the Freudian early major discovery that *paternal seduction* "remembered" by patients represents in most cases a primal phantasy and the real father is not to be automatically blamed when this phantasy, disguised as memory, arises in periods of acute regression during analysis. Indeed, primal phantasies that organize male sexuality and paternal authority were more easily recognized, causing benefit to the symbolic organization of the subject according to parameters of maleness and masculinity. It is the primality of the not less prevalent phantasies, that tortured mainly daughters *vis-à-vis their mothers*, that was disrecognized.

Upon the thread of the phantasmatic abandoning mother, feelings of psychic pain of sorrow from all different sources including the maternal source are registered (amplified of course by real neglect and real abandonment); and upon the thread of the *phantasmatic devouring mother* feelings of anxiety arising from different sources including the maternal source (and amplified by real over-domineering) are registered. This primal phantasy digests and elaborates anxieties of being invaded and penetrated (amplified by real impingements). The Not-enough mother phantasy arises as a reply to the enigma of the loss of perfect attunement between presubject and environment – the disturbances in what Freud has named "Oceanic feeling". Apart from occurrences of traumatic and very dramatic disturbances in presubject/environment reattunement, and apart from real traumatic maternal abandonment and real traumatic maternal over-domineering (that must be recognized as sources of suffering when indeed occurring in reality), *the failure to recognize* these three unconscious threads **as** primal Mother-phantasies is, in my view, the reason for a flagrant damage to the feminine-maternal dimension and to the mother/daughter matrix caused during the process of psychoanalysis itself encouraged by their defaulting counter-transferential misrecognition of them. This misrecognition accounts for the endless search after non-existing "causes" resulting in the "reply" in terms of a mother-monster readymade that

leads to a devastation of the psyche of daughters, to the ruining the daughter/mother relationship in the real, as well as to the fragmentation of the matrixial web itself and to the destruction of the Eros of compassion. Devouring and abandonment were mistakenly recognized by Freud as phenomena that are *caused by something* (rather than as primal). With Winnicott and Kohut (to mention just few) these phenomena are already *explained* by *real* maternal failures, while in fact, being primal phantasies, they arise in the psyche and re-arise in transferential relationships in order to organize and give meaning to pain and anxiety brought about by human existence itself. A mother “cause” that is thus built in the imaginary from a mixture of phantasy and memory traces that glue feelings to images and present them as “reasons” for archaic anxiety and pain, with the help of phallic signifiers that seal the deal, leads to an unconscious dead-end that reveals itself by emotions of hate and phantasies of revenge directed in women mainly toward mother figures. In a regressive therapeutic or analytical setting, psychic pain and anxiety *must* arise as a result of the return of the pre-Oedipal repressed itself. *Anxiety and the return of the repressed* go hand in hand, as Freud had discovered again and again: the one is the necessary companion of the other (Freud 1916-17; Freud 1926; Lacan 1962-63 (2004)). These anxieties then call for the imaginary “reasons” fabricated from images, memory traces and phantasmatic tendencies as they are echoed and fixated together by free associations and interpretations, producing themselves in retrograde *as causes* of the anxiety and the psychic pain by both analyst and analysand, who while together enjoying the phantasmatic “explanation” for the unexplainable pave the road for an insatiable black hole. Thus, when the monster-mother readymade becomes a by-product of regression to pre-Oedipal primal phantasies and of transference/counter-transference alliance as well as the result of the analyst renaming and fixating them as “memories” from pre-Oedipal infancy, the originary compassion, first toward the m/Other and second in a more generalized way, is abolished, and a fatal tear is rended in the matrixial com-passionate fabric, paradoxically with the help of what I have named *empty empathy* (Ettinger 2006c), as we shall see later. The destruction of the originary compassion undermines proto-responsibility at the presubjective level. Compassion is the psychic royal way to responsibility. If analyst and analysand realize the originary virtual status of the mother’s not-enoughness and its imbrications with the other primal Mother-phantasies of devouring and abandonment, compassion toward the m/Other can be conserved while the analyst still is in empathy toward the analysand. In the case of Little Hans (Freud 1909: 27) – and perhaps as a correction to the failure to recognize the mother in the case of Dora? (Freud 1901(1905), analysed by Ettinger 1993 and Ettinger 2005) – Freud himself had the strong intuition to announce the necessity to *take the side of the mother*: “*we must take*

the side of the mother”, stand beside her and support her act – as the German original text states clearly by the expression *Partei nehmen* – even if we don’t identify with her. This intuition, that however was not elevated to the level of a theoretical concept (and was, perhaps for that reason, completely lost in the translation of Freud to English, being very lousily translated as “We must say a word, too, *on behalf of* Hans’ excellent and devoted mother” Freud 1909: 27-28) was retaken by Lacan when he states (Lacan 1994: 222) that Freud calls for the ratification of the mother’s acting: “It takes Freud’s *sublime serenity* in order to *ratify* the act of the mother, whereas today all bans would have been decreed on her...” (Lacan 1956-57: 222, free translation of: *Il faut à la verite la sublime sérénité de Freud pour entériner l’action de la mère, alors que de nos jours tous les anathèmes seraient déversés sur elle...*). It seems to me that this idea merits to be articulate as a *principle within countertransference* in the sense of the anti-splitting measure secured by besidedness. Ratifying besidedness with the mother stands at the service of the practice of elaborating the emotional difficulties of the three clusters of phantasies whose status *as primal* I am announcing. The term *besidedness* coupled with the term *severality convey*, on the symbolic register, an unconditional side-by-side-ness with the mother which means the *ratification* of her acts *without* any need for *identification* with her or rationalization of her acts. Besidedness with the m/Other keeps the integrity of the matrixial web and is doing its work of healing beyond, with, or without, identification. If as analysts and therapists we can ratify the mother’s acting and remain at the mother’s side in the way Freud and Lacan indicate even when we do not identify or agree with her, psychotic split is avoided; we avoid the dangers of split and enter the domain of *full empathy with compassion* (to which we shall return later).

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In what sense compassion is “an-archic” and corresponds to an originary “youth” that we can also apprehend as *primordial innocence*? I see compassion as an originary psychic manner of *accessing* the Other where though the I is in *immemorial passivity*, it is still bathing inside a particular matrixial Eros allowing non-object-relational access to the m/Other, close in some senses to the notion of *primary love* (Balint 1952) which is a kind of non-narcissistic and non-rejective primary apprehension of the non-I. If originary compassion is the infant’s way of feel-knowing the m/Other and the world, by the matrixial erotic antenna of the psyche an attraction toward an-other as subject, and not as object, opens the horizon of “aesthetical” proto-ethical sensitivity, sensibility and emotion, by which the m/Other (and the Cosmos) is apprehended and accessed in primary love. The I’s accessing by originary compassion evokes and provokes the m/Othernal compassionate hospitality. Isaac’s compassion

toward his father, what for Freud could have been standing for a direct identificatory love link, is based upon the infant's primary compassion toward the m/Other. This has been arising into life in com-passionate co-response-ability with the m/Other inside her compassionate hospitality toward the infant. Passing through the matrixial horizon where the father is included after birth, this compassion spreads toward the father. *In that sense Isaac is every-infant in innocent youth in passive vulnerability.* In trans-subjectivity composed of partial subjects, the I's (partial-presubject) fragilizing vulnerability evokes and provokes the m/Othernal (partial sub-subject) fragilizing vulnerability. And so, in what sense originary compassion, which is proto-ethical, presubjective, sub-subjective and operating on the unconscious partial level, can contribute to ethical responsibility, which is the foundation of the subject in ethical obligation? Responsibility is a phallic notion inasmuch as it requires the obligation of a separate subject toward the Other. The idea of the "phallic" subject within a phallic relational space must be conserved by whoever insists on the idea of responsibility which necessitates the individual unicity of a subject. Indeed responsibility, like choice and liberty, requires the irreplaceable subject. The phallic subject with its gaze is unavoidable on certain levels of identity and on many dimensions of reality, and it is an ethical obligation to recognize the phallic gaze, not in the other, to begin with, (and not by projecting), but inside each subject, because with its negation, denial or projection, it (the gaze, operating in the subject) becomes dangerous (paranoia being one of its dangerous modes). The phallic subject within each subject in separate identity is both responsible and a potential perpetrator (the perpetrator is not a "them", but a potentiality of each and every identity). And only individual identity can take responsibility for direct witnessing and sign it. In the matrixial stratum the subject is wit(h)nessing.

In the matrixial sphere the wit(h)nessing touch-and-gaze is not active-aggressive. The passivity of an Other-object given to a *phallic gaze* can be transformed through a *supplementary* matrixial gaze by way of being embraced via self-relinquishment into larger subjective web and by awakening some-one's non-abandoning responsibility inside the newly accessed anonymous I(s) and non-I(s) *severality*. Compassion then becomes an originary event of peace. The I's passivity is transformed by the non-I's activity in jointness-in-differentiating by the passage through channels of trans-sensitive borderlinking. The matrixial compassionate hospitality is proto-ethical since by definition it doesn't reach symbolic obligation. In an era of technical gazes and anonymous global eyes, the choice of witnessing to, rather than ignorance, of internal and external phallic gaze becomes crucial. Direct witnessing is painful, since one can't ignore and deny one's own participation in the phallic gaze. When a subject documents traumatic humiliation it takes the risk of temporarily

organizing itself around a phallic gaze and of partially joining it. But since the question of direct witnessing is also the question of the personal responsibility of each identified subject, if we ban the subject completely (which is the claim of some contemporary mythology – the death of the subject – and the aim of some contemporary technologies) and over-embrace the dimension of endless fragmentation or technical eyes, responsibility disappears. What I have named the matrixial gaze doesn't "replace" the phallic gaze but aids in its moving aside from its destructive aspects, a moving which is however a life-long unending process. Embracing instants of matrixial borderlinking orients the subject toward responsibility. With the matrixial gaze when the I reattunes itself in co-response-ability with the non-I's traces within a shared psychic space (shared by chance, accident or will, choice or destiny) wit(h)nessing arises on the trans-subjective level, as the time-space of encounter-event is shared by several intimate-anonymous I(s) and non-I(s). The subject in responsibility is bound to its individual boundaries, but the path to responsibility is unconsciously paved by matrixial co-response-ability, com-compassion and compassionate hospitality, and is saturated with them. Responsibility depends on compassion that in turn depends, in my view, on the matrixial com-compassion, co-response-ability and wit(h)nessing, and on infantile primary compassion and maternal compassionate hospitality. Com-compassion and co-affectivity, trans-sensibility and trans-sensitivity, as well as a-symmetrical co-response-ability in the context of the infant's presubjective primary compassion and the m/Othernal compassionate hospitality are all "aesthetical" (in the original sense of the word) proto-ethical foundations of responsibility of the individuated subject. The matrixial "aesthetical" yet proto-ethical com-compassion, aroused inside maternal compassionate hospitality in meeting with primary infantile compassion, can't be "obliged"; but as a psychic move this is precisely what inflexes the individuated subject toward responsibility where each unicity of being can, and often does indeed, rather choose relations of cruelty or abandonment. Matrixial compassion is than the unconscious psychic basis for ethical responsibility. A feminine-matrixial fragilizing self-relinquishment in the human, in terms of some kind of in-tension and ex-tension toward vulnerability, founds an ethical dimension by which the almost-Other infiltrates the subject. In the matrixial sphere, the unconscious I doesn't begin, like for Levinas, in obligation but as part of I with non-I in a com-compassionate affective, psychic and mental resonance chamber. This "aesthetical" proto-ethical com-compassion paves the passage to the ethical. Compassion is a proto-ethical way for the I (as infant instances and as maternal instances) to feel-know of, by and in the Other. In the matrixial, the almost-Otherness of the feminine turns the I into subjectivizing agency while, in a spirallitic move, the subjectivizing agency of the feminine turns the I into almost-Other.

