The future of dialogue: Narrative identity, the exchange of memory, and the constitution of new spaces of belonging.

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DRAFT - NOT FOR QUOTATION

A central political and ethical problem today concerns the conditions for the kind of dialogue and exchanges that would reduce or eliminate antagonisms by altering the relation to the 'other' regarded as stranger or alien. Whilst most of the conflicts that afflict the world today are grounded in one form of exploitation or other, many are overlaid with an intransigent history of difference dividing communities into apparently irreconcilable ethnic and religious, or 'civilisational'camps. The conflict in Israel/Palestine appears to be one of the now proliferating cases where the weight of history, added to the burden of geo-political and economic machinations, condemns the present to the repetition of violence.

This paper addresses the theoretical issues underlying such conflicts, focussing on the problems of identity and the possibility of a politics of transfiguration. It seeks to establish some connecting threads linking the mechanisms involved in the formation of subjectivity and identity, the effectivity of history in this process in the form of memories of belonging and community, ontological and ethical issues that arise when one considers the grounds for dialogical exchanges, and a politics that imagines alternative forms of sociality. It will draw from Ricoeur's analysis of narrative identity and the problematic of forgiveness and debt and from Derrida's (1997a,b, 1998) discussion of hospitality and responsibility in relation to the problematic of the cosmopolitical to examine the way in which such considerations impinge on the problem of constructing spaces for dialogue and solidarity in situations of conflict. It will refer to fieldwork carried out in sites in Israel (Hansen, 2003) (1) where programmes for reconstructing communities through dialogue and the exchange of memories have been trying to intervene to constitute new spaces for ways of living together.

If dialogue is a compromise between the impossibility of an ideal speech and the graphocentric authority of writing, complicit with the Law, then it requires a space for a translation that is a re-transcription operating a relay between apparently irreducible differences. At the level of authorisation (and answerability), the compromise that dialogue attempts to secure reveals the rift between the saying and the said that opens up the question of the ethical. The dilemma is repeated in the monotheist religions of the Book, namely, between the authenticity of the Voice or the Commandment and the letter of the Law in the sacred writings that claim to be a transcript of the Voice. Monotheisms dictate the untranslatability of the names of the gods, enshrining a rigid demarcation between true and false beliefs; it is affiliated to monolingualism and the colonial spirit - expressed in the choice between assimilation or exclusion - that animates it. Furthermore, fundamentalist interpretations of the Book necessarily construct identity within an agonistic frame, using the tyranny of dogma to erect an unbreacheable wall between those who belong to the faith and those who do not. In my discussion, I will examine to what extent concepts of the dialogic, in-betweenness,

third space, translation, enable analysis to find a theoretical space for understanding the obstacles to dialogue.

Let us start with the concrete reality in which theory tries to intervene. One of the central problems impeding dialogue in the Jewish - Arab conflict in Israel is the extent to which the land enters into quite different narratives of belonging for significant sections of the two communities. On the one hand, for the more orthodox Jews, their sense of identity is bound up with founding narratives of the nation that bind the Jewish people to a specific religious grand narrative of emancipation and to a particular space: the promised land, a God-given and inalienable place, the designated world in which Jews, as the chosen people, can finally lead the rightful life and seek redemption. The exclusionary effect of the doctrine is amplified by the formation of the state of Israel as intrinsically Jewish. For the Arabs, on the other hand, the land called Palestine is more straightforwardly the place that centuries of settlement have made into the repository of the community's history and what Pierre Nora (1997) has called the 'lieux de memoire' that harbour ancestry and circumscribe domiciliary rights. For them, only force or acquisition can wrench belonging from the land. It must be said that the situation is complicated by the fact that, on one side, there are many Arabs, for instance, the Bedouins, who have a more nomadic relation to land, a relation that relays utility, displacement and sense of place according to 'traditional' mode of existence and ethos, whilst, on the other side, there are significant numbers who are recent immigrants from Russia and other part of Europe for whom the question of space and place in relation to identity and belonging is far more ambivalent or fractured. Nevertheless, for both groups, the notion of the nation-state is atypical from the point of view of modernity and the latter's legalistic and secular definition of the boundary of the national territory. As Hansen (2003) argues, one feature of this different foundation of the nation is that Israeli Arabs are not seen as entirely legitimate citizens, and consequently have certain basic rights withheld from them. Furthermore, the experience of diaspora and of the Shoah has over-determined the significance of Palestine/Israel for Jews in terms of the imagined community to come.

