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Rectificaties

In Splijtstof 49-4 staan helaas twee fouten. De naam van de auteur van het artikel "What happens when someone's unhappiness threatens another's joy?" is Sıla Kurşun, niet Sila Kurşun, zoals in 49-4 geschreven. Ook wordt in de inhoudsopgave van 49-4 vermeld dat de auteur van het artikel "Is It Justified to Evaluate FGM Categorically Different from MC?" Lea Jule Ritterfeld is, dit moet Leah Jule Ritterfeld zijn. Onze oprechte excuses.

Illustratieverantwoording

De illustraties in deze editie zijn gemaakt door Kirsten Shuttleworth.

Inhoudsopgave

Rubrieken

Podium

Forum

Editorial

Dear Reader,

To be honest with you, I have struggled with writing this editorial for two reasons. Firstly, it is my very first editorial that I have been writing since I have become the new editor-in-chief at *Splijtstof*. Secondly, this edition includes a few articles that I hold very dear to my heart – social safety.

Since social safety is an issue that affects people personally, let me first introduce myself. My name is Mireille Kouevi, and I am currently an international master's student from Germany, following the *Philosophy, Politics and Society* track. Similar to my philosophy, my goals are impulsive and have a tendency to be born out of struggle. To give you an example of what I mean by that, I will tell you how I ended up studying abroad in the Netherlands. What initially motivated me to study abroad and obtain my bachelor- and master's degrees abroad, was based on an impulsive decision and one conversation with a representative of the Radboud University at a university fair in my hometown Hamburg. Although I talked to several representatives that I scheduled an appointment with to talk about the philosophy track of their university, the results of those conversations were quite discouraging. Although the representatives were students themselves, they seemed to be highly dissociated from the social aspects of their university, which was one of the issues that I did not want to face during my study. I often heard from friends that were already studying around that time, how they felt like "just a number" in the system, and that the power dynamic between students and lecturers was extremely present in day-to-day interactions. This experience was pretty discouraging to them. They advised me to make sure that whatever university I decided to start studying at in the future, is a university that advocates for the importance of a positive study and work environment, and in which social safety is one of their main concerns. Social safety, in this context, thus referred to the importance of creating and maintaining friendly social bonds based on equality and respect, in order to let open discussion between students and lecturers and the institution and its staff flourish. Social safety is an issue that concerns everyone within a designated environment regardless of their status or rank within its system.

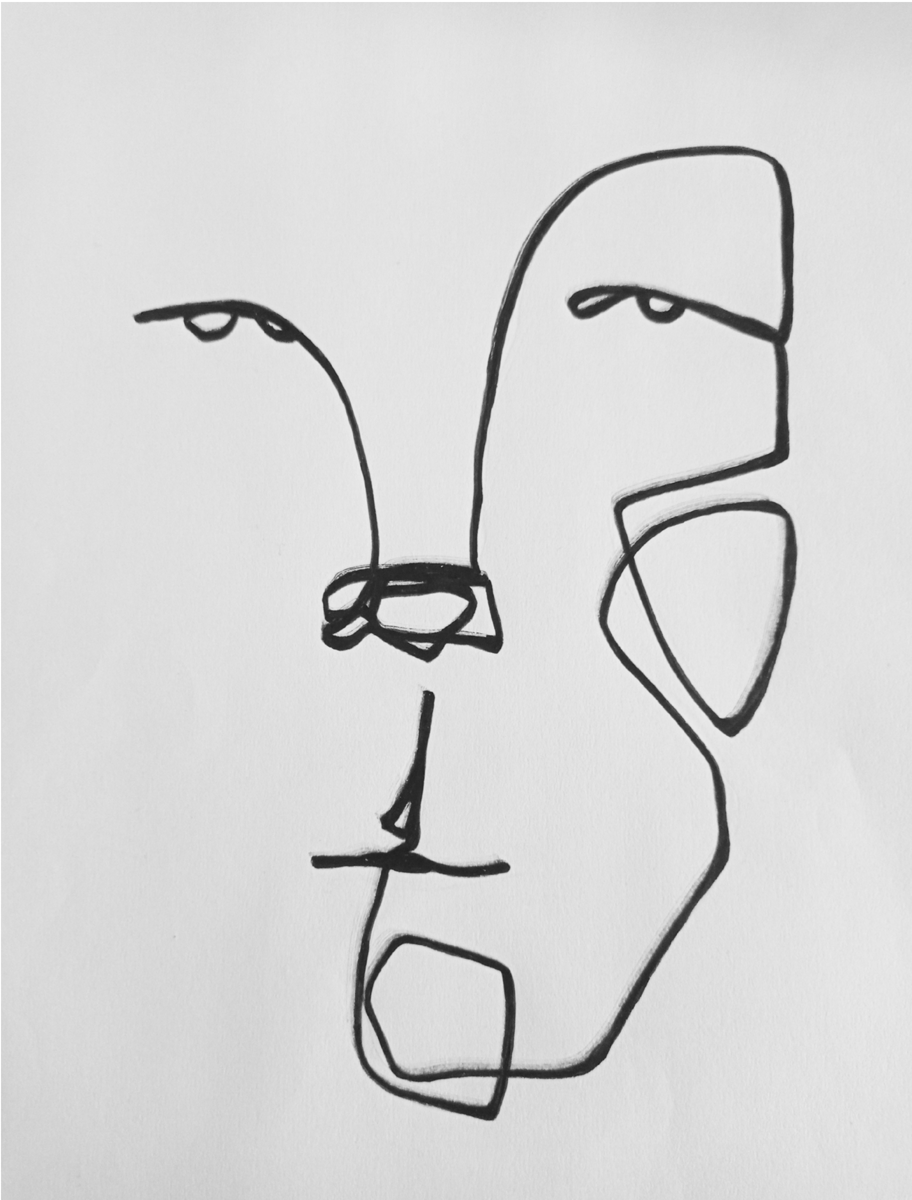
My last conversation at the fair was with the representative of Radboud University, and I was already pretty discouraged based on the outcome of the other interviews. The representative was pretty upfront about the fact that they could not tell me much about the philosophy track. Nonetheless the representative could provide me with information about the university itself and the overall atmosphere. I expressed that one of the most important factors to decide for the right university was the overall atmosphere of the university, so I was pretty stocked about the fact that they had some information on that topic for me. The representative's information was quite helpful and positive, and I was excited to give Radboud University a shot. This person also advised me to participate at the open day, to see whether the university would be able to cater to my needs for a socially safe campus. To be honest, I already made up my mind and I knew that very moment that this was the university for me. In retrospect, my impulsivity might be not the most sophisticated way of making such a life-impacting decision, but I am glad that this decision I made on a whim has worked out wonderfully.