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If we are heading – as indeed we are – toward understanding to what an extent the inauguration of the ethical space is articulated with the (pre-responsibility and pre-obligation) pre-subjective asymmetrical *compassion of the infant* in its transconnectedness (without reactivity and beyond exchange) with the asymmetrical *compassion of the m/Other* that occurs in a time-space-atmosphere of a feminine-maternal compassionate hospitality in the real, we can already interpret Levinas' idea that justice is needed to stop the I from giving everything to the Other and impoverishing itself, by means of the maternal com-passionate fragilization and the I's originary compassion which is in potential sacrificial. As archaic modes of accessing the m/Other, com-compassion and compassion involving vulnerability are also the most intensive means of healing: these are Other-self regulatory means to counterbalance the originary not-enoughness of the m/Other and of the Cosmos and to soften the primal phantasies of abandoning and devouring. In the field of the Unconscious, however, originary pre-liberty vulnerability means that subjectivity itself is not inaugurated in responsibility which is obligation but in a before: in compassion and compassion, in the particular *I with-in non-I* fragilization, before (and after) the consolidation of individual boundaries. Femininity enters subjectivity as the alterity of *transitivity and jointness* – not of *absolute Other*. If for Levinas, however, femininity is transcendent alterity, in what way these two “femininities” inform one another? The first point of meeting is this: like alterity of transitivity and jointness, the transcendent alterity of absolute Other is a *quality* – and not a logic distinction – *of difference*. Femininity qualifies difference itself; it is neither constituted in relation to masculinity nor derived from it (Ettinger with Levinas 1991-1993, reprinted here).

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For Levinas, though the research of transcendent alterity begins with the feminine, its comprehension is impossible, as Infinity is intrinsic to this alterity. “Woman” in the sense of “absolutely other” as well as “infant” in that same sense are accessed by *relation without relation* which is *never* co-presence. Therefore the proximity of the other, like proximity to Infinity, is never co-presence. Originary relations with the other is not *ecstasy* (jouissance, absorption and fusion) and not *connaissance* (knowledge by recognition) that would have denoted *appropriation*. Jouissance contains sensation, knowledge and light. Femininity lacks jouissance and co-presence since as alterity that is “impossible to translate in terms of light” it concerns future time in terms of passivity, mystery, infancy and death (Lévinas 1979: 56-57, 60, 68). A leap of discontinuity separates the subject that is articulated with freedom and responsibility (Lévinas 1979: 36) and the Other-feminine, the subject and

the Other-infant, and the subject and the Other-future. Levinas' ultimate *foundation* of Ethics in the feminine-Other leads to the idea of Death in birth (Ettinger with Levinas 1991–1993). “The relation with the other are relations with Mystery” yet the condition of time is a “face-to-face” intersubjectivity (Levinas 1979: 69). “If relations to the other comport more than relation to mystery” (Levinas 1979: 74) and to death then in my view we must reexamine the question of originary relation between becoming-I and m/Other in the feminine not in terms of (dying in) giving birth but in terms of pregnancy. There, the “nonreciprocal relations” – on the intersubjective level – between subject and Other do reach affective reciprocity on what I call the *trans-subjective* level, by reattunement of intensities and vibrations and shareability of mental waves and affective resonance, while still “the *intersubjective* space is not symmetrical” (Lévinas 1979: 75). Even the “same” mental and affective intensities and waves trans-subjectively shared by psychic strings and threads enter different subjective constellations and produce different traces in each I who is trans-connected to an other I: affective and mental arousals (in psychic strings) and traces (inscribed in psychic threads) are absorbed and redistributed in each different individual psychic milieu.

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Levinas posits the feminine – not complementarities, not contradiction, not duality of oppositions but “insurmountable duality” (Lévinas 1979: 28) – as difference which is a *positive* alterity, close, in a sense, to the idea of *supplementarity* in Lacan. In both Lacan and Levinas we find, concerning the absolute Other, positive supplementarity coupled with disappearance. The relation that conserves this difference as alterity refers to femininity “that consists of hiding oneself from light” (Lévinas 1979, 79). On the one hand, the “feminine” Other is the infant: the “not-yet” (Lévinas 1971: 297), fragility, vulnerability and non-significance (Lévinas 1971: 286-287), and on the other hand it is the mother as womb: hospitality toward the not yet: habitation, home, contemplation, reception, vulnerability of proximity and welcoming (Lévinas 1971: 166, 169). The Other evades Eros while the Subject is subject by Eros. The move of the “lover” (paternal) in front of this vulnerability is neither compassion nor impassibility (insensitivity to suffering), and yet complaisance in compassion is absorbed in an affectionate stroke (*Caress*) that transcends the sensible in the direction of a relating to that which is not yet there and is *yet* to come. Absence in the feminine is, then, neither lack nor emptiness, but fragility at a *yet* which is a limit of the future (Lévinas 1971: 294, 297) while the position of responsibility toward the Other implies an emotional stroke. The Eros of the affectionate stroke is power-less relations with alterity as *event*. In this relationship, the paternal principle represents

discontinuity of subject and feminine-Other. Love and Caress give access to the inaccessible feminine as future and to its mystery (Lévinas 1979: 82), and this leads to Fecundity as the only victory over death (feminine). The figure of fecundity is paternity (Lévinas 1979: 85). It is the category of paternity that creates freedom (of the Self from the Ego). Thus Levinas draws a path from Death/Feminine to Fecundity/Paternity/Son/freedom. In the Seventies, it is Paternity that creates Time. In our conversation (1991-1993), Levinas finally does appoint directly the feminine-maternal to the absolute future and Other, and it is rather the feminine-maternal that founds the heart of Ethics in the human and reveals the dimension of “time without me”. But if paternity accessed the Other and future in terms of living, with the Levinasian feminine-maternal the ultimate access to the Future is in terms of dying: in the feminine the I disappears so that the Other will arrive. With the feminine dimension, not fecundity (or creativity) is at the center, but disappearance-for-future. Even though it is precisely here that Levinas finally moves the feminine to the heart of the ethical as well as (in my view) into subjectivity itself, as its heart of sanctity, by this same move femininity itself is sealed with sacrifice, redemption and sanctity that are connoted to death. In this Levinas continues to join the hidden assumption of the classical Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, in which the feminine and maternal are basically joint with Death and the Thing. For Levinas, in childbirth, in giving life, in the feminine-maternal principle, the non-I as m/Other can disappear. Since the matrixial principle takes us to the transferential space as pregnancy, I and non-I must coemerge and the feminine-Other must live in order for the becoming-I to live. The m/Other remains alive and aesthetically co-present to assist the I’s emergence. In the matrixial as pregnancy space it is possible to formulate a relation to the Other where on the one hand the I doesn’t appropriate the non-I yet on the other hand doesn’t abandon it either. Matrixial futurity appeals to a creative gesture in *copoiesis* (in partial disappearance (*rétirance*) in appearance in jointness). ***Matrixial futurity articulates non-abandonment and non-devouring in com-*passion* and compassionate hospitality. It founds Non-abandonment and Non-devouring in proto-ethical compassion that leads to Responsibility.*** Thus, with compassion, “sacrifice” and either/or and subject/Other dichotomies move to the margins, and grace, solace, coemergence, besidedness and co-fading move to the fore. In the feminine-matrixial futurity a principle of continuity of my life in the other’s life is revealed in *care*. Hospitality and compassion (to which we shall return later on) are not only the direct path to the connection between sacrifice and redemption but also the direct path to the connection between grace, solace, care and misericord. It is precisely at this locus that I interpret the Levinasian father/infant relation as feminine-matrixial, twisting by this interpretation the continuity between

subjects in terms of time and space (intersubjectivity) beyond time and space (the space of the Other and the time of the future) from the femininity-in-dying perspective to the femininity-in-co-implicated living (transsubjectivity) perspective. The non-abandonment yet non-devouring of the non-I depends on the I's continual com-passionate borderlinking to the non-I. Compassion is a transgressive yet non-appropriative knowledge of the Other and even *in* the Other. In that sense, the move from the moment of birth (a phallic moment that can produce the either/or of life and death) to the encounter-event of pregnancy (interlacing in-between-ness and uncognized co-presence on the unconscious partial level) is crucial. The matrixial transference therefore refers to continual traumatic com-passionate co-response-ability and coemergence in encounter-event apprehended by compassion. Here, the Life of the feminine-maternal agency is a necessary responsibility, based on coemerging with an almost-Other-infant in co-response-ability. Femininity is the borderlinking of subject and Other in and beyond co-presence. It allows for proto-ethical, "aesthetical" wit(h)nessing, that paves the path to ethical witnessing. In that sense, on the unconscious psychic sphere, the originary events that counter-balance the primal phantasies of not-enoughness, abandoning and devouring are the assembling of the infant's presubjective compassion and the maternal compassionate hospitality in com-passion and co-response-ability; they form the foundations of responsibility and freedom of each separate I who is ready to put its self at risk of vulnerability brought about by compassion. If, with Levinas, the appearance of the I signals the disappearance of the m/Other at the limit, difference par excellence becomes *at that limit* a difference by opposition on the appearance/disappearance axis. At this point my notion of femininity differs from Levinas' femininity. ***With continuity-in-besidedness, even death doesn't destroy the matrixial web.*** After all, isn't difference itself a kind of call for a non-absolute Otherness and even for the abolition of the absoluteness of the subject/Other split?