The ethnographic material to which I refer relates to schools in Neve Shalom and Givat Aviva that are two of the few institutions where a systematic effort is made to manage a rapprochement between Jews and Arabs living as citizens of Israel. At both places, attempts to equalise the relations of power and instigate dialogue is managed through arrangements based on equal ratios of Jewish and Arab staff, and equally privileging Hebrew and Arabic language, although in practice, Hebrew, which is the official language, is the de facto common language. Encounters are staged between schoolchildren from the two ethnic communities at which the groups can express and discuss their sense of identity, and take part in games that provide occasions for challenging stereotypes and for initiating communicative action that are meant in principle to approach 'ideal speech communities'. The fact that in practice they fail to come close to this ideal should not be surprising, particularly when violence and conflict have become a relentless feature of daily reality. This contextual feature of the exchanges taking place leads one to recognise the limits of the point of view of dialogic communication, since the latter assumes the willingness to communicate, and conditions conducive to dialogue. Bakhtin (1990) refers to the dialogical aspect of dialogue in order to make visible the dynamic, playful, mobile, multi-voiced or heteroglossic character of linguistic exchanges between people, so that the specific

meaning of utterances is seen to arise from the interaction of interlocutors. Furthermore, the meanings inscribe an I-you relationship, embedded in a communal experience, shifting according to context and situation. When a differend (Lyotard, 1963) exists between parties, that is to say, when an irreducible or incommensurable difference is thought to separate groups, as with monotheisms or conflicting paradigms, meaning within the 'regimes of phrases' cannot be translated, so that the dialogical is short-circuited in cycles of the repetition of the same and we are left with the dialogue of the deaf.

The evidence for this is clear in many of the episodes of the staged encounters and exchanges between Jewish and Arab Israeli students in the ethnographic material I am considering. The differends takes the form of negative stereotypes applied to the speech and behaviour of the 'other', thus returning that other to the incomprehension of an alien lifeworld, in spite of the common world often shared. Not all the students mistranslate the situations, and it was clear that already existing notions of identity and its location in relation to a narrative of the community determined the degree of systematic misreading. One of the reasons for using the work of Ricoeur to analyse the narrative and linguistic character of the data is because his approach enables one to theorise what is going on at the level of subjectivity and identity, and what other considerations might come into play in examining what is at stake in changing the situation.

I am going to structure my analysis around two series of questions. First, the theorisation of subjectivity and identity by reference to the idea of the self as a narrated identity grounded in the proposition that temporality is a fundamental dimension of human beings; I will pursue the implications for issues of recognition, of the economy of debt and of the gift, and, underlying them, an ethics founded in the idea of responsibility for the other. The second series of questions relate to the fact that the reality of antagonisms is steeped in a history of traumas and conflicts that attend forms of exploitation and oppression - capitalisms, slavery, masculinism, and so on – and the dispossessions and violences that are integral to them. That history is activated in the repetition of violence that disables genuine dialogue. So, memory and historicity are central categories linking the two series. This approach opens up a discourse about the ethical principles involved in the 'exchange of memories' and in 'translation' between cultures (Ricoeur, 1996) that could guide action towards new forms sociality and narratives of emancipation that implicitly rejects forms of oppression and violence.

Narrative identity.

