

## DEMOCRACY AND IDENTITY

*Abstract: It might be that the crisis of democracy is crisis of thinking. Modern metaphysics affirms the monologue of the subject with respect to the problem of rationality, as well as in the social realm. It thus affirms liberal egoism. Such metaphysics structures modernity as a monologue. Thus the question arises: how to think the democracy within this monologue? Democracy appears to be a modern project impossible to achieve.*

*Keywords: Modernity, Democracy, Rationality, Monologue, Liberal Egoism.*

Cognitive certainty is found in Descartes' statement: "I think, therefore I am". Peculiarity of Cartesian affirmation becomes obvious once we analyze the following proposition – "I think, therefore I am not". According to Apel and Habermas, this statement is contradictory, not in semantic but in pragmatic sense. It is in contradiction with the conditions which make it possible, conditions constitutive of the performative part of speech acts.

Pragmatics of the communication of Apel and Habermas thematizes this Cartesian question not as a basis of certain metaphysics of subjectivity but rather as an investigation into conditions of meaning in general. These conditions are articulated by the pragmatic, performative dimension of speech acts. They are also implicit in every clear affirmation. In reference to the idea of transformation of the modern practical subjectivity Descartes will only say "I think, therefore I am" and not "I think, therefore you are" or "I think, therefore someone is". Modern certainty is certainty of the subject and not of the *others*. Modernity begins with affirmation of new identity, identity of the subject, metaphysics of the subject. This metaphysics affirms the monologue of the subject with respect to the problem of rationality, as well as in the social realm. It thus affirms liberal egoism. Such

metaphysics structures modernity as a monologue. Thus the question arises: how to think the democracy within this monologue?

However, the prospective might change in the context of certain radicalization of modern thinking. Thus Kant believes that even though Decartes affirms the subject he does not affirm it as a constitutive one. It is because Cartesian subject does not constitute anything – it only has to establish the conditions of the certainty of knowledge. We can argue that the strength of German idealism has been trapped within the question of how to be able to think constitutive subject. Hegel is also an exponent of this particular perspective.

However, Hegel asserts that even though Kant affirms constitutive subject, he still remains within the Cartesian relationship between subject and object he wants to criticize. Therefore Kantian subject, just as Cartesian, still remains outside of the object. Dignity of subject and of our reason are still not to be found in Kantian world. According to Hegel, Kant will make the same mistake speaking of our freedom. Kant limits freedom by locating it to our interior instead of the world itself. In that context, Hegel believes that he takes part in the political event – French Revolution – which will prove his idea that reason has already realized itself in the world. According to him Revolution had exposed the presence of reason in the world, and the world governed by the reason. Still, and least in this aspect, Hegel does not reach the point of doubting French Revolution as Marx will.

Hegel will discuss history – masters and slaves, and the idea of recognition. The model of recognition represents an important change within the modern thought, which had as its only alternative the model of self-preservation. However, since no recognition exists between masters and slaves, it is to be established by the history, and ultimately it will be realized exactly with the French Revolution. From the French Revolution stems the recognition of the human as such, recognition being based on natural presuppositions.

“Philosophy of Right” endeavors to reconstruct the path of the Modernity which starts with the affirmation of natural law, continues to affirm the constitutive subject in the Kantian morality, and finishes with concrete freedom realized within the discussion of ethics. “Philosophy of Right” reconstructs history. In spite of that, there still were to be found peoples without a history. In his lectures on the world

history, for example, Hegel speaks of the absence of history in Africa. Africans are still on the level of natural, sensual, and are unaware of spiritual. Hence Hegel defends their colonization – it is through colonization that Africans were acquainted with freedom. He continues with the argument that once colonized as European slaves, Africans will only grow mature. His discourse on Africa is not only an episode, but rather reflects a basic structure of his thought according to which concrete, particular has to be overcome in order to affirm the general structure of the spirit. Hence, the immediate life of Africans has to be mediated by Europeans, general has to win over the particular, implying its colonization by the general. In this context, we need not think only of Africans in Hegel's philosophy. We can take the example of women whom Hegel situates only in the place of natural, real, and family, and never in the civil society, where only men enter. Of course, this exclusion of women does not begin with Hegel. It is already present in the Greek philosophy and subsequently in the discourse of Christians. It is worthwhile remembering that there are no women in the Christian Holy Family. Accordingly, Hegel only grants continuity to this phalocentric history of Europe.