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The matrixial Eros is linked to sexuality in ways that weaken the importance of gendered "object choice". The centrality of gendered object-choice – the question of either male or female partner – moves to the margins when Eros intends *the other as subject* and does its work of borderlinking on the level of partial-subjectivity beyond identity.

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If subjectivity for Levinas was always laid at the male-paternal side while the absolute Other was the feminine, it had been my hypothesis that his long silence concerning the feminine (up until our conversation in 1991-1993)

spouted from a gradual hidden theoretical breakthrough that consists in the move of the mystery of the feminine from *absolute* Otherness into the heart of Ethical subjectivity itself (Ettinger with Levinas 1991-1993). The feminine has become the subject's proto-ethical ovule. In my view this ovule has its Eros, and it manifests its erotical intensity in the transferential web of I(s) with non-I(s).

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In psychoanalytical and therapeutic relationships, if Time is the relation to the Other and the relation arising from the Other, the not-yet-ness of/for the analysand is glimpsed by the analyst's anticipation, aspiration, inspiration, expectation (Aulagnier) waiting in patience and finally by *the analyst's initiation of subjectivizing moments* via her own openness and self-fragilization. By offering the non-I a psychic borderspace inside herself – for the analysand to borderlink to it – in a responsible positioning toward him (femininity informing the phallic within subjectivity), the analyst stirs and arouses a subjectivizing event inside the matrixial transference. As subject-and-m/Other she offers and invites the analysand to become a partner in an I and non-I differentiating-in-jointness through her compassionate hospitality. The future of a partial I as well as its emerging into being lay in the compassionate hospitality of a partial non-I (analyst) that has come to fruition as responsibility. It depends both on her responsibility and on her affective and mental transmissivity. The transformational potentiality of the therapeutic process as well as its copoietic intensity must join the analyst's obligation to avoid splits and to work toward besidedness with the analysand's emotionally significant others.

II

Primal compassion, fragilizing self-relinquishment, fascinace and awe participate in the originary matrixial knowing of/with-in the m/Other and of/with-in the Cosmos. Early empathy that arises in extreme psychic-mental fragility and vulnerability leans on the originary tissue of com-compassionate co-response-ability. Response-ability, vulnerability, fascinace, awe, compassion and fragilizing self-relinquishment are forever bound within matrixial nets composed of psychic-mental strings and shared threads and working-through in *metramorphosis*. In a matrixial sphere, the bending of the aesthetical toward the ethical and of the ethical toward the aesthetical is awakened by artworking and healing that resonate the originary aesthetical com-compassion, co-response-ability and wit(h)nessing in and by which pre-subjective primary compassion is already manifested. The pre-subject's compassion and fascinace informs its own emergence with-in a co-birthing (co-naissance) of trans-subjective entities – composed of partial I(s) and non-I(s) – by way of affective and

trans-sensed knowledge. Trans-subjective co-response-ability, inaugurated by and in the primordial matrixial encounter-event – where pre-maternal hospitality, empathy and responsibility encounters prenatal pre-mature response-ability, compassion and fascinance – and inaugurated at the same time also by and in interconnectedness in self-relinquishment and wit(h)nessing in awe, is the primary psycho-aesthetical and psycho-proto-ethical basis upon which creativity and ethical potentiality can evolve all throughout life with-in new matrixial clusters (the matrixial is a signifier of feminine ethics and feminine aesthetics.) The compassionate hospitality of the non-I (m/Other, psychotherapist, analyst) allows the I to enter in fascinance a space in which the non-I might initiate subjectivizing moments, but the I's fascinance, awe and compassion are primary. To the matrixial com-compassionate co-response-ability, the mother contributes her growing adult responsibility and empathy in actual hospitality during a long process of becoming a m/Other *from the always there position of a daughter*, and the baby contributes her compassion and transmissive affectability, response-ability, and fascinance imbricated in *trans-sensing* that is a kind of “telepathic” and “hypnotic” knowing by mental waves and frequencies, which can achieve synaesthetic perceiving.

Shareability in a space of the several entails besidedness. Like fading-in-transformation, besidedness as a borderlinking process is a part of the metamorphic unconscious apparatus. Besidedness is experienced and registered before substitution and split appear and also beside them after their appearance. If depressive integration is a dissolving of a split, the joy and sorrow of besidedness is enfolded within differentiating-in-coemergence and differentiating in co-fading, before and alongside split and substitution, before and alongside integration. In working-through our besidedness and recognizing all our intimate-anonymous partial partners, we are becoming more vulnerable yet we are re-paving a non-regressive path to the primary compassion. Re-co-birth can occur in hospitality and generosity triggered within and by sensitive com-compassion. In a mature empathy not regulated by compassion (a non-compassionate empathic mode that often characterizes the therapist/patient and analyst/analysand relationships), some mental and psychic truths sensed in the inter-subjective space are sacrificed for the sake of momentary relief of the analysand, and therefore of the analyst too, but by such empathy a split between “good” (or even “ideal”) objects and “bad” objects is created. In a mature compassion where empathy is regulated by the compassionate capacity of the analyst (if empathy is attuned to the patient only, compassion is attuned to the analysand *and* to her human surrounding also), a sensed emotional truth can be connected to ethical sensitivity and more precisely to compassion *as a point of view* that is stretched *between perspective and horizon*. In this case, the mature compassion enters in resonance with the presubjec-

tive compassion to join the potentiality for mental-psychic growth while the patient still feels emotionally enveloped even if s/he is not entirely empathically “understood” (since a tender consideration for her non-I(s) – mother, father, siblings, friends – is maintained by the analyst even if this seems to go against what we usually call empathy). Both analyst and patient can feel anxiety and pain and survive it; this survival and the affective recognition of anxiety and pain bound together are a kind of *happiness in sorrow* that allows re-co-birthing as it echoes the matrixial com-passion within co-response-ability that forms the archaic encounter-event with the m/Other. Compassion relieves the primal phantasies of abandonment and devouring and permits to avoid the mother-monster readymade imaginary “cause”. Each analyst and therapist must strive to develop her capacity for compassion (Kulka 2005) in a mature way, compassion which in my view goes far beyond empathy and is different from it in ethical and aesthetical sensitiveness, nature, intensity, level and perseverance, and which is interconnected to other trans-sensed affective primordial knowledge and ethical sensitivity as well as to values, perspectives, horizons and points of view. ***When empathy disconnects from the compassionate tissue it endangers the matrixial sphere itself.*** I name *full empathy* the empathy within the matrixial sphere which is *empathy within compassion*. I name *empty empathy* the compassionless empathy that can explode the matrixial webs (full empathy and empty empathy being of course empathy’s two extreme poles). Where empathy “sees” and envelopes only the patient that the healer/analyst is facing, compassion envelopes the patient’s human surrounding and internal objects, present and archaic, while still keeping an empathic bond with the subject. Thus, within a compassionate holding, empathy is still maintained, but it finds its relative location with respect to an ethical value and futurity, so that the subject’s (patient’s) affective surrounding (including actual and archaic representations of mother, father, siblings, friends) is not destroyed through the I’s phantasmatic attacks combined with the analyst’s collision with those attacks, and so that the patient’s relief doesn’t depend on split and substitution, and to begin with on the split between loving the idealized object (now the analyst) and rejecting the monsterized object (now usually the mother). In other words, empathy without compassion in trans-ferential regressive situation organized from a phallic point of view revives one of the most dangerous of all regressive mechanisms: the splitting. Thus, it might break the basic human engagement of the therapist herself and hurt the basis of her own capacity to help – the matrixial aesthetical-affective kernel of her subjective ethical sense of integrity – though it does often supply her with a blinding narcissistic satisfaction. Thus, empathy without compassion contributes to the shattering of the potentiality of co-birthing and might tear a fatal tatter in the matrixial tissue itself. Such a tatter is caused precisely by the

rejection and annihilating substitution of the m/Other and of other archaic non-I(s) – and the split it must return to – and blocks the road to respect, thankfulness, forgiveness, and finally to compassion itself, even though empathy (oh so empty now) toward the patient is still maintained. In the case of empty empathy without compassion, the patient might remain fixated upon the split while the analyst gains on narcissistic satisfaction from being idealized. It is therefore useful to talk about full empathy as it emerges within a compassionate point of view, and empty empathy as it emerges by/from/with split (to “good” and “bad” objects, and eventually to “ideal analyst” and “monstrous mother”) and substitution (analyst instead of other emotionally invested figures, and new psychic objects injected with split “love” replacing internal archaic objects now full of “hate”).

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Primary compassion and empathy are interconnected to “hypnotic” and “telepathic” transfer of waves and frequencies, and to trans-inscription and cross-inscription of psychic-mental traces – all matrixial supports for the more articulated and more conscious attitudes of respect, admiration, sorrow, awe, forgiveness, trust and gratitude, and finally the more mature compassion and full empathy, and all contributing to the creative process and to art as *transcriptum* (Ettinger 1999). Empathy, however, is secondary to compassion as it is more focalized, cognitive, leans on identification, and it can also be reactive. While Melanie Klein sees gratitude and forgiveness as the depressive end products of the overcoming of splits that were formed in the paranoid-schizoid position, I see gratitude and forgiveness, like empathy, as, to begin with, differentiations in the I’s com-passionate borderlinking to the non-I within the matrixial stratum itself, which can however become disconnected from it and function without it if the presubjective compassion is already foreclosed. Infant’s and m/Othernal compassion is a presubjective and sub-subjective support of primary empathy, sorrow, trust, gratitude and forgiveness; matrixial awe is a presubjective and sub-subjective support for respect and fear; matrixial fascinancy is a presubjective and sub-subjective support for admiration and vision; matrixial self-relinquishment is a presubjective support for trust and gratitude and for the more mature compassion and hospitality, and all those presubjective and sub-subjective supports are interconnected and cross-informing the I and the non-I, and revealed in and by extreme fragilization within new matrixial webs where co-response-ability, wit(h)nessing and compassionate hospitality in jointness are re-created. All those presubjective and sub-subjective supports are proto-ethical “roads” to responsibility. Trans-sensed mental knowledge – whose most spectacular manifestations that alerted Freud are indeed evidences of unconscious telepathic and hypnotic transfer

– is at the heart of copoiesis, transcriptum and even inspiration. We inspire from with-in the other and from with-in the Cosmos and transconnect to virtual strings and potential poles, and we expire into-with the other and the Cosmos a real, actual, potential and virtual knowledge whose emergence as artwork and/or healing is transformational. Thus, in co-emergence within the matrixial transference space, all repetitions are occasions for differentiating, and mental cycles of repetition reopen into spiralic transformations. However, like in pregnancy, one needs to dwell long enough in jointness without “schizoid” or “paranoid” defenses so that a matrixial web would become creative. Here, primary compassion that neutralizes the primal phantasies of the not-enough mother, the abandoning mother and the devouring mother is of major importance. It is aided and supported by the infant’s and the m/Other-nal compassion.