We know that in the everyday the sense of a self, and of a self identity is tied to mundane practices in which people locate themselves by reference to a routine of action or performances, and expectations about themselves and others that remain relatively stable in particular social settings. The term iterability, drawn from Butler (1993) and Derrida, is often used to point to what is significant about subjectivity in relation to acts, the re-iteration of a particular subjectivity in instances of action that position a self by reference to a previous pattern of behaviour recognized by significant others. For instance the frequent reliance on stereotypes of the 'other' in the accounts of behavioural expectations as described by participants in the encounters to

which I have referred above suggests that such pre-established vocabularies and patterns exist in a discursive form, interiorised in the form of imaginaries, that are enacted and embodied in face to face situations. The stability of social relations is premised on such patterns of repetition and mutual recognition so that a self exists as a knot in a network of intersubjective action and understanding; they enact the fact that every particular 'who' or self is coupled to a world, both material and social. It follows that change implies transformation in that whole world. The line of argument I am developing is that because identity is constituted in relation to narratives of belonging and of the collective – nation, ethne, religious community, tribe – that inscribe the deep structural aspects of the socio-material lifeworld, our understanding of change must interrogate the process of constitution. Here, it is important to recognise the fact that social interactions are ever open to the indeterminate. The possibility of change is premised on this openness. One of the tactics employed in the experiments at the schools in Neve Shalom and Givat Aviva was precisely to establish situations that would allow the 'discrepant experiences' (Said, 1993, pp 35 f) shaped by the hybrid cultural spaces in Israel to disrupt the stereotypes, and establish a threshold space for dialogue.

Let us look at the process a little closer. Ricoeur's notion of narrative identity points to the idea of a self as a storied self, as an entity made up of stories told, indeed, entangled in the stories that a person tells or that are told about her. Yet, this very mundane aspect of human beings is also a profoundly enigmatic element (2). This is because, in Ricoeur, the notion of narrative identity is grounded in an ontology deriving from Heidegger's (1962) emphasis on temporality as the defining characteristic of human beings. The primacy of time in relation to being has to do with the understanding of being as the entity that questions itself as to its way of being.

That questioning takes the form of a search for a sense of self measured or judged in terms of ways of being inscribed in models and scripts for the emplotment of life that exist in the form of a culture's archive of existence. One could say that a self comes to be folded in a kind of temporal envelope that circumscribes a memory referring to one's past action as well as to the reflexive account of collective existence. Time, then, determines the horizon for any understanding of being; as soon as we think of ourselves as conscious beings, we think time, and we cannot think time without bringing up the question of consciousness, specifically, the consciousness that we exist in time, as beings in time, dispersed between a remembered past, an evanescent present and the anticipation of a future. For each subject, the having-been, the making-present and the coming-towards constitute the three moments, indeed, the co-articulated moments, of the temporality of one's being-in-the-world. They mark the space in which we question ourselves as to our way of being. In thinking about the problem of subjectivity and of the possibility of transforming identities, we need to recognise that the spacing and trace of time, in the form of memory and narrative, allows us access both to the intersubjective dimension of existence and to the historical framing of culture.

Yet a basic aporia of time is its inscrutability. This may well be because we are encompassed by time, as I have just indicated, so that it is impossible to stand outside it. The avenue that Ricoeur follows is to explore the possibility that narrative is the form in which we can overcome the unrepresentability of time (when we think of it in the singular), and the device by which we express the lived, or phenomenal, aspect of the temporality of being. The underlying idea is that the act of telling a story "can transmute natural time into a specifically human time" (1984: 17). In Ricoeur's approach, the term narrative identity seems to join up two problematics of subjectivity: concerning identity, and concerning the relation of history to fiction in the process of the figuration of temporality. The two problematics are correlated by way of the idea that time, and the way it is lived, provides the common ground for their co-articulation (3).

Furthermore, the sense of narrative identity that Ricoeur develops stresses the view that every identity is "mingled with that of others in such a way as to engender second order stories which are themselves intersections between numerous stories... We are literally 'entangled in stories' " (Ricoeur,1996: 6). These stories are structured according to rules of emplotment of experience that exist in a culture, including models of the good life – e.g. how the faithful should live, what rules must guide her, and so on (4).