As we have seen, Hegelian philosophy is manifested as an affirmation of the colonial spirit. History is the place where the process of overcoming the particular and affirmation of general is taking place. It is the process of establishing domination of general over the particular. The issue here is the well known malevolence of the reason, which has realized itself in the history. Therefore, the history is the stage of the domination. In other words, the domination realized itself throughout the history. Having in mind already mentioned European motives, posted for the discussion by Hegel, we can argue that domination has European characteristics. And this argument can be confirmed historically. Globalization, which had started in Europe as a protestant movement, nowadays dominates the world. The world is always realization of one exclusive type of rationality, and this is what Hegel articulates in his idea of the identity between subject and object. The world is dominated by the subjective rationality, and in the historical context by the European rationality. The North-American world is nothing more than its consequence. Thinking in this direction, Hegel articulates the essence of the modern philosophy, which will ultimately correspond with the attempts to

affirm modern subjectivity up to its ultimate consequences. Therefore, domination and colonization of the world are the ultimate utterances of the Modernity, and it is precisely for this reason that we have to ask ourselves what price is to be paid if we are to become modern and enter the global world. Hence, neither the Cartesian presuppositions which opened the path of the Modernity, nor the Hegelian, which radicalized the former, articulate the possibility to think the democracy. Democracy appears to be a modern project impossible to achieve.

Let us see now whether the possibility to think democracy appears within the confrontation with the Modernity. Is it possible to alter the relationship between the being and the appearance? Is it possible to overcome its hierarchy? These are all grand questions of Husserl's phenomenology. It seems that only phenomenology can provide an adequate response, for its aim is to surpass the difference between the essence and the existence, between the being and the appearance. The being only appears – there are no other “privileged” places for it to be located. Thinking without essences – this is the great message of phenomenology. The world is not given but created. Possibility is more important than factual reality.

In her numerous discussions on politics, Hannah Arendt refers to this dimension of phenomenological discussion, and consequently helps us understand the historical importance of this radicalization of Cartesianism within Husserl's phenomenology. She acknowledges the fact that the platonic separation of being and appearance marks the historical path not only for the life of the Greeks, but for the subsequent civilization's path as well. De-valorization of the appearance and the affirmation of the being are the aspects of the turnover of the life of Greeks and Occidental Europe. With it begins the tyranny of reason and its standards over our lives. This is what Nietzsche diagnosed as the beginning of the nihilism in Europe. The structure of relationship between being and appearance which is already determined and therefore static, has catastrophic consequences for the thinking. Thinking becomes mere subsuming of appearances under the superior forms of being. In such an organized world we almost need not think anymore. Thinking does not alter the dominant structure of being. This impotence of thinking resulted in political catastrophes of the past century. Numerous crimes and al-

most none held responsible. The individual who does not think is an accomplice in crime – this is what Hannah Arendt has portrayed as the banality of evil. It is the consequence of this philosophic tradition which had almost mummified the structure of being and marginalized us. It might be that democracy requires other type of thinking. It might be that the crisis of democracy is crisis of thinking.

At the beginning of the Fifth and last meditation, Husserl tries to resolve the problem of solipsism which could appear in phenomenology. How can subjective acquire the same value as the objective? In order to resolve this problem Husserl will in his last meditation think not the existence of the objective world, but the existence of Others. In philosophy, Others will occur as a possibility to resolve the problem of solipsism, and not as a social reference. Hence, it is interesting that even though in his own account Husserl did confront the profound crisis of our culture, he did not draw any motive from social theory.

How did Others appear in phenomenology? Or better said, how did the Others come out into the light at the time when philosophy reacted as a radical criticism of culture, and articulated itself as an alternative to traditional essentialist thinking? To think the Others, the community, including democracy outside of metaphysics – these can be alternatives that phenomenology had opened. However, this did not happen, precisely for the reason that experience of Other remains related to our consciousness. I can think the other exclusively as analogous to my conscience. There exists no experience of the other besides the one of my conscience. The subject is the basis of thinking the others. It is for this reason that Merleau-Ponty will lead phenomenology to the path where bodies appear, where a pre-reflexive encounter with the Others is articulated.<sup>1</sup> However, it is impossible to think the inter-subjectivity with reflection. Contrary to this, Husserl will defend the possibility of resolving the problem of solipsism with the new reflection. It is because of the structure of conscience which reveals not only transcendental *ego* but inter-subjectivity as well, two essential structures of phenomenology. The Others can be the guard against solipsism. At the same time, the Others are the sign that the philosophy cannot realize the project of pure

---

<sup>1</sup> In relation to discussing the question of body, we can think of differences among Merleau-Ponty, Foucault and Arendt

subjectivism. However, Husserl did not articulate these consequences as an argument.