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A becoming-mother is forever a becoming-in-jointness, as long as her transferential matrixial potentiality continues to evolve. We can think of a becoming-subject with-in such archaic becoming-m/Other as participation in initiatory voyage. Like in pregnancy, one needs to dwell long enough in com-passionate jointness interweaved behind the veils of any phallic gaze, hopefully relaxing one’s “schizoid” or “paranoid” defenses, so that a matrixial web would become creative or even visible and audible (the resonating voice of the m/Other is a primary affective feeling-knowing transmission tool). In a prolonged encounter-event, I and non-I are trembling in different ways along the same sensitive, affective and mental waves, sharing in different ways the same affective waves to create a feeling-knowledge of different aspects of a shared encounter-event. Meaning might emerge from a retrieval of memory of trauma in analysis and in art, as long as transmitted traces and cross-inscriptions of traces of the trauma, accessed by wit(h)nessing in com-passion, offer themselves in a sensible form and are carefully differentiated from primal phantasies. This is one of the paths by which the aesthetical informs the ethical. Believing in the reality of imaginary mother-phantasies is a psychic dead-end.

A continual trans-subjective reattunement in a shared psychic resonance sphere cross-prints traces that are absorbed by the I and by the non-I in different ways and levels. We therefore do not expect “sameness” or symbiosis as the resulting phenomena of vulnerable self-relinquishment and of transitivity and transmission of mental and affective waves; but a m/Other-nal responsibility saturated with compassion is here a prerequisite. Unexpected empathic induction and transmission, unconscious semi-telepathic and semi hypnotic influences appearing as intuition and inspiration are revealed in different ways

in different individuals (analyst and analysand) along matrixial threads where traces of initiation-in-jointness and initiation-by-jointness are cross-inscribed and trans-inscribed. The intuitive choice of an analyst is therefore also a choice of a “soul mate” for a continual reattunement within a joint co-incidental initiatory voyage. On the side of the analyst the meaning of this is the necessity to assume responsibility for her own transmissive state of mind and for her own point of view in terms of compassion and futurity. Only in the name of matrixial jointness-in-difference and compassion that absorb psycho-ethical tendencies and psycho-aesthetical tones, and not in the name of “empty” empathy alone, the analyst can ethically authorize her/himself to mentally “receive” or “solicit” the other’s others into the analytical scene, since only compassion (and a symbolic and imaginary borderlinking to those figures) will assure their symbolic and imaginary safety at moments of heightened fragility in which these others – the patient’s internal identifications and objects, her mother, father, sibling and other human-beings co-implicated in her/their history – are at risk of hate and revenge. In that sense – of containing the other’s others for the other and on behalf of the matrixial tissue itself – compassion as a point of view becomes an analytical tool and a safety mechanism within regressive moments, when primal phantasies dominate the scene. As a state of mind, compassion works against split and projection. Thus, the false imaginary common interpretative mode involving *empty* empathy and a ready-made monstrous mother object and accompanied by a resulting violent mental rejection of the actual mother can be avoided. The invention of the mother as a ready-made monster and figure for projecting hate, that goes hand in hand with the channeling of unbound anxiety and free-floating aggression toward the actual mother (outside the analytical room), are undoubtedly a major result of most Western theories and practices of psychoanalytically-oriented psychotherapy, since these ready-mades are the unavoidable imaginary artifacts of the combined processes of regression to pre-Oedipal phantasies and to the “basic fault” (Balint), split, and transference/countertransference relationships, intensified by the blind spots of the theories themselves. This is aided by the desire of individual analysts to occupy the split ideal space, and by the patients’ *empathic* collaboration with this desire of the analyst (to be loved and idealized). The ready-made mother-monster becomes the imaginary “source-cause” for the enigmatic source-less pains and anxieties of human existence, the imaginary “cause” for phantasmatic “memories” that are in fact endless variations of the primal phantasies, anxieties and pains that are unrecognized for what they are: an integral part of being born, alive and mortal, subject to sexuality, disattunement between needs and reality, and death. Hating the mother is not necessarily a cause for psychotic disintegration; and sometimes it is its *result*. Borderline patients enters endless revengeful moodiness because

the “causes” they find are partly phantasmatic and therefore offer no relief when they are imagined as real memories. By interpretations that look for reasons (a cause) for the primal phantasies and produce the mother as the cause, the mother might become imaginary cause in the process of transferentially produced psychosis and *folie-à-deux*.

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The infant’s compassion is presubjective. It “asks” the non-I(s) not to become abusive, controlling, assimilating, annihilating, suffocating and choking, abandoning and rejecting, overdominating and devouring, and not to overtake the entire psychic borderspace. But source-less traumas will always arise, since the world is never in perfect attunement with the I, and enigmatic residuals of painful moments and anxiety states will forever bother the I. The infant’s breathing eye looks for the compassionate, nourishing, touching gaze. It “asks” the m/Other non-I to trust it. The analyst’s mature compassion is based on that presubjective primary compassion and on the com-compassionate transmissivity that is revived within the matrixial transference. The point of view of matrixial com-compassion is an erotic antenna that informs the mature perspective and horizon that embraces the presubjective proto-ethical and aesthetic-affective psychic sensitivities and sensibilities and renders them creative. In a matrixial co-emergence in the now, primary compassion resonates with mature compassion along virtual strings interconnected to strings arriving from with-in other matrixial nets, and therefore a matrixial co-emergence in analysis or therapy awakens the co-creative transformational potentiality I have named copoiesis. Co-creative transformational potentiality gives rise to a particular kind of knowledge produced in/by unconscious strings and threads vibrating and creating a psychic-mental resonance space, as well as vibrating and creating within a resonance space, where the ethical capacity grows precisely within the primary aesthetical awakening – primary both in terms of the past: the original encounter-eventing with-in the real becoming-m/Other, and in terms of the now: the potentiality for reattunement in new prolonged encounter-events with several non-I(s). Thus, the matrixial co-response-ability is also an originary “ethical affect” on the borders of the aesthetical, an unconscious contribution to Responsibility. Primary compassion is a way of mental and emotional passage to the wit(h)nessing m/Other – a transmissive participation in the m/Other’s feelings, and a trans-sensed access to her nonconscious knowledge. Wit(h)nessing is an unconscious contribution to Witnessing. In a matrixial borderspace, wit(h)nessing participates in the differentiating in reattunement and by resonance from a non-I who is different – differentiation that is worked-through not from the same, and not from an “opposite”, but from the m/Other transconnected inter-witness

side-by-side-ness. This non-symbiotic transitivity enables the I to keep a sense of itself with-in basic non-sameness in jointness during differentiating. Self and m/Other differentiate and get a subjective non-appropriative sense from non-sameness by continual reattunement: trans-subjectivity is not a fusion, and where the non-I doesn't respect the I's difference s/he forces domination and initiates resistance.

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Primary awe (in the I) is nourished by respect (arriving from the non-I) that leads to the evolvment of the mature capacity for respecting; primary fascinace is nourished by admiration that leads to the evolvment of the mature capacity for admiring; primary compassion is nourished by empathy and forgiveness that leads to the evolvment of the mature capacity for adult empathy and forgiveness; and primary self-relinquishment is nourished by trust and gratitude that leads to the evolvment of the capacity for mature engagement; being nourished by doesn't mean being created by. All these primary proto-ethical-aesthetical affective qualities that can be cultivated through consciousness are sensitive to the matrixial resonance field since from the outset they compose it. From my perspective, compassion and non-specific mental transmission are the basis for empathy which is more specific and entails "understanding" and in that sense is less fragile and more easily carried over and persists with the growth of understanding in non-matrixial environments, where it risks to become "empty", reactive and strategic. Primary compassion doesn't stem from empathy and doesn't necessarily even entail empathy. There can be continuity between poles of full compassion and empty empathy when compassion and empathy emerge as two poles of the same connective string. Endless refinements and tones differentiate various degrees of empty empathy, full empathy (empathy within compassion), mature compassion, presubjective and sub-subjective primary compassion revived in com-*passion*. Though mature compassion can very slowly develop out of empathy in a secondary mode, the presubjective I is compassionate with no reasons and beyond reason, in resonance with the virtual cosmic string of compassion – transmitted in what for Freud would have probably stand for a *phylogenetical transmission*.