Narrative identity appears in his discourse of being as the concept that enables us to think of the mediation between the phenomenological and the cosmological apprehension of time, that is to say, the mediation between time as lived, inscribed in activities in the world, and inscrypted (that is, at once inscribed and encrypted) in life narratives, and time in the singular, the intuition of a dimension that cannot be derived from the experiential but encompasses and transcends it. As Ricoeur (1992) has put it, narrative is the way of joining up the 'time of the soul' with the time of the world. In a sense the 'self' as a meaningful and meaning-making entity appears at the point of intersection of two kinds of reflection on our beingness or existence. On the one hand, we find the stories and memories that express the time of being-in-the-world and of being-with, the duration of events and experiences in the everyday - for instance, in Edward Said's (1999) account of going to school in Cairo in the early 50s, his holidays in a Lebanese village, the countless events marking family life - that is, the scansion of the temporal flow in each life that we reckon and keep and memorialise because they involve our care (in the Heideggerian sense)(5).

On the other hand, every culture inscribes collective and shared memories of the group that have effects for how the biographical and the historical dimensions of being-in-the world and being-with are lived in the everyday. A self happens at the point of intersection of these two kinds of narratives, weaving the personal into the collective. For instance, for the students at the schools in the study, 'real time' involves memories of the daily fighting going on all round them, and in which they participate or get caught up, as in the case of the Jewish girl who cannot talk about the Arabs without recalling the stone-throwing incident that she suffered whilst travelling in a car. This kind of incident calls up a history of conflict between the two communities, and relays

another history of the oppression of the Jews, with effects for the analysis of change that I will develop later on. Thus, the phenomenal apprehension of time already inscribes a dimension that opens towards an unrepresentable trace, the absent presence of memorialised and immemorial real and imagined events. I would relate this to the problematic of trauma and its psychical effects that has become an unavoidable yet central problem affecting strategies for change in the Israel/Palestine situation, as well as in, say, ex-Yugoslavia or Rwanda.

The mediation between the phenomenal and cosmological modalities in our experience of time brings into play the effects of another kind of discourse, that which addresses the questions which surface about time in the singular, thus about finitude and the experience of loss and thrownness, or, in other words, about existential suffering (6); they are the questions that animate the discourses about what gives meaning to life at the general, cosmological level. I would relate this to the apprehension of a sublime or ungrounded dimension to human existence, an experience, besides, that links up with the ecstasy and epiphany of being. Typically, this dimension of the temporality of being is expressed in religious discourse (and, in a different register, in the sublime in art), invoking a transcendent being – God or gods - and an imaginary space - the afterlife, the promised land, paradise – that allocates their place to the mundane, grounded activities of daily living.

So, at one level, temporality encompasses the historical and cultural space of the emergence of the who of action and meaning, and at another level, it opens onto a critical hermeneutics and to a reflection which points to the apprehension that a self "does not belong to the category of events and facts" (Ricoeur,1991: 193). I would argue that grand narratives, whether expressed in the secular language of the Enlightenment and the project of modernity, or in a religious, or onto-theological discourse, function to relay the two levels. In the case of doctrinaire systems of beliefs or fundamentalist sects, the rules and principles, as interpreted by the believers, determine absolutely what is rightful conduct and draw very strict lines of demarcation between what is and is not acceptable. The line separating purity from danger is both unambiguous and rigidly established, correlated and repeated in terms of the cleavage between identity (conceptualised in terms of unicity) and the other (conceptualised as absolutely other, or reducible to the same). One can see this at work in the attitude and action of fundamentalist sects on both sides of the conflict in Israel/Palestine. In such circumstances, the problem is how to envisage the possibility of a translation between the two experiences, that is, the possibility of meaningful dialogue.

Translation, the exchange of memories, forgiving.