Weirdly, the decisions that I made based on impulse are the ones that proved themselves to be one of my better decisions. For instance, joining *Splijtstof* and the editorial team is another excellent example of such an impulsive decision. I joined *Splijtstof* out of frustration with the institutional structures of the university which pretty much turned into anger, and I knew if I wanted to get rid of or at least find an outlet for these feelings, I would have to do something. This was before the Social Safety Club came into existence. I needed a platform where I could express my frustration with the institutional practices of academia that has failed to take into consideration many people, not only me feeling unseen and our experiences. My experience as a black woman in academia has not always been a fun one. However, my lecturers and the people in "higher positions" tried their best to either help me out with my issues, or support me during difficult moments I was experiencing at that time, which always resulted in the same frustration. Because it felt like they did not hear *me*. Maybe it was the fact that they could not relate to my experience of being a black woman in our faculty, which predominantly consists of white men. What *I* needed was an open ear that would listen, instead of trying to provide answers and find a solution to a problem (that they were unable to fully understand in the first place). I knew that I was not alone in this frustration, based on the countless stories of social discomfort that my friends and other students experienced. From there on, I knew that I do not just want to create a platform for myself, but one that is open for the experiences of others and willing to share these with everyone else.

The need to create this platform for everyone that feels excluded or unseen by the institutional practices became my ultimate motivation to sign up for the editor-in-chief position. With the help of Janneke and the people on the editorial board of *Splijtstof*, my goal is to create a platform in which predominantly students can get their word out in the world.

So, with not much left to say, I am happy to announce this edition and hope you will enjoy this brand new edition of Splijtstof!

Mireille Kouevi
Editor-in-chief



Tarkovsky's Andrei Rublëv: A Dostoevskian Hero

Sidney de Laat

Introduction

Few literary writers have left their mark on the realm of thought and art as fiercely as Fyodor Dostoevsky, whose novels and stories have brought forth – with an incredible pathos and novelty – questions that are seared into the *condition humaine*. Dostoevsky's feat to give flesh and blood to various philosophical, psychological and theological debates has enticed poets, philosophers, theologians, artists and *film directors*. The ideas presented in books such as *The Idiot*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Demons* and *The Brothers Karamazov* have been of an enduring value, as they continue to echo in the works of many thinkers.

Among those who stand on the shoulders of this gambling, bearded, Russian giant is the great Andrei Tarkovsky, a giant in his own right in the field of cinema. Although living a century apart from Dostoevsky, Tarkovsky has proven himself to be a faithful disciple of Dostoevsky by touching upon the same subjects and debates as Dostoevsky, and by craftily imbuing his films with considerable philosophical depth. This is evident in films such as *Stalker, Solaris* and, as the focus of this essay, *Andrei Rublëv. Andrei Rublëv*, a fictionalized epic based on the famous Russian icon painter, is of particular interest, because in this film, I argue, Tarkovsky weaves Dostoevsky's religious views – as espoused in *The Brothers Karamazov* – into the narrative fabric of Andrei's life's journey.