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In the I's compassionate position toward a non-I on the sub-subjective level there is no self-sacrifice, no masochism, no understanding of the non-I, no justification for the non-I, not even forgiveness or thankfulness and no blame, since the primary compassion is before and beyond them all. The I works with-in metamorphosis with compassionate strings that reach her

from different webs, and opens her co-response-ability in the matrixial zone where non-life is accessed by life and life is accessed by non-life. It is precisely in such a context that we must imagine Isaac's compassion for his father, Abraham. This compassion is primary; it starts before, and always also beyond, any possibility of empathy that entails understanding, before any economy of exchange, before any reactive forgiveness or integrative reparation. It is woven with-in primordial trans-sensitivity and co-naissance. This in my view is the psychic unconscious basis of what for Levinas is a conscious obligation of Responsibility where the Other comes before the I and the life of the other counts before the subject's life. Compassion is intrapsychical, subjective and trans-subjective. It works its way, like art does, by fine attunements that evade the social and the political systems. It is a kind of fragilizing subjective openness which is also a resistance, since the social and political level can't handle or reach it by definition, though there is possibility that this level will be informed by it at the long run (and always indirectly.) *Isaac was compassionate toward his father, because, as Infant, he had already been compassionate toward his mother, apprehending her compassionate hospitality uncognizingly, and emotionally feel-knowing the trauma he had been to her in her bringing him to life.*

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The passion offered by the analyst (as a responsible compassionate m/ Other) to the analysand is bringing the subject's psyche into "life" out of "eternal" freezing repetitions, and allowing the subject to feel-know by passion and through fascinancy and to be seduced into life (in the sense of the primal phantasy of seduction (Laplanche)). Primary compassion gives birth to responsibility while responsibility gives birth to adult compassion to the extent that they are not thinkable apart when the matrixial horizon penetrates the phallic angle. Though we can think and talk on compassion and on responsibility apart, their *combination* is not a *thought* but a *practiced affective encounter-event* that becomes, in its turn, a point of view. Compassion is not only a basis for responsibility. It is also the originary event of peace. Peace is a fragile encounter-eventing, an ever re-co-created and co-re-created fragile and fragilizing encounter-event in terms of the particular epistemological parameters of matrixiality. From the point of view of compassion peace is not in dialogue with war. I don't have to feel empathy for my perpetrators, nor do I have to understand them, but this doesn't mean that I will hand them the mandate to destroy my own compassion which is one of my channels for accessing the non-I. To suffocate my own compassion would be a kind of mental and affective paralysis, this would be a "second death" (Lacan), since primary compassion is a spontaneous way of trans-subjective knowing of/in the unknown Other before and beyond any possible economy of inter-subjec-

tive exchange. It is in that sense that in compassion one is always fragilizing one's self and becomes vulnerable. As a resistance to bestiality as such, it has nothing to do with the perpetrators, since it is working-through on a dimension of no symmetrical exchange. If empathy without compassion is empty, moments of transconnected compassion without empathy are perhaps in the domain of sanctity. They are beyond physical survival, and they need justice to moderate them – justice which indeed is on another dimension. And this is perhaps what Levinas means when he clarifies against all common-sense that justice is needed not because the subject wants the other's treasures for itself, but in order to stop the subject from giving all its treasures to the other. This doesn't mean that we should stop questioning Abraham, but that Abraham's dilemma is of a different order and level than the compassion of Isaac. Primary compassion is a spontaneous way of affective trans-subjective knowing of/in the unknown Other before and beyond any possible economy of inter-subjective exchange. The pole of compassion resonates with the miracle of non-life coming into life in jointness, with the ethical value of wit(h)nessing and the virtual strings of matrixial com-compassion. A perpetrator can kill the subject, but it has no hold on its archaic compassionate potentiality. Suffocating the subject's compassionate potentiality by way of cutting the compassionate strings that are borderlinking the I to the m/Other's hospitality and to virtual compassion itself would be inflicting on the subject a kind of death in life by tearing a fatal tatter within the matrixial tissue itself.

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Mothers feel with amazement the compassionate attitude of their babies toward them. Mothers know from experience that babies are compassionate. A primary compassionate response-ability helps the baby to tolerate exterior excess – the parental overwhelming anxiety or pain for example – “gracefully”, without excessive “paranoid” or “schizoid” defenses. Com-compassionate co-response-ability that evolves in the maternal womb, in the fetal matrixial trans-connectivity with-in the m/Other's psychic and mental resonance sphere, can however be hindered or lacking for interior or exterior, biological, genetic or psychological motives; certain proneness to psychosis is rooted there. Inasmuch as it is spontaneous and prior to any paranoid-schizoid manifestation, compassion has the potentiality to modify this position. We can talk about compassion as a psychic position on its own. In openness and vulnerability, the subject is embracing the encounter-event as s/he matrixially enters what until that moment had been an outside, mostly not by *primal rejection* but by *love* (Balint). In matrixial encounter-events we are extremely fragilized, and the fear of being abused, devoured and abandoned is therefore at heights. Rage can therefore be born here, with no other motive than a failed attempt

for reattunement or a spontaneous intensification of primal phantasies. But since such failure and such intensification are too fine to be perceived or accounted for other than by matrixial wit(h)nessing by the m/Other (and analyst), phantasmatic imaginary tales might be invented to express rage and justify revengeful feelings, unless the I rejoins another matrixial non-I in compassionate reattunement and this reattunement operates without phallic splits and without promoting the projection of hate on the a ready-made mother monster with whom one might feel an urge to fill gaps in memory by phantasmatic productions and find an imaginary “cause” for the inexplicable anxiety and psychic pain. The not-enough mother is a primal phantasy that arises as a reply to the enigmatic question: what is the origin and source of my disharmony with my environment. The reply in terms of not-enoughness is closely linked to envy and jealousy. As a primal phantasy it is connected to the other two, since it attracts pains and anxieties of abandonment and of overdomineering arising from any internal and external source. Thus, it joins the primal mother-phantasies of abandonment and devouring and it sometimes contains them. These primal mother-phantasies organizing painful disattunement are earlier than those that organize the enigma of sexuality and difference in terms of castration and Oedipus. They are, also in that sense, “feminine”. By failing to recognize that not-enoughness, abandonment, and devouring are primal phantasies, psychoanalysis reconstructed the actual maternal figure as the source of all unaccountable early psychic pain. Freud projected, from an Oedipal position, as the cause of hate for the mother, the girls’ painful recognition that their own sex organ is a defect for which the mother is to blame. Freud also recognized the prevalence of the devouring phantasy and the mother’s not-enoughness, but then he imagined causes for those pains that are by definition enigmatic since they correspond to basic “failures” of life itself (Ettinger 2006b). Primal phantasies are indeed the psyche’s replies to life’s basic enigmas, but they must be recognized as such, so that they don’t turn into pipes for channeling unbound aggression. Archaic failures in matrixial reattunement are indeed looking for expression and explanation, but are not satisfied by imaginary interpretations, since they correspond to life’s disharmony. Only *reattunement* in compassion in the matrixial borderspace transference can heal this wound. Where false imaginary reconstructions replace such reattunement and “psychologization” of lacking cause advances a splittig mechanism a flagrant monsterizing of the mother occurs. With the help of Lacan’s *Thing* understood as *lack* and his *objet a* as *lacking*, such a blaming of the mother is revealed as absurd already in the phallic arena itself, since there is no one and no-thing to blame for nameless suffering and archaic trauma, and even the mother is not an “origin”. Analytical therapy of different schools that emphasize infantile memory and reject the phantasmatic contributions

to the Imaginary in regressive states reinforces the basic split by phantasmatic idealization (reinforcing the ideality of an ideal mothering) and by fixating the actual mother as the monster by imaginary and symbolic means. In the matrixial arena, the *objet a* is not a total lack, but since the parameters for apprehending the archaic m/Other and the becoming-subject entirely change, projection, split and substitution do not work there altogether, so even ideas like lack and source receive new meaning.

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The mere return of the repressed (no matter what is its content) is accompanied by anxiety (Freud 1916-17, 1919). Anxiety colors any content of the repressed material as it arises to the surface, even if the content itself (or the phenomenon remembered) was not frightening in the past. Since early materials that return from the repressed during analysis are usually connected to the maternal figure, this figure by virtue of the analytical process itself (regression and the return of the repressed) becomes horrifying, and a mother “monster” is reconstituted by the analytical process as such. In fact, the longer the symbiotic relations with the mother lasted, and the stronger the love to the mother was, the more horrifying her figure would arise during the regressive process. Freud realised the connection between the love attachment to the mother and the hate toward her revealed in analysis, but he didn’t realise what I wish to claim, that this hate in itself might be *the result of the process itself*. The analyst who ignores this analytical result of regression and this artifact of anxiety destroys the maternal potentiality of the analysand and deepens the foreclosure of her primary compassion while the real daughter/mother relations are fatally damaged. I am thinking of that biblical “God full of mercy” which in Hebrew means, literally, “God full of wombs” (*El Maleh Rakhamin*). If God had wombs, they would have been bleeding each time an analyst says to his analysand, like Winnicott has done (according to his analysand): “I hate *your* mother.” In my view, the desire to replace the mother was Winnicott’s blind spot. Only from compassion as a point of view within a matrixial transference space can idealization and empathic mirroring avoid splitting and substitution and work for healing, especially in the case of borderline cases and psychotic regression that risk ending in suicidal self hate and hallucinatory matricide or patricide. So much hate toward real mothers arises from psychoanalytical literature and in clinical rapports (alongside idealizations of an idealized mother-figure that the analyst sometimes tries to become upon an imaginary-narcissistic wish), that perhaps God’s womb is constantly bleeding. Hating the patient’s mother is hating her internal mother hidden within herself, and it testifies to the analyst’s lack of compassionate full empathy, which, at the end of the road, is frightening to the analysand, since when the

possibility of the analyst's hate is exposed, even if it is targeting the mother, it is also targeting the mother within the mother and within the daughter within the analysand, hitting a potential me-mother and foreclosing the primary compassion. Contrary to that, a patient feels free to "hate" as long as the therapist remains empathic to her and compassionate to her environment, that is, by full empathy within compassion. This way the analyst still holds together protectively the patient's surroundings, while giving the patient the freedom to hate in her presence.

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Transitivity, trans-inscription and cross-inscription work differently than projections and projective-identification. In transitivity, trans-inscription and cross-inscription the phallic-Symbolic itself is transgressed. The matrixial com-passionate wit(h)nessing and hospitality is an originary "source", a cause of matrixial desire. The originary fascinace is an aesthetic-affective coming into knowledge that is revealed in a vulnerable transferential encounter-event in art when the matrixial borderspace becomes the psychic locus of the viewer's (listener's) encounter with the artwork, like in a healing working-through.