The problem appears to be even more complex for Husserl did not bring the discussion to an end. It is because the ultimate effort of phenomenology was not authentication of inter-subjectivity but articulation of perspectives of new humanism. No doubts we are in the state of profound crises. We have forgotten our life, the source of the meaning, and reduced our conscience. We follow the path of reified thinking.

Together with science we think of what is and not of what could be. We relinquished the possibility to think alternatives. Our thinking is nothing more than the pure repetition of the same. It is for this reason that we need to revisit the philosophy and the question of spiritual in our lives. Up to this point we could agree with phenomenological critique. Still, as Husserl argues, the crisis of European culture has two possible ways out. The first one is barbarism and an animosity towards the spirit. The second one is the return to spiritual presumptions of Europe.

The human mission of the Occident is the return to spirit and to its immortality. In other words, Husserl is saying that changes in Europe are the only precondition of the new humanism. As follows, China and India are reduced to examples of an empirical anthropologism,<sup>2</sup> and Husserl does not grant them any potent spiritual reference. The spirit is associated only with Europe and not with China or India. Brazil is not even mentioned by Husserl. The apparent issue here is the return to bare Eurocentrism, which we also find in Hegel. Our uncertainties about phenomenology can be concretized as follows: Is it possible to think new humanism with philosophy still tied to subject, and particularly European subject? In spite of his confrontation with essentialism in philosophy Husserl will ultimately reaffirm it. I believe that new humanism should scrutinize essentialism up to its final consequences, and in the place of the subject, the very place of this modern form of identity, think *difference*. Thus, the new humanism can be *thinking of difference*.

Let us now explore whether the overcoming of subject and affirmation of difference can be found in Habermasian idea of

---

<sup>2</sup> Compare, Husserl, E., *Die Krisis europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Gessamelte Schriften*, Hamburg, 1992, p. 14

inter-subjectivity and deliberative democracy. It offers us another possibility to confront modernity.

Habermas will affirm that all speech acts possess double structure. On one hand they have a propositional component, and on the other they have conditions of affirmation of proposition. In their own capacity these conditions are related to the existence of the community of communication, real and ideal. We cannot avoid this dimension and Apel will search within it for new transcendental basis for the philosophy. Here, the issue is the argument which searches for new forms of certainty which would be accepted even by skeptics. Even skeptics have to argue in order to criticize the argumentation. In this sense, the conditions of argumentation cannot be overcome.

Therefore it appears as though searching for fundamentals makes sense. This is exactly modern attempt of the return to reason. Only modernity has not yet reached an answer, for it is still a project. However, at least we have one direction available. Certainty is not anymore semantic and subjective, but pragmatic and inter-subjective. Its pragmatic dimension divulges the presence of community, inter-subjectivity. Habermas is still modern, but the change of paradigm has already occurred. At the place of subjectivity we have inter-subjectivity. In addition to the relationship between subject and object we now have an inter-subjective relationship as a basis of rationality. Thus inter-subjectivity becomes a basis of the rational society. In this context Habermas will also raise the question of social legitimacy. Legitimacy is related to the conditions of acknowledgement of a certain social system. If a society is a result of particular strategies it means that it has not yet attained its own rationality. Habermas believes that nowadays the question of rationality of society is not linked to the working class, but to possibilities of collective decisions. Questions of ethics and politics are linked to possibility of universalisation of norms. Only these norms which can be universal are valid.<sup>3</sup>

What are then motives for reconstruction of social theory, social critique and critique of capitalism, starting from the possibilities offered by linguistics? Does capitalism have a language? Does it

---

<sup>3</sup> Habermas, J., *Moralbewußtsein und kommunikatives Handeln*, Frankfurt, 1983.

have linguistic structure? Does it have a semiotic form?<sup>4</sup> Habermas also might say that capitalism is certain linguistic structure which determines conditions of reason, freedom, etc. As such, capitalism is but a semantic structure which does not articulate pragmatic possibilities. Better said, capitalism is practical world, where numerous things occur. It is not a pragmatic world which opens possibilities for affirmation of communication, democracy, and solidarity, all based on inter-subjectivity. Theory of Habermas is Marxist perspective which articulates the grounds from which a critique of capitalistic positivism can be articulated.

