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Self & Others

the Individual, Family, and Culture

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Self & Others

Emmanuel Lévinas:

the other (alterity) comes before the self (subjectivity)

rejecting the self-centered western philosophy (being, man) and its resulting violence (self-proclaimed sovereignty)

other self

relationships — individualities

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new approach
self and others (non-violent)

pwemomenokogical method
(reaching the original experience)

Self & Others

- 1. the primacy of the other over the self (following this inversion of the most traditional and common perspective) which calls for a reflection upon the evolution of the philosophical perspective on the self and the other;
- 2. one's identity as relation (pursuing and extending the shift on the dominant trend);
- 3. the ethos of relation (recovering the most original meaning of ethics as the place one belongs) in the home, restoring its specificity and uniqueness.

www.mpatfcheveome would, then, beather birth place of "non-violent relationships"

- 1. We see reality (self, others, world, God) through our eyes as if the "I" was the beginning of everything www.mpatraonevindeed, subjectivity cannot be eliminated
- 2. Western philosophy has an ontological-anthropological tradition:
 - www.mancient Greek philosophy (the anthropological shift with Socrates)
 - Middle Ages (ontological hierarchy of beings)
 - www.m.Mcdernity (Descartes's cogitat) aoneves.pt
 - Contemporaneity (Kant's Copernican revolution)

The self-sovereignty is denied:

- -(theoretically) the authority of some implies the washing ation of others www.mpatraoneves.pt
- -(practically) when the self arrives to the world the other was already there

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This truism requires the redefinition of the self and the other www.mpatraoneves.pt www.mpatraoneves.pt

Lévinas:

the self arrives after the other who makes it be

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depends on the other is subjected

elects the self chooses the self

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- subjectivity is "being-for-the-other" (I → self)

- the other is a "you", the other human being www.mpatraoniseap "he-ness", illeity, Thininite

The face-to-face encounter is an intrigue of three:

- "Illeity", the absolute other, a trace of transcendence
- "you", the other man, my brother
- "I" who, constituting before the other, is a "self"

true alterity (alter)

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alter-ego

different from the self sameness of the other

The "ego" period

Extends from Antiquity to Contemporaneity as an effort centered in the definition of the "I" as an individual (disregarding a separate definition of the other) either:

- as substance (ontological approach / from Ancient Greece to Middle Ages)
 - in its distinctiveness from all the other beings and in its sameness with all other human beings
- as conscientiousness (theory of knowledge approach / www.mpatraoneves.pt www.mpatraoneves.pt
 - in its uniqueness, regardless of the other

From the "ego" to the "alter-ego" period

consciousness

- -(philosophy of consciousness) is interiority (inner life) and the individual is defined according to a www.mpatraoneves.pt self-consciousness as subjectivity
- (phenomenology) intentionality (movement of wwtranscendence to the world) at and esthe individual perceives himself and the other as subjectivities

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Merleau-Ponty

The primitive experience of consciousness (perception) gives the subjectivity the unity of:

- self/world, in its coexistence
- consciousness/body, a "own body" www.mpatraoneves.pt
- self/other, an inter-subjective subjectivity

Sartre

There are two kinds of being:

- -"in-itself", plenitude of being, self-identical, facticity
- "for-itself", consciousness, non-self-identical, www.mpatraoneves.pt transcendence

www.for-tothers²³, subjectivity entails the other

The "alter-ego" period

- consciousness is inter-subjective
- the other is irreducible to the I
- -the other (you) is subjectivity, at a self-conscious being (sameness)

Phenomenology:

- **states raothes pirreducibility of subjectivity and intersubjectivity (none can be isolated from the other, although the other is the same as the self, an "alter-ego");
- reflects upon the self and the other within an ontological wwwframework pt(either a phenomenological ptontology or an existential ontology), which definition does not allow a relation between them.

1.2. Self & other: inter-subjectivity to alterity

From the "alter-ego" to the "alterity" period

The different ways the self and the other were understood throughout history did not suppress the violence of the selfproclaimed sovereignty of the individual,

Instead, to the sovereignty of the "I" (ego) it added another sovereign "I", a "you" (alter-ego). A dualism of subjectivities could favor the establishment of relationships; but, being both subjectivities sovereign, the relationships will tend to be violent.