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We have to imagine the primary compassion of Eurydice, working in the silence of a womb-tomb. Orpheus can kill Eurydice through his empathic gaze, but he can't kill her potential for compassion because her compassion isn't conditioned. Primary compassion released of originary repression has no idea whether the other or the world deserves it. It is working-through to know by joining the non-I before/beyond any capacity for reasoning or judgment. It is innocent in the sense that it is always surprised at the qualities of the Other, good or bad, and always somewhat traumatized by the Other and the world. It is beyond innocence in the sense that it is always already bound with the trauma of the world and cross-inscribed by it. Compassion asks nothing; it is working-through with-in a resonance field of metamorphosing compassionate strings, living its traces in borderlinking threads. Primary compassion directs a touching gaze to eternity and to the Cosmos while mature compassion is already interconnected to responsibility. Compassion is a primordial way of knowing which is also a bridge to future humanness in the Levinasian sense. We have to imagine the I's compassion as a way of her think-feeling and uncognizingly knowing the not-yet non-I(s) with-in the Cosmos through originary response-ability. To access such a psycho-ethical basis as adult one will have to return to vulnerability by readiness to self-fragilization and fascinace. Transmissively knowing with-in the m/Other behind the veils of secondary

splits implies accessing the “cause” of pain and joy beyond the Imaginary, in a trans-subjective shared and unsplit Real. In the matrixial sphere, because of some awareness to inter-connectivity between several subjective instances, the level of vulnerability is heightened. For that reason, turning away from the non-I by splitting becomes a deletion, a dropping, an abandonment and a prolapse that creates retraumatization and tears the fabric’s texture precisely in the potential locus for potential re-co-birth (re-co-naissance). Non-wit(h)nessing within a matrixial web would be abandoning. Abusive appropriation would be devouring. The prolapse itself is a tear. Responsibility in the space of the several is awakened by wit(h)nessing, which is the opposite pole of the invisible prolapse within a matrixial web. Wit(h)nessing heals by stitching the collapse of the other’s capacity to elaborate loss. Where for the artist transitivity, vulnerability and oversensitivity to the other and to the Cosmos remain open and expanding, new art-and-healing strings emerge. The I grows new psychic antennae or sensors pointing towards a new trans-sensed radius. As compassionate response-ability and transitivity of waves are archaic affective-mental methods of accessing knowledge, they function earlier than the Ego to support primary survival and are quasi-totally foreclosed, taken over by more adaptative survival mechanisms and reappearing only at moments of extreme vulnerability. Stepping toward compassion in adulthood is progressively reconnecting with a repressed or foreclosed archaic dimension. Babies are not only empathic, as Kohut noticed; they are first compassionate beyond empathy; but for adult survival, empathy is more adaptive. Empathy is an affective transmissivity, and “hypnotic” telepathy is a mental one. Psycho-mental transmissivity underlies the psychoanalytical transference sphere of initiation-in-jointness where healing is also an initiatic voyage that derives its parameters from the archaic matrixial jointness-in-differentiating. The analyst might resist such vulnerability and such a fragile exposure, and the analysand might resist it too, especially if she senses that the analyst has “switched off” its compassionate hospitality. Thus the analyst’s readiness for compassionate hospitality is a question of the desire of the analyst, a desire that, following Lacan’s spirit, should be reframed in ethical terms. Inasmuch as this desire is prior to verbal articulation and logical thinking, it would even be more exact to talk about the matrixial meeting between com-*passion* and desire. However, missing a potentially subjectivizing matrixial moment is hurtful to the analysand and a micro-catastrophe to the analytical process itself. Matrixial reattunement between analyst and analysand turns both partners vulnerable indeed, but as the transformational capacity of the moment is sustained by the ethical desire of the analyst, new knowledge is accessed and created and, in a spiralic way, precisely via such vulnerability. Without it, we would still be exposed to matrixial frequencies and be influenced by them, but we would

miss the subjectivizing transformational moment. It is the analyst's task to be aware of matrixial transmission and, with ethics of compassionate hospitality, open the moment – that might otherwise become unconsciously abusive or retraumatizing for the analysand – to its creative potentiality for growth. Matrixial transmission and reattunement are parts of the healing space and atmosphere. More even, specific psychic vibrations and frequencies are created specifically in-between the unique encounter and belong to the particular borderspace. Knowledge hovers in the shared psychic borderspace, and one receives from the other by way of immersion within the same resonating borderspace and becomes, on a certain partial level, a continuity of the other's strings and threads, by joining and amplifying the same modulations, by bathing within the same resonance, by increasing or decreasing the intensities' amplitude. I and non-I are trembling in different ways along the same sensitive, trans-sensitive and affective string, riding the same virtual flow or mental wave, sharing in different ways the same affective knowledge of the uncognized. The analyst articulates that knowledge, which is not an interpretation of the past but an articulation of the emerging qualities that first appear in the unique encounter-event within this unique co-emerging matrixial web. Meaning can't emerge out of attributing to a phantasy reconstructed by the analytical process of regression the status of "memory" (in "A Child is Being Beaten" Freud shows how the patient's unconscious phantasy is the reconstruction of the analyst). Meaning emerges from deconstruction of phantasy on the one hand and from retrieval of memory of trauma on the other hand – and even from the retrieval of transmitted traces and cross-inscriptions of trauma, that would release the real archaic m/Othernal hiding beyond the veils of a split from the monstrous ready-made status, recognizing the "source-less" cause of certain human suffering and co-creating graceful causes to live for. In each particular togetherness, being-with and being-in is "self"-differentiation and individuation within transgressive reattunement which creates spirallike metamorphic vectors. Unconscious initiation in psychoanalytical relationships, where the encounter is between two non-symbiotic participants, where the analyst contributes to freeing the potentials of the analysand while being transformed by the encounter too, is a kind of love, or non-sexual Eros – an ethical co-birthing in beauty. The aesthetical and the ethical horizons of the participants grow while their potentiality for creative existence is developed or re-established. I and non-I co-emerge affectively, and the potentiality of each psyche for differentiating and for non-cognitive or pre-cognitive knowledge of resonance and inspiration is enacted. We may speak of simultaneous asymmetrical differentiation inside the same resonance sphere. In instants of psychic co-birthing, the I grows with and into its psycho-ethical and psycho-aesthetical sensitivities while the ethical horizon of the non-I is gradually enlarged

when her aesthetical sensibility deepens. The analysand needs to dwell in transferential relations with an analyst who is recognizing difference-in-co-emergence as well as taking distance-in-proximity, and whose non-sexual erotic passion, like that of a parent for its infant, initiates psychic-truth emerging subjectivizing moments. Beyond the analytical theoretical knowledge and the interpretative space that it allows, the healing potential lies in the emotional proto-ethical compassionate attitude of the analyst and in her own human qualities inasmuch as they are going to be transmitted and informing by transgression, in her capacity to contribute to the co-creation of a singular joint psychic and mental transformational and copoietic space. Within emission and transmission and in receptivity they partake of co-response-ability when I and non-I are bathing in a shared resonant atmosphere while the non-I assumes responsibility for the metamorphic reattunement with the I's primary compassion. We are then bathing within a psychic resonance field of mind-psyche waves, frequencies, intensities, that from the outset was opened as already shared prolonged encounter-event. In ebbing and flowing within such a shared field, particular resonating strings become more and more significant, by intensity or by repetition, and accumulate shareable "memory" in threads.

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In the matrixial encounter-event the moment of asymmetrical co-responding when compassionate hospitality is responded by fascinace is a subjectivizing moment. When matrixial partial-subjects meet and differentiate in co-emergence, the subjectivizing moment settles beside earlier encounter-events. The non-I dwells beside the archaic m/Other, enveloping her without assimilation or rejection. Inspiration is a radiance of conductivity becoming a kind of knowledge that works itself through sensitive mental and affective channels on aesthetical and ethical precognitive levels. Jointness-in-initiation is one such hidden effect with a healing transformational potentiality; copoiesis is another: here an artwork is born. Generous emanation mainly depends on the non-I's (analyst's, m/Other) cultivation of her own creative level so that allowing the other to resettle and be nourished within affective heimlich hospitable resonance also would mean an invitation to share with-in a poietic mind-psyche-spirit. The matrixial desire – expressed by compassionate hospitality and fascinace – creates an invisible aesthetical "screen" on the level of the real and the virtual-real, a screen which both by art and in ongoing continual encounters of healing is glimpsed and becomes accessible. It becomes that which is woven and touches me behind the visible and the audible on the borders of the thinkable. The matrixial desire opens up a field of knowledge with the other and in the other in which the other's knowledge is also recogni-

zed with-in the I. It can only be reached by non-defensive self-relinquishment in fascinace and by participating in a subjectivizing occasion offered by the compassionate hospitality of a m/Othernal non-I or the generosity of the artwork as aesthetical and psycho-ethical environment. In the matrixial trans-subjective borderspace, copoietic transformational potentialities can evolve along aesthetic and psycho-ethical paths all throughout life. M/Otherity is an evolving process. However, conductive shareability might lead to traumatizing as well as to healing. In a matrixial borderspace, lack of awareness to transmissivity is a path to entropy, and lack of compassionate hospitality is a path to retraumatization. Actively-passive relinquishment in matrixial com-compassionate hospitality begins with aesthetical and ethical desire and an actively-passive “decision” of the artist to fragilize herself and loosen her psychic boundaries in order to surrender to vibrations arriving from inside and outside. I and non-I co-emerge as if each one is a different pole or a point along the same vibrating string. The psycho-ethical encounter and the aesthetical event or object of bewilderment and wonder, stimulating fascinace and relinquishing, are elusive and belong to the mystery of the incipience of meaning and creativity. Matrixial compassionate hospitality as Eros that offers the possibility for the other to differentiate herself in jointness creates a psychic space of potentiality where the other is solicited by a particular configuration of desire and transference to join a creative space of virtuality and potentiality, to join in what is yet to come. The analyst must offer the analysand a transferential borderspace founded upon her compassion, responsibility (as a human being and in terms of her knowledge) and freedom (in terms of viewpoint, perspective, horizon and free choice). The artist like the analyst yields the boundaries of herself to include the pain and the wonder of the Other or the world. In matrixial compassionate hospitality she is wit(h)nessing whatever arrives: the pain and the wonder, the longing and the fear of languishing with-in con-templation. Thus an active tendency inside the active-passivity of a relinquishment to waves of encounter-events lies in the tension between the originary psycho-ethical openness and aesthetical trans-sensing.