Thus, we can almost articulate Hegelian critique of capitalism only if we recognize that contrary to what capitalism suggests the satisfaction of desire is not linked to world of objects. For capitalism, the market is the place of satisfaction of desires, and for that reason the market always has to remain in function. On one hand market stimulates desires, and on the other, never lets them satisfied. Ultimately it will reach the point of the impossibility of satisfaction of desires. Contrary to this, Hegel will argue that the satisfaction of desires is not linked to the objective, natural world, but to social, inter-subjective one. It is precisely this idea of inter-subjectivity which will later on be embraced by Habermas as a strong argument in confrontation with Modernity.

The eventual change of capitalism has to be followed by the change of the existing paradigm. Thus, the inter-subjectivity becomes the reference point for the question of fundamentals. The problem here is the project of modernity which remains to be only a project. Habermas' vision of modernity is not very much pessimistic for the *reason* still remains to be a possibility. The point characteristic of the modernity, argues Habermas, is transfer of legitimate power to the reflexive level of justification. However, having in mind the great phenomenological motive, instead of thinking the system, Habermas returns to the world of life with which he associates with unsuppressed communication. Liberation of the world of life from the colonization by the system<sup>5</sup>, liberation of communication and of

---

<sup>4</sup> Cf. The reconstruction of capitalism in this sense is done by Baudrillard in: Baudrillard, J., *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Rio de Janeiro, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Habermas, J., *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, II, Frankfurt, 1982, p. 461

critical opinion/perspective and opening of possibilities for alternative are the pleas that Habermas puts forward.

The aim/issue is to return to the action, to human beings as actors in their own history. The universal pragmatic of Habermas demonstrates the possibility to think the theory of rationality outside of the system. In his recent works Habermas argues that the institutionalization of forms of communication opens possibility for articulation of the self-reflexive society which will thus be capable to re-think the conditions of its own constitution and will ultimately confront with ideology.

Thinking the auto-reflexive society brings us to realization of the project of permanent revolution and realization of the permanent critique of society. This is what communist systems completely forgot. To the contrary, communism transformed the life into a new form of static, new form of identity. Communism only followed an old path of metaphysics. Communism without metaphysics might come to be a project for the future.

With regards to the German culture Habermas appears to change the perspective of his arguments. Habermas thinks the affirmation of presumptions of German culture as he was an American in Germany. The idea of the philosophy of communication is precisely the mediation between the community of particular and real communication and ideal conditions of communication which are accepted as regulative idea for all the discourses in which we are engaged. There are two consequences of this. Firstly, the rules of the ideal community of communication are new forms of obligation. Once again the being has to overcome its own limits. In this sense, it appears as if Habermas begins as an American philosopher in Germany and ends as a good, almost as a good Hegelian, German philosopher. The intention of the philosophy of communication is to overcome the metaphysics, including Hegelian. However, it seems that philosophy of communication follows some of the aspects of modern metaphysics. In this case, the difference between the obligation and being establishes the primacy of obligation, obligation to attain conditions of ideal community of communication.

The issue is to discuss the possibility to think particular in ethical structures, or, as it appears, whether ethical motives are always related to the elaboration of norms, which are general struc-

tures of our practical behavior. This issue of the loss of particular within the philosophy of communication provoked many doubts, especially in Latin America. The question is how to apply the ethics of communication, ethics of discourse, in the specific context of Latin America.<sup>6</sup>

Habermas wants to overcome Hegelian model established by the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, within which the asymmetry in social relations in the history of masters and slaves creates possibilities of the history and constitution of the specifically human world. Instead of Hegelian asymmetry Habermas proposes symmetry of social relations. However, this symmetry which appears to open space for numerous interlocutors, including Latin America, also limits the conditions of communication. The *Other* is articulated as *I*. Thus Habermas engrains the idea of social symmetry which can also be understood as a regulative idea for constitution of the new rational society of the future and therefore the termination of the project of modernity. I believe this to be an important aspect of Habermas' position. But his symmetry presumes new general forms of obligation which are not articulated as particularism of the *other*. The individual has to be overcome by the new forms of general forms of ideal communication, and therefore uphold open the question of whether the *other*, the particular, is a constitutive interlocutor. Several authors derived from this the question whether ultimately everybody should accept new conditions of modern, European rationality.<sup>7</sup> The Other is as I? Can it be that ethics, within this perspective of the philosophy of communication, is able to determine the *other* as I? How can we think the *others* in the discussion on the land reform in Brazil, for example? Is discursive solution between latifundiarios and landless people possible? I remember the destruction of Yugoslavia taking place while the Europe was searching for consensual solution for what was going on there.