Clearly there is a primary political issue to be resolved, to do with establishing the conditions for any dialogue at all. But that is but a first step, since in the case we are examining, and similar ones elsewhere, the return to violent conflict is a constant danger until some notion of community has been (re)constructed. Community, after all, depends on sharing stories of belonging and narratives of becoming. For instance, Herzog (2000) studies of feminists

in Israel has shown that Jewish and Arab women can and do cross the divide and construct community motivated by their feminist ideals and their consciousness of shared experience as women. My analysis will focus on the conditions for the emergence of new communities of solidarity, beyond the political level. In addressing a similar problem regarding the ethical issues involved in the integration of Europe, Ricoeur proposes three models for analyzing the relation of identity and alterity. The first is that of translation premised on 'the principle of universal translatibility' (Ricoeur, 1996 :4) itself conditioned by a 'translation ethos' grounded in the gesture of 'linguistic hospitality'; the latter is inscribed in the principle of "living with the other in order to take that other to one's home as a guest" (op. cit: 5). The spirit of translation expressed in this idea of hospitality is to be extended to the relationship between cultures.

The second model that Ricoeur discusses is that of the exchange of memories or 'narrative hospitality'. It connects with the first model in that the latter recognizes a "difference of memory … at the level of the customs, rules, norms, beliefs and convictions which constitute the identity of a culture" (op. cit.: 5.6). These features of memory are preserved and communicated in narratives of identity and of the community. For this reason, Ricoeur argues that the exchange of memory calls for each party to take responsibility for the story of the other. Clearly, the implication is that this exchange requires a labour, involving the recognition of the other as a fellow human being worthy of respect and dignity. An obstacle to this process is the effect on the collective memory of a people of 'founding events' that fix the history of the cultural group into an immutable identity, untranslatable to the 'other' as outsider. Experiences of oppression and persecution, inflicted because of ethnic or religious or racial difference, and the collective memory of the suffering caused, as with the Shoah, amplify the hold of founding narratives on the enframing of the meaning of the nation, or the ethne, or the religious community. Breaking with such a tradition requires an ethical gesture indicated in the notion of hospitality, that is, the welcoming of the other as someone entrusted in one's care. Ricoeur proposes the possibility of overcoming the hold of founding narratives and collective suffering through his third model, that of forgiveness, grounding the latter in an economy of debt and of the gift. The elaboration of the model passes through the process of the refiguration of identity that involves the revision of the past, a process that he has discussed elsewhere (Ricoeur, 1988) by reference to the mimetic functions of narrative (7). Ricoeur specifies two instances of suffering that needs to be worked upon, namely the wounds that one associates with the 'terror of history' (op.cit.: 9) and the suffering one inflicts on others. The memory of such suffering needs to be exchanged in the third model, not according to the contractual rules of reciprocal obligations, but according to an economy of the gift that exceeds reciprocity so that one would "proceed from the suffering of others … before imagining one's own" (Ricoeur, 1996: 9). It is clear that a spiritual economy is invoked in Ricoeur's discussion, involving a non-forgetful forgiveness that does not confuse forgiveness with forgetting, for one must keep the memory of the debt owed to those who have suffered. This means that "… the work of forgiveness must be grafted on to the work of memory in the language of narration" (op. cit.: 10). It follows that the effort of

telling differently involved in refiguring identities requires the work of anamnesis, thus of mourning (in relation to loss and suffering) and of the revision of the past as narrated in 'traditionality' (8) (for instance, in relation to the recovery of the traces that onto-theology and monotheism erase, and in relation to a justice called for by a suffering caused). Some of the techniques used towards altering identity at the schools Hansen (2003) observed seemed to stumble towards the situation in which each party would be able to inhabit the other's story in imagination. Dialogue would take place in the shelter of such an ethic of responsibility for the other. But, telling differently is in solidarity with a difficult, because non-unitary and indeterminate, justice. The appearance of the notion of justice along the line of analysis I am developing suggests that other principles must be brought into visibility to charge the models with the capacity to guide transformative action.