A further development of the phenomenological method and its new redefinition of consciousness will pave the way from inter-subjectivity (alter-ego) to alterity (alter), that is, from the statement of the other as other-self to the other as other in itself.

1.2. Self & other: inter-subjectivity to alterity

The "alterity" period

Within hermeneutical phenomenology, the access to the original meaning is mediated by language; in turn, this calls for interpretation (it leads to a reconstruction of the meaning).

Paul Ricoeur

Narrative and personal identity are always a self-appropriation of subjectivity, mediated through the world (natural and cultural):

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- subjectivity is no longer a "I" (cogito) but a "self" (integrating the other);
- the other is no longer another subjectivity but otherness,

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- alterity becomes constituent of the identity of the self.

The definition of the self and of the other inevitably influences the relationship between both.

"Ego" or subjectivity:

- as substance, as an ontological entity, in its universalizing and individualizing substance, the relationship with the other was viewed by its relation with Nature and later by its relation with God, and never by a direct relation to itself (depending on heterogeneous relationships and not considered an individual);
- as self-consciousness, the human being started to view itself www.mpatraoneves.pt in a direct or immediate way and as an individual, that is, different, separated from all other beings.

"Alter-ego" or inter-subjectivity:

the other became indeed indispensable to the definition and self-understanding of subjectivity and we could expect an improvement on human relationships. This was not the case.

The perception of the other as an other "I" (ego), an "alter-ego", like an own projection, recognizes the other's existence but does not establish a relationship with it.

Merleau-Ponty es.p

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- Subjectivity is constituted within inter-subjective relations which are anonymous

Sartre

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- The other is condition for the existence of the self but also a threat; therefore, the self remains in a solipsism.

"Alterity" or otherness:

The other as otherness is crucial to overcome the anonymity of the other, the solipsism of the self, and the conflict between both (to a philosophical foundation of peaceful relationships).

Ricoeur

- the primacy of the other-than-self (not as an ontological being www.butaasaraneethical category), overathe self, establishes an unbalanced relationship.

Lévinas

- the relation is prior to individuality, and this one constitutes

****itself within a relationship, being submissive and exposure

to the other in a severely asymmetrical relationship.

The acknowledgment of the other, of its presence in the constitutive process of the self (subjectivity), is important for the establishment of human relationships, but there is still a need to guarantee that this relation is non-violent, which should be achieved by building balanced, symmetrical, reciprocal relationships.

Renefiting from the philosophical contributions on the self and the other, and on the requirements for an ethical relationship, we can now demonstrate (still in a Lévinasian framework), how the ethos of relation is situated in the homematimum and every days spaces in which human relations are born; and a new ethical category.

3. The ethos of relation: home

Relationships between the self and the other demand that subjectivity constitutes itself with the authentic other, and that their relation can only be non-violent if grounded on ethics.

Home is the original place where the self, who arrives late, encounters the other, who arrives early; where the original ethical relation within the self constitutes itself takes place.

Wome is the ethos of the relation self-& other

3. The ethos of relation: home

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Lévinas

Home as two facades:

street front (outside) ———— secrecy (inner side)

buidilng (objective world) ———— real home (rootless)

self/world: the self takes shelter, empirically, from the natural world

with himself/herself and opens to transcendence

habitation

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dwelling www.mpatraoneves.pt

3. The ethos of relation: home

Home assumes an ethical dimension as the intimacy of one's self recollection from the natural world (horizontally) and original site of openness to the other (you, horizontally; illeity, vertically), a junction of self/world and self/other relations.

Therefore, home is the ethos of relation

- a relation which is prior to the self & others
- a other that is (alterity and not an "alter-ego") a ethical category and is prior to the self
- a self who is self-appropriation (and not an "ego" or www.mpatraoneves.pt www.mpatraoneves.pt
- a non-violent relation or ethics, that takes place at home

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Thank you

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