---

<sup>6</sup> C.f. Sidekum, A., (org.) *Ética do discurso e filosofia da libertação*, São Leopoldo, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Thielen, H., *Ética e experiência*, in: Siedekum, A., *ibid*, p. 209. Other issues mentioned in this book are for example whether the defence of the real community of communication can be articulated as an apology of the existing social system, and whether ethics of discourse marginalizes its own position in the society by affirming again the idea of the constitutive subject in the form of inter-subjectivity precisely because the system marginalizes the subjects.

It looks like philosophy, throughout its whole history, has been doing a profound injustice articulating numerous forms of the Same and overlooking the Other. How to articulate the *Other*? We can think of the symmetric relation between the Same and the Other, still the doubt remains whether this affirms the authentic position of the *others*. Second alternative may be the asymmetric position in favor of the Same. This is exactly what philosophy has been favoring until today. Third alternative may be an asymmetry in favor of the Other.<sup>8</sup> This is the perspective of Lévinas.

To elaborate it Lévinas departs from confrontation with Husserl and Heidegger. The historical importance of phenomenology is in that it identified the being and the appearance and liberated philosophy from dominant structures. The consciousness is an act and not a thing (*res cogitans*). To think is simply to exist, and in this case, Lévinas will affirm phenomenology as a philosophy of freedom.<sup>9</sup> Intentional acts constitute practical and in this context Sartre will affirm the idea of freedom. It is the path that Hannah Arendt will follow searching for new possibilities to think politics outside the world of essences. However, Husserl remains in Modernity, in the relationship between constitutive subject and object. The *Other* is thought of only in an analogy to the Same.

The critique of Lévinas follows Heidegger's critique of Husserl. Still, in the philosophy of Heidegger, Lévinas does not find the possibility to affirm the Other. Existential structure of *being* remains closed within its own world – the possibility of inter-subjectivity becomes a “promise” Heidegger will never elaborate on. In the end, the being remains alone. Ethics and philosophy do not appear in philosophy of Heidegger, His is not philosophy of Others, emigrants. What determines position of Heidegger is certain form of egoism, maybe an European one. For Heidegger Europe and Occident are still the most important. There is still geopolitics in his philosophy.<sup>10</sup> The hermeneutical structure of being also reveals this aspect. In all the acts of comprehension we have to presume our existence. Thus, com-

---

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Discussion in: “Les nouvelles morales”, *Magazine littéraire*, 361, 1998, p. 32

<sup>9</sup> Lévinas, E., *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger*, Paris, 1974, p. 49

<sup>10</sup> Compare, Lévinas, E., *Entre nous*, Paris, 1991

prehension is always a self-comprehension. Heidegger wants to destroy the idea of subject, but the idea of the Other still depends on subject, and conditions of its comprehension.<sup>11</sup>

The ontological difference between the thing and the being has to be overcome precisely with ethical structures which one does not find in Heidegger.<sup>12</sup> This is the point in which Lévinas radicalizes the idea of Heideggerian destruction of metaphysical tradition. What institutes the philosophy is the *Other*, the *difference*. Only the Other can be different. The Other does not emerge as an appearance of the consciousness. The consciousness affirms only the subject, the Same, and cannot be the place of the affirmation of the Other. It is for this reason, as I will point once again, that M. Merleau-Ponty transforms phenomenology into an affirmation of the body. In Lévinas' discussion on face, again emerges this corporality, the fragility of the Other. The face opens to us the defenseless nakedness of the Other, its misery, its mortality.

To Lévinas this implies that nowadays ethics cannot be elaborated with an idea of the reason, but with the idea of the sensibility. Ethics is a new sensibility for the *others*. Subjectivity is based on this heteronomy. This is an anti-Kantian context, because the basis of the ethics is not in the autonomy of the reason, but in the heteronomy, this fundamental responsibility for the others. This is also an anti-Habermasian context because the Other is the precondition of the communication. The language only exists and we only need it in case the Other exists. The essence of the language is in its hospitality in its relation with the other.

Politics comes from the Other, from the stranger. The relationship with the other is the justice, the society. Historically, philosophical injustice had political consequences. Wars are always negation of others. The Others were almost always enemies. Enemies are those who thus justify politics of the State. To be without enemies today for some states means, including USA, to be without politics.