The problem is that Ricoeur's analysis calls for quite a different understanding of being and of emancipation, opening onto a politics of transfiguration beyond fundamentalist (and onto-theological) visions of ways of being. There are some pointers in his arguments when he correlates the recognition of fragility and suffering with concepts of custody and care and trust so that, as Levinas has argued, it is always another that calls us to responsibility. The figure of hospitality in the models he proposes has for its ground this ethics of the primacy of the relation to alterity.

This line of analysis is interestingly developed in the later work of Derrida in his essays on hospitality, cultural identity, monolingualism and cosmopolitanism. It is appropriate to start with what he refers to as the 'disorder of identity' (Derrida, 1998:14), given the disjunct spaces of belonging in Palestine/Israel - and in so many other places today in the age of diaspora, displacement and tranculturation. Derrida here discusses the correlation of identity with the sense of 'being-at-home in language', or the dwelling in language, (op. cit. :17) that remains impossible or spectral for those who have been displaced, forcibly or not, and those whose national identity is one that has been lent to them by virtue of colonial decrees or juridical decisions. The reference to the model of colonialism in questioning the relation of language to identity brings into the relation the effects of power and the subterfuges of resistance to subjection. These mechanisms and strategies are very visible in many of the encounters in the schools in Hansen's studies. On the surface, both Hebrew and Arabic are supposed to have parity in the activities at the schools, with classes conducted in both languages, translation being offered when required. However, the most frequent disputes in the encounters centre on which language to use, many Jewish children refusing to speak in Arabic or insisting that the dialogues take place in Hebrew. Underlying this ploy is the assertion of Hebrew as official language and the demand that the Israeli Arabs prove their good faith as citizens, and prioritise their Israeliness by speaking in Hebrew. The result of such disputes is often the breakdown of the dialogue, with both groups reconstituting themselves into antagonistic camps thus reasserting the agon of the colonialist situation which prevails generally. It is clear that speaking is never neutral. Power introduces an alienation into the process of identification – here, for Israeli Arabs who are at home in one culture, yet have to speak a language that not only is not their own, but, is the

language of the master, transmitting the imposed sovereignty of a monolingualism that inscribes subjectifying power relations. Yet, I can never own language in any case, for language does not repeat the interiority of a unitary I, but relays the relation to the other and the insufficiency of the I think indicated by the concept of ipseity, understood as the 'I can' in the text of Derrida I am considering, or the 'I of enjoyment' in Levinas (1969: 117-120). The two senses are conjoined in the politics of transfiguration to the extent that the power to act of the 'I can' is oriented by the anticipation of an emancipation to come belonging to the economy of desire that enjoyment connotes and to the idea of the self as potentiality.

A cosmopolitical 'third space'?

We come at this point to the threshold of a discourse about futurity (the 'to come') that, for a considerable time, has been confined to religious discourse or to modern humanist ontology (9). It is these discourses that one needs to disrupt if one is to break the hold of fundamentalist and totalizing narratives of becoming and the politics they sustain. Derrida addresses key elements of this interruptive strategy in his discussion of cosmopolitics. The issue of the cosmopolitical arises because the impasse created by the force of incommunicable ways of being means that one must imagine the possibility of a 'third space' that would enable mediation on the basis of common ground at two levels: that of the lived space and the level pertaining to the anticipation of a just resolution to conflict. The first level assumes a degree of life in common, around work and routine everyday activities - say in the polyglot cultures of Jerusalem. The second is necessary because we know that the commonality of a lifeworld is insufficient to prevent the worst atrocities between ethnic, religious or political groups, as the events in ex-Yugoslavia and Rwanda demonstrate only too well.