III

“The feminine is the future. . . the possibility of conceiving that there is meaning without me. . . the deepest of the feminine, is dying in giving life, in bringing life into the world. I am not emphasizing dying but, on the contrary, future. . . what is to come.” (Ettinger with Levinas 1991-1993, reprinted here). And this deepest of the feminine infiltrates the subject as its ultimate ethical positioning for Levinas. The Levinasian *feminine* becomes a subjectivizing agency. The moment of birth becomes a symbolic principle of creation alongside paternal fecundity, and the heart of human ethics is

attributed to *that feminine* which is that incredible healthy “craziness” in the human *subject* “**by which it is affirmed that without me the world has meaning**” (Ibid). In the matrixial borderspace the sacrificial potentiality of the merciful femininity is supplemented with potentiality for non-sacrificial grace, inasmuch as for living the non-I that is yet to come requires the living of the I. Thus, “a world without me” would encompass, in the matrixial, the continuity of the non-I by the I in difference, and draws a world where the almost-Other has its different Eros. While for Levinas a visual artwork is secondary in terms of ethical value since the ethical relation is formulated in terms of the relation to the Other and to the Face, while art – and the aesthetic dimension – is secondary to this, with J.-F. Lyotard (2004) and Griselda Pollock (Pollock 2002, 2006a, 2006b) on the other hand an ethical path is opened in and by art. Lyotard recognizes an ethical dimension in a certain resistance to memoriality that offers itself by artistic means and Pollock articulates feminine difference with aesthetics. Such a resistance and such difference saves invisible trauma from oblivion. For me, the psycho-aesthetical transmissivity and the I’s compassionate trans-sensing of the m/Other announces the basis of ethics itself in an originary psycho-aesthetical proto-ethical trans-subjective passage with-in non-absolute m/Otherity. However, the ethical qualities of the matrixial Eros are more directly revealed in therapeutic and psychoanalytical working-through (than by artworking). The compassionate hospitality of the analyst as an ethical being in asymmetrical responsibility and the ethical Eros or passion within com-passion stirs up and initiates the scope of freedom within the matrixial transferential borderspace: freedom of the analyst released by responsibility enhanced by compassion, alongside the more “natural” freedom of the analysand. The parental (especially m/Othernal) “aesthetical” proto-ethical vulnerability and her symbolic stroke, atmospheric carefulness and enigmatic appeal, and the presubject’s fascination in this m/Othernal atmosphere which seduces the not-yet here toward a subjective becoming are aesthetical means for the opening of the ethical womb space toward its co-*idental* futurity.

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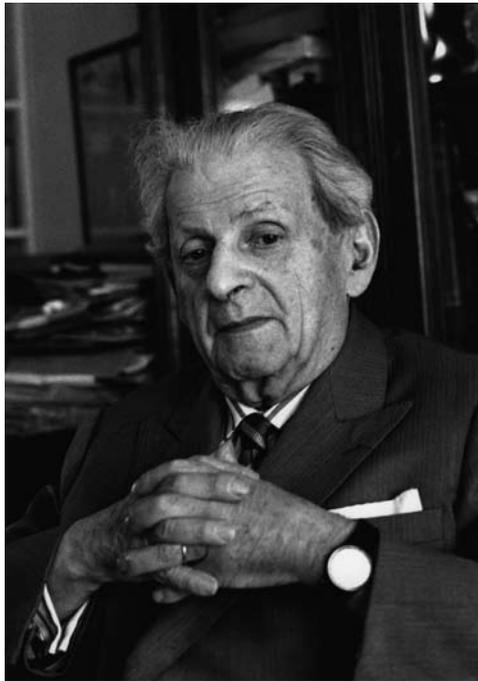
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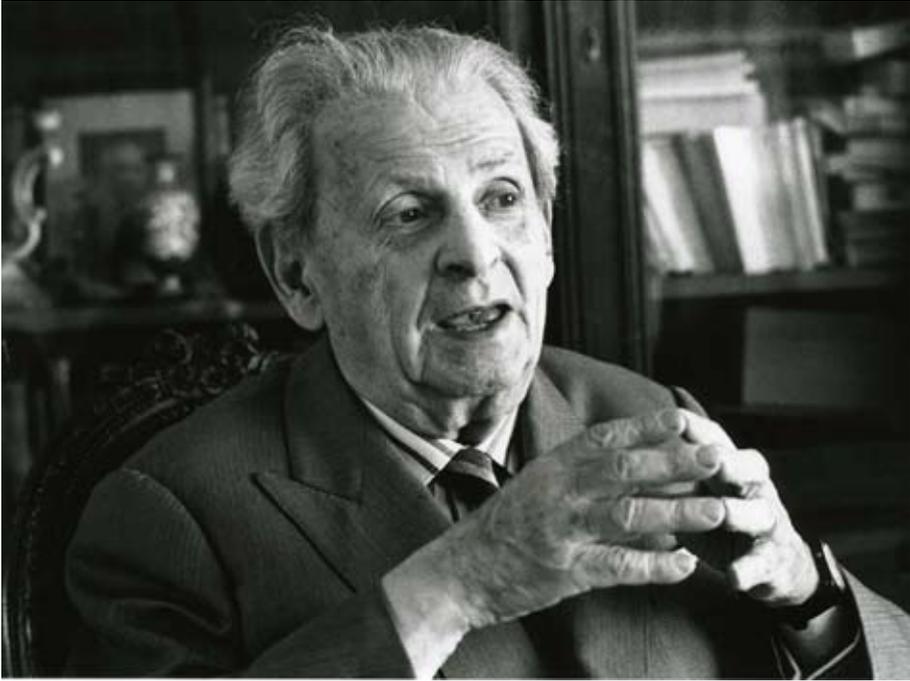
WHAT WOULD EURYDICE SAY?

EMMANUEL LEVINAS IN CONVERSATION¹ WITH
BRACHA LICHTENBERG-ETTINGER

Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger : I am going to ask you my Eurydice question. You wrote that knowing amounts to removing the other's alterity, and that "this result is obtained from the moment of the first ray of light. To illuminate is to remove from being its resistance, because light... delivers being out of nothingness";² it is a betrayal. You have spoken about "the corporeity

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² Levinas, E., *Totality and Infinity*, trans. A. Lingis, Duquesne University Press, 1969, p. 44.



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of the living being and its indigence as a naked and hungry body”³ and then this vulnerable nakedness itself becomes the ethical resistance of the Face. We are at the heart of the problem of the crossing of death and the *between two deaths* of Eurydice, at the heart of the relationship between disappearance and the difference of the feminine.

Emmanuel Levinas : Best to make only a few allusions to the subject of the difference of the feminine.

B.L.E. : On the contrary, I believe that your philosophy will be more and more central for talking about difference and the alterity of the feminine, and that we have not yet really measured its potential in this matter.

E.L. : Above all do not commit yourself too much and do not exhaust this theme too far; you will be attacked, they will say that you have said too much or not enough. It would be better for you not to become entirely involved, stay on the edge. You see, the feminists have often attacked me...

B.L.E. : And so we have lost a lot of time with what seems to me to be of secondary importance. In my “matrixial” interpretation, what is most important is that you start directly from difference, that this difference is sexual, and that feminine difference is originary, that is, neither derived nor dependent on masculine difference. What’s more, you have articulated the feminine with notions which inaugurate the ethical space itself, which make it possible.

³ *Ibid.* p. 129.

That's what overrides the rest. In relation to this, I see the possibility of conceiving of a particular rapport as feminine. I interpret even the relation of filiation as feminine-matrixial: the father/son relation of filiation is "a woman". I believe that your conception will even open the way for feminist research which still has far to go in respect to the feminine in men and in women.

E.L. : That's a *bracha* of la Bracha ... [laughing] [*bracha* in Hebrew means blessing]

B.L.E. : You have spoken about interiority in relation to the feminine, but does that mean that sexual difference is linked to the difference between an interiority so-called "feminine" and exteriority?

E.L. : I do not oppose exteriority and interiority in that way. The essential of a human being is the relation to other human beings. This is true for both men and women. One can conceive of human multiplicity as made of units or individuals, localized in a particular way, included, belonging to a species belonging to a genus. That is how reality is usually viewed. My question consisted in asking whether the human individual starts there. And the heart of my idea is that the human self is before anything else responsibility for the Other.

B.L.E. : In Hebrew, other – *acher*, Other – *ha'acher*, and responsibility – *achraiut* are linked by their root: *a.ch.r.*

E.L. : That is a certain illumination which comes from etymology in as much as it confirms a conception. The relation of *achraiut* to *acher* – yes yes – that is the essential self of the human, and that is just as true for men as for women. The difference between the sexes has no part to play in it. That, overall, the feminine is a necessary complementary category for the masculine has nothing to do with the exteriority of the Other. For women as for men, the Other is the essential source of a person's life. Responsibility is thus the essential moment of the spirit and of the human being. It's even in that precise sense that the human is essential to the spirit.

B.L.E. : So does sexual difference, starting from the feminine as an opening to the Other through welcoming, ingathering and hospitality, involve the relation of each man and woman with the Other?

E.L. : The relation of whomever says "I". For there is a radical difference between the individuation of things of reality and the unicity – *ha'yehidut* – of humans. My attempt to situate the unicity of being, the power to say "I" in the responsibility for the other - that is the heart of my philosophy. I am not particularly concerned to contest the idea of the soul or of thought, but I insist on this exceptional being of the human. Which is to say, this radical difference is not at all because the human being has a soul or a thought; I emphasize the human difference which is the result of

this exceptional destiny of ours. Nothing is superior to the order of man to man – in as much as “man” designates the human being – in which the human Other finds itself recognized. The order of man to man, the order of the Face...

B.L.E. : In terms of the unreciprocal hospitality which is the opening towards this destiny and this order, the feminine is not a difference between men and women in their complementarity.

E.L. : That’s right, Bracha. But, where did you get your name?... One cannot close the door to *la bracha*. One says to her: *bevakasha, bevakasha, tikansi, tikansi* [Hebrew: please, please, come in, come in] but *la bracha* does not need a door, she does what she wants to do, she is capricious! How do you say “caprice” in Hebrew?

B.L.E. : You say “caprice”... [laughing] But, when it comes to working on our conversation, what am I going to do with all your playful joking?

E.L. : It is very important to me. You are turning back onto me the responsibility I am putting on you by talking to you about the feminine, since every single word must be weighed. But even with some embarrassment, these little things must be kept, these rapid exchanges. You will find the most important things in what we have said in passing, in jest; more than in the abstractions.

Philosophy does not start with the incomprehensible. Philosophy starts in common sense, which is the right direction even if it is paradoxical. And common sense is what is the most hidden. Believe me, once written down, our exchange will be better unfinished than if we complete it.