---

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Discussion on the hermeneutical circle in: *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen, 1976, p. 202

<sup>12</sup> It is for this reason that J.L. Marion uses ontological indifference for the ontological difference Marion, J.L., *Note sur l'indifférence ontologique*, in: Greisch, J., Rolland, J., *Émanuel Lévinas. L'Éthique comme philosophie première*, Paris, 1993, pp. 47-63

According to Lévinas, politics affirms the difference. In this sense, the difference is the sign of a new democracy. The basis of presupposition of the democracy is not identity, but rather its deconstruction. The presupposition of democracy is the difference. It is the question of political equality based on this ethical inequality as in the case of Lévinas. The meaning of politics is not therefore the affirmation of the identity. On the contrary, the meaning of politics is to question identity. With identity nothing new in the world could have happened. With identity, the world could not have been the world of freedom, but the world of reproduction in the capitalist sense. The objective of capitalism is not production, creation of new, but only reproduction. It is for this reason that we have many machines and technologies in capitalism. The only thing machines can do is re-production of the logic of capitalism.<sup>13</sup>

I believe that the affirmation of difference implies that philosophy will not be understood as a new form of autism. After the monologue of the modern subject it appears that nowadays we have a monologue of the post-modern individual. By affirming the *difference* philosophy helps us think something new. It helps us leave the desert of the metaphysical thinking where dominant structures repeat themselves and nothing new appears. There is nothing new in history, as Hegel's words remind us. New Hegelians on the right will tell us that there is also nothing new in the social. The only thing we have is a reproduction of capitalism.

Within this confrontation with metaphysics, the hero of philosophy, for example for Derrida shall not be Zarathustra or some other form of the esthetical resistance, which Foucault and Baudrillard are still searching for, but Abraham and Judaic tradition.<sup>14</sup> Jews are the *others* whom Christianity does not accept. Thus anti-semitism begins within the Christianity. Following this line of thought Hegel will argue that Jews have nothing of the spiritual and do not accept the infinity. They know nothing of this speculative structure of thinking, this history in which father transforms in son and thus guards prior spirituality. The objective morality (*Sittlichkeit*) of the *Philosophy of Right* begins with the idea of the love of the Christian

---

<sup>13</sup> Comp. Blanchot, M., *Lámitié*, Paris, 1974, p. 54

<sup>14</sup> For example, Derrida, J., *Donner la mort*, em: Rabaté, J.M., *L'éthique du don*, Paris, 1992, pp. 11-109

family. In the name of love Hegel demonstrates hatred of Jews. In this sense, conditions for Hitler's final solution have already been prepared by the European tradition. Clearly, the difference is not a different identity. It is not Jews who nowadays exclude Palestinians. The difference means acceptance of difference.

Today, the system isolates, atomizes individual. Therefore, it is important to think new forms of communication. But the system also negates the individual. Capitalism begins to develop general forms. In economy, for example, the values of concrete and qualitative usage are changed for values of general and quantitative exchange. What emerges in philosophy is the general subject and not the individual. Therefore the difference is but a form of critique. Critical argument is the affirmation of the individual in the light of the idea of difference and not in the liberal, egoist sense. The virtue of this discussion on philosophy, democracy and social is that it forwards two important issues. The first one is thinking the auto-reflexive community. Thinking the auto-reflexive community enables us to confront new forms of ideology. This is what Habermas is doing. But on the other hand philosophy also needs sensibility for the different. If not, it will only repeat identical forms that already exist and therefore will close the possibilities for new, spontaneous and authentic in history. This is the project of Derrida. I hope that the dialogue between these two positions, in which according to Gadamer no one has the last word, will be possible. It is in this manner that the project, which is articulated in the philosophical works of Habermasian and Derridian orientation, might ultimately become *a new auto-reflexive community of difference*, a community, a democracy which might come.

Miroslav Milović

## DEMOKRATIJA I IDENTITET

*Sažetak*

Kriza demokratije mogla bi biti kriza mišljenja. Moderna metafizika afirmiše monolog subjekta u vezi sa problemom racionalnosti isto kao i sa socijalnim područjem. Odatle sledi liberalni egoizam. Takva metafizika strukturise modernost kao monolog. Iz toga proizlazi pitanje: kako promišljati demokratiju unutar takvog monologa? Izgleda da je demokratija jedan za ostvarenje nemogući moderni projekat.

*Gljučne reči:* modernost, demokratija, racionalnost, monolog, liberalni egoizam.