Cosmopolitanism in principle is meant to engage with the question of the relation to the stranger but it is clear from the examples I have cited that this relation depends not only on having a world and experiences in common but is guided by an ethics that commands responsibility for the other as stranger. I have examined some aspects of this through Ricoeur, by reference to fragility, suffering and an understanding of being that argues for a universalism founded in fundamental ontology. Historically, cosmopolitanism has addressed the problem of universalism in political and philosophical terms, but it is burdened by the Eurocentric character of the discourse of universalism, for example, as one encounters it in Kant and other key thinkers of the Enlightenment (see Venn, 2000, 2002). In his critique of this Eurocentric cosmopolitanism, Derrida (1997a) searches for a way beyond the "tired, worn-out, wearisome opposition between Eurocentrism and anti-Eurocentrism" (op. cit. 31), an opposition that is itself a symptom of "missionary and colonial cultures" (op.cit. 33,34) and, I would add, reproduces the model of appropriation-as-dispossession characteristic of colonialism. It does not recognize that counter-appropriations and transformations of cultures over the centuries make even European thought "hybrid, grafted, multilinear, polyglot" (op. cit. 33). Indeed, does there exist today a more heterogenous, hyphenated cultural space than the land of Palestine-Israel, that, from Roman times, has

seen the diasporic and messy admixture of cultures, peoples, beliefs, languages and scapes that makes a mockery of attempts to cleanse it of 'impurities' to create an originary authentic space of the chosen? Even today, Jewish immigration has resulted in the co-habitation of a multiplicity of eastern European languages and cultures, with Russian becoming a de facto third language in Israel (Anders, 2003). What unites this disparate collection may well be an experience of modernity in terms of the vocabularies that have emerged, for instance, in the discourse of universal human rights, or in the technologies and knowledges that world the world as modern. But that, as I have said, is not sufficient when it comes to the problem of breaking with the model of colonialism or that of occidentalism. Even the wish for a 'democracy to come', respectful of the fundamental principles founding international charters and guaranteeing basic freedoms and liberties (Derrida, 1997a: 40-42), must open towards another discourse beyond the political. Derrida advocates the recognition of different regimes of debt, thus, as I have indicated, an anamnesis guided by an ethics of responsibility for the other that grounds rights to asylum as much as the idea of an unconditional hospitality (Derrida, 1997b). This approach suggests the agenda of a secularized cosmopolitanism to come (Derrida, 1997b), divested of exploitative systems, opening towards a different project of becoming.

The exchange of memories, dialogical dialogues and the work of a non-forgetful forgiveness are part of this process, but the conditions for their possibility require the political will to challenge the forms of fundamentalisms, including neo-liberalism, that now occupy the spaces vacated by Enlightenment humanism. In this context, and following Santner (2001), I will make a distinction between the global and the universal, between, on the one hand, a cosmopolitanism of the right that wields the dogmatic tyranny of the neo-liberal 'end of history' to abolish alternative socialities, and, on the other hand, a cosmopolitanism of the left that imagines a future founded on the imperative of generosity and on universal respect for the (enigmatic) singularity of the other to whom I am answerable (Santner: 9). Such a new universalism is incompatible with any form of exploitation such as capitalism, racism, masculinism, or neo-feudalism. It is clear from my analysis that the possibility of dialogue is bound up with the destiny of a political project that aims to create the conditions for an Arendtian 'enlarged mentality', informed by the conviction that cultures are fundamentally plural and diasporic, and that the becoming humane of humanity is the only alternative to the coming barbarism.

Notes

1 The analysis in what follows owes a great deal to the fieldwork done by Anders Hansen in Israel between 2000 and 2002 and to the many discussions we have shared in trying to understand the possibility of dialogue and of a 'third space' of culture to break with the cycles of violence that afflict this

historic place. I am grateful to him for allowing me access to his important work.

2. I would go far as to say that human beings are characterised precisely by this fact that they invented stories, or rather narrative, as the form in which the events of a life and of a community can be figured and communicated and kept as a memory. I would claim, furthermore, that narrative is co-extensive with the emergence of consciousness and of language as a symbolic system, specifically with the elaboration of the complex signifying systems structured in terms of the communication of temporality that we have come to take for granted.]