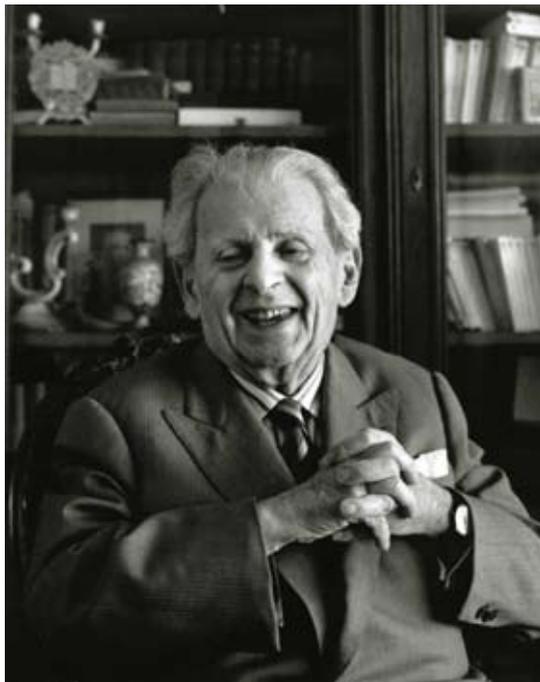
What shall we call this? Our conversation is an exchange before discourse... Exchanges before... The remarks (*propos*) from before the discourse... Remarks without eloquence? – no, no. Remarks without pretension, yes... Remarks without discours [*Propos sans discours*], that’s it! Remarks without discourse are not remarks without responsibility! Sometimes half a word is more important than a whole sentence, often the halves of words join together. It is the unfinished sentence which retains the force.

In writing there is the force of the fragment. The fragment is what is most suggestive, because in it there is allusion. The fragment is not dogmatic, the fragment is an opening. And writing is the fragment which remains.

B.L.E. : Lets get back to the feminine? – You wrote that the strange duality of the unreciprocal enunciates sexual difference.

E.L. : In as much as man comes to pleasure in love as does woman, sexual difference is reciprocal.

B.L.E. : In your work, since intersubjective relations are non-symmetrical, since you criticize the concept of totality through the notions of secret and infinity and since subjectivity is *for* the Other, without reciprocity, there might be an open, fertile space here for exploring the alterity of the feminine.



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E.L. : *Od lo ne'emar. Od yavo.* (Hebrew: not yet said, is yet to come).

B.L.E. : I'd like to ask you a question about the alterity of the feminine. At one point you spoke of the feminine as a flight before the light.

E.L. : In other words: not to show oneself. A flight before demonstration.

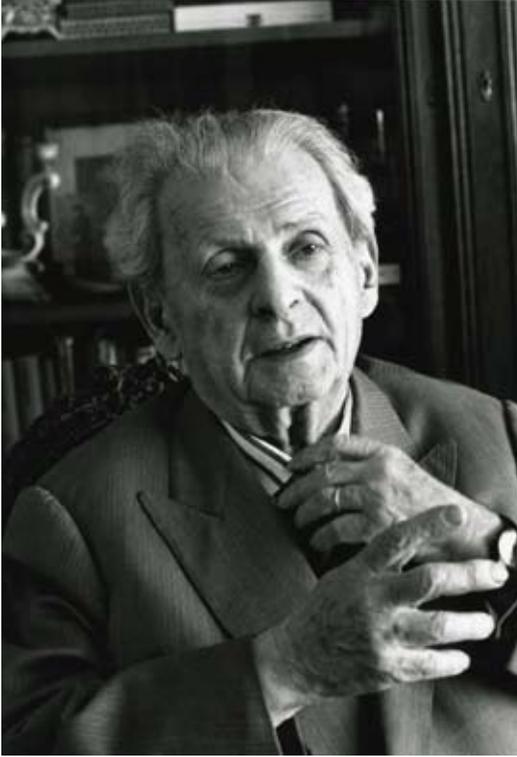
B.L.E. : I took it as a metaphor for a kind of movement of disappearance. Not to be fixated by the gaze. For me, in the Matrix, a kind of withdrawing/contracting [*rétirance*] before the light of consciousness leads to meeting with an unknown other.

Is there an interiority that is not the passage of the "infinitely exterior"?
What would Eurydice say?

Can the subject-woman have a privileged access to the feminine?

E.L. : The feminine is the future. The feminine in its feminine phase, in its feminine form certainly may die in bringing life into the world, but – how can I say it to you? - it is not the "dying"; for me, the "dying" of a woman is certainly unacceptable. I am speaking about the possibility of conceiving that there is meaning without me. I think that the heart of the heart, the deepest of the feminine, is dying in giving life, in bringing life into the world. I am not emphasizing *dying* but, on the contrary, *future*.

B.L.E. : Disappearance before what is to come?



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E.L. : ... what is to come.

Woman is the category of future, the ecstasy of future. It is that human possibility which consists in saying that the life of another human being is more important than my own, that the death of the other is more important to me than my own death, that the Other comes before me, that the Other counts before I do, that the value of the Other is imposed before mine is.

In the future, there is what might happen to me. And there is also my death.

B.L.E. : Then is this deepest of the feminine the ultimate responsibility? Or the ultimate measure of the ethical relationship?

E.L. : Yes, this is the *k'dusha* [Hebrew : saintliness].

And in the feminine there is the possibility of conceiving of *a world without me*; a world which has a meaning without me.

But we would not be able to develop this idea in so few words. Many intellectual precautions are needed. There is too great a risk of miscomprehension. One might think that I am saying that woman is here to disappear, or that there will be no woman in the future... One might say, they construct a world, and we are all just going to drop dead... [laughing]

B.L.E. : On the contrary, for me you restore to woman that which was taken away from her; a certain *symbolic* principle of creation, an ethical space. The idea of disappearance might make an allusion to the idea of creating a space on the outside like in the inside.

Where are we going to look for the feminine, if not in the relationships to the unknown aspects of the Other, or in the relationships to the Other unknown because of its place in space and time? To my mind this is linked to ideas you developed in *Totalité et Infini* [*Totality and Infinity*]: that knowledge does not bring us into relationship with the Other; that there is a movement toward the Other in the idea of time. When I link that to the alterity of the feminine it leads to this interpretation...

E.L. : That's not yet visible in my writings.

Firstly, there is the past. But a past that is *really* past. For us, the past is that which was first present and then gone. But the Past is a past which has never been present. In the relationship to the Face, in the encounter of two human beings, before the other, the instant I see him I am already indebted to him.

In Yiddish there is a nice way of saying it. Do you know Yiddish? "I've just laid eyes on him and already I owe him something..." [laughing]

B.L.E. : As a human being, you recognize your debt for my past. And in terms of the feminine, as a human being, I recognize my debt for your future?

E.L. : Yes. One can't live like that all the time, but yes. This is the heart of human ethics.

B.L.E. : So, there is the Past. But what you are saying is that the heart of human ethics is also tied to difference, or to the alterity of the category of the feminine; to a certain conception of the future.

E.L. : Yes yes. The feminine is that difference, the feminine is that incredible, unheard of thing in the human by which it is affirmed that *without me the world has meaning*.

B.L.E. : In the woman?

E.L. : Not in all women at all moments... [laughing] Every woman is man, Adam⁴... In the human, there is this incredible, unheard of thing.

B.L.E. : According to you, with this idea, can one go beyond the Face to say that there is a responsibility toward that which does not yet have a face or toward that which no longer has a face? Toward those who are not yet born or those who are already dead.

E.L. : That consolation, I do not have. I only say that *in reality* there appears this human phenomenon which is *meshugé* (crazy). It's a *meshigas* (craziness). You don't know your Yiddish...

B.L.E. : No. But *meshigas* I do know... [laughing]

E.L. : Since we are not going to be able to develop this theme sufficiently, we'd better put down only some allusions. But not paradoxical ones! If you

⁴ *Adam* : Man in Hebrew, means man or woman as a human being.

say it like that, that woman is there to disappear, it's you who will be called the *meshugas* (crazy woman), isn't that right? If you want to go with this path, take all your intellectual precautions.

B.L.E. : The fragility of Eurydice between two deaths, before, but also after the disappearance... the figure of Eurydice seems to me to be emblematic of my generation and seems to offer a possibility for thinking about art. Eurydice awakens a space of re-diffusion for the traumas which are not reabsorbed. The gaze of Eurydice starting from the trauma and within the trauma opens up, differently to the gaze of Orpheus, a place for art and it incarnates a figure of the artist in the feminine. You wrote that woman is at the origin of the concept of alterity and that "the Other, the feminine, withdraws into its mystery".⁵ Starting with Eurydice and with the aid of your concept of the feminine, linked to the future and to this flight before the light, I can see a certain interpretation of the poetic or *paintorial* act, of painting at work. Writing as following an ever-fleeting center, painting as withdrawal/contracting before consciousness.

E.L. : That, if you want, you can say with no problem. You can say it, but be careful, you must find a formula for saying it, for it might be taken as a weakness.

B.L.E. : If the *tsimtsoum* [Hebrew: contraction/reduction] belongs to creation, then in the light of the Ethics you have established – I am thinking of *Humanisme de l'Autre Homme* (*Humanism of the Other Man*) – perhaps this movement won't be interpreted as a "feminine weakness"...

E.L. : In *Humanisme de l'Autre Homme* I state only the first phase of such things. In any case, up until now, I have not spoken to you about aesthetics. I insisted on all the ethical aspects.

What is important here first of all is that in all these descriptions of relationships to the Face there is a certain conception of Time. My relationship to the Other is an obligation. The ethical relationship to the Other gives Time a particular meaning.

In French we have this wonderful expression *maintenant*: now, the present. *Main-tenant*: hand holding. The present corresponds to the hand - it is what one can work, take, apprehend, understand (*com-prendre*). *Howé* [Hebrew: present] is the holding-hand: *ma shenichnas layad* [Hebrew: that which enters the hand].

In the structure of intentionality, to know or to see, like taking by the hand, brings the past and the future into the present, and the Other to the Same. This is different to the idea of the past as being due to relationships with the Other. As I said to you earlier: before the Face of the Other, I am already obligated; before having laid eyes on him/her, and even if the face is hidden. And then, there is that idea of the feminine, or of love, of love relationships with the woman or in the family; love in general. It is the possibility of believing that there is a reality *without me*. But it has this meaning in the face of any presence of the other, for every human being.

⁵ Levinas, E., *Totality and Infinity*, op. cit., p. 276

The relationship to the Face, to the Other, *is already* a grasp of a past and *is already* a contact with a future, in which you have the idea of the unknown. And of the possible. And of the impossible too.

In the future, there they are; my possibilities and my impossibilities. And my death is there as well. And time is there: in what is possible, in what is no longer possible, and in the unforgettable.

Time, our time, is already the breath of the human being in respect to another human being. Our time is the breath of the spirit.

Paris, 1991-1993

Translated from French by Joseph Simas and Carolyn Ducker