3. The elaboration of this position, involves drawing a distinction between identity as sameness (*idem*) and identity as selfhood (*ipse*), that is to say, on the one hand, identity as something that remains identical to itself over time and, on the other hand, an entity that considers itself to remain the same being in spite of changes over time, for example, in a person's biographical history Ricoeur, 1988). Identity is not the sameness of a permanent, continuous, immutable, fixed entity; it is instead the mode of relating to being that can be characterised as selfhood. Self is not a fact or an event, it is not reducible to the facticity of things-in-themselves (or Heidegger's ready-to-hand). The identity of a person, or a group or a people, takes the form of stories told.]

4. But, one may ask, how do we choose them, how do we know which scripts apply to us? Is self-recognition the retroactive effect of a process of constitution, recalling in part the Althusserian concept of interpellation, and in part the process of (self)disciplining and normalisation that Foucault has described? Is narrative identity but a supplement to these other ways of accounting for the emergence of particular subjectivities?]

5. I should note the cultural specificity of this experience of phenomenal temporality is a matter that is too often neglected in Eurocentric (and logocentric) theorisations of time, as ethnographic studies have demonstrated for some time (See Peter Osborne, 1995).

6. See Venn 2000 for an elaboration

7. There are three correlated mimetic functions of narrative as described by Ricoeur. Mimesis 1 refers to the prenarrative, prefigurative features that express basic human desire; it describes a 'semantics of desire ' (1988: 248). We could understand the prefigurative, from the point of view of a particular subject's configuration of experience, to refer to the corpus of the already-known and the already-said, the stock of narrative understandings of the world and of subjects, inscripted in the lifeworld. Mimesis 2 arises from the creative process of the configuration of experience, the implication being that emplotment is not automatic or routine but involves the imagination in the selection and ordering of elements, linking the fictional dimension of the story to a domain of reality, so that the narrative refers to real events that can be verified through testimony. This mimetic function is constantly subject to

repeated rectifications that occur in the course of the subject's reflection on her life. For Ricoeur, narrative identity is the result of these rectifications, proceeding by way of the third mimetic function. Thus, the third mimetic relation relates back to the first by way of a transformative praxis applied to the second. (1988: 248). In this way, every narrative identity is a refigured identity involving the action of a *poiesis* which accomplishes the weaving of phenomenological and the cosmological dimensions of being, working the fictional into the historical narrative to constitute a 'third-time' (1988: 245). It is this identity which is refigured through the application of particular types of narratives existing in a culture. Thus, the self-reflective activity of the examined life performs a hermeneutic and critical function. The constant refiguration of identity, or its possibility, brings up the question of the kind of narrative, and hermeneutic practice, promoting such a process, so that narrative would allude to the 'name of a problem' (1988: 249).

8. The diachronic dimension in the process of subjective change is taken up in Ricoeur when he refers to the inscription of a notion of 'traditionality' located in the conceptual space bounded by the three-fold relation of mimesis. The concept of traditionality, irreducible to tradition, is used to try and account for the effectivity of history upon us, the way in which the past affects us independently of our will and the way we respond to the effect of history through an articulation of the past and the present. In that sense, traditionality can be understood as the term referring to the interweaving of two 'temporalizations of history' (Ricoeur,1988: 219) that cross each other, constituting particular identities at the points of intersection. A 'who' appears at that point of intersection where the history of a culture, sedimented and transmitted in its stock of knowledge, its sayings, parables, songs, myths, that is, the narratives and 'texts' that constitute and inscribe a 'structure of feeling', cross the history of a named subject, constituting a particular consciousness. This is the mechanism by which we are so to speak sutured in history.

9. There is, additionally, the effects of capitalisms on the lived aspects of religion and modernity, whether in conditioning modern forms of colonialism and imperialism, or in conditioning the emergence or appeal of particular sects and their interpretation of founding doctrines. I cannot address this range of issues here, though the formulation of a politics to come cannot ignore capitalism without distorting analysis.

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