And thus I have set out the goal of this brief essay: to argue that the titular character of Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublëv* represents key facets of Dostoevsky's religious views. However, it must be noted that my argument is based on a *specific* interpretation of Dostoevsky's religious views. There are, of course, various interpretations of various facets of Dostoevsky's thought, but I aim to make use of the interpretation given by Igor' Evlampiev, a noted scholar on Russian thought.

To achieve this goal, I have divided this essay in two parts. Firstly, I will present Evlampiev's interpretation of Dostoevsky's religious views, and thereby lay the foundation for an investigation of the story of *Andrei Rublëv* itself. Secondly, I will sketch out the plot of *Andrei Rublëv*, focusing on the scenes that are relevant to my argument, and view them via the aforementioned interpretation of Dostoevsky. I conclude with some general remarks.

I am of the belief that viewing the story of *Andrei Rublëv* through such a lens may reveal the depth of Andrei's spiritual odyssey and provide a greater understanding of the religious background at play in the film. And, because our enjoyment of art increases with our understanding of it, I hope it may contribute to a greater appreciation of Tarkovsky's masterpiece. At the same time I must emphasize that I have no pretentions of having discovered the 'true' interpretation to one of Tarkovsky's works, but rather of having found a fruitful way to engage with a work of art.

Dostoevsky and Religion

Before we turn to Tarkovsky, Evlampiev's interpretation of Dostoevsky must be understood. Although there are various elements to this interpretation, I focus on those that are relevant to my argument. Key is the idea of joy. Here, joy is understood as an experience of 'mystical plenitude'. That is, the attainment of an absolute completeness of existence, a 'fullness' of life. This joy is the foundation of our Being and gives us a feeling of 'oneness' with the entirety of the universe. As noted above, joy is a *mystical* sensation: it is about a merger with the divine, and as such cannot be grasped *intellectually*. It is about the way we relate to God. It should be evident that the 'flavour' of Christianity Dostoevsky is propagating is mystical Christianity.[1]

The other type of Christianity is Orthodox Christianity, the Christianity that is recognized throughout history and that is represented by the (Orthodox) Church. This 'traditional' and 'Orthodox' view of Christianity conceives humanity as sinful and imperfect. As such, humans are barred from truly unifying with God on earth. Mystical Christianity, the Christianity advocated by Dostoevsky, disagrees on this point. For Dostoevsky, humanity *is* able to acquire perfection and enter into an eternal union with God. It is our task to strive towards this earthly perfection via this mystical joy, the precise character of which I will address further on. For Dostoevsky, the distinction between 'Orthodox' and 'mystical' Christianity is, respectively, the distinction between 'dark' and 'light' Christianity.[2]

For Dostoevsky, humanity is able to acquire perfection and enter into an eternal union with God.

As is typical with Dostoevsky, the ideas that he engages with are voiced via the various characters that inhabit his works. The religious ideas sketched above are no exception to this tendency. It is the *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky's *magnum opus*, that represents the aforementioned religious views the most vividly. In this work, Dostoevsky voices said 'dark' and 'light' Christianity via two characters: Father Feropont and Father Zosima, respectively. I cannot give a general outline of *The Brothers Karamazov* here, as the plot is too complex and multifaceted to briefly summarize, nor is such a summary necessary for my argument. A short description of those characters that are relevant to this essay is adequate enough.

Firstly, the cantankerous Father Feropont, Dostoevsky's representative of Orthodox Christianity. It should be of no surprise that Dostoevsky paints him rather negatively: Feropont is a misanthropic monk who has entirely withdrawn from the earthly world and engages in rigorous ascetic lifestyle. Father Feropont is a crazy and

1 Igor Evlampiev, "The Concept of Joy in the Context of F. Dostoevskij's Understanding of the Essence of Religious Belief," Studies in East European Thought 66 (2014), no. 1/2: 142.

2 Evlampiev, "The Concept of Joy in the Context of F. Dostoevskij's Understanding of the Essence of Religious Belief," 139.

odd character, one who believes that there are tiny devils everywhere. It is obvious Dostoevsky wants us to think that Feropont is a character we ought not to take too seriously.

Secondly, we have Father Zosima, the embodiment of what Dostoevsky considers to be the 'true' version of Christianity. Father Zosima symbolizes said mystical Christianity because Zosima believes in the potential perfection of humanity, he believes in the 'fullness of life' via mystical joy. For Zosima, humanity *can* realize paradise on earth. This belief is brought forth the most adequately when Zosima quotes his deceased brother: "life is paradise, and we are all in paradise, but we won't see it; if we would, we should have heaven on earth the next day."[3]

Zosima – and per extension, Dostoevsky – believes that via a mystical understanding, that the world is governed by an absolute unity between humanity and God, we may achieve a union between ourselves, one another, and God. This requires a transformation of humanity's Being, a transformation that happens through joy.[4]

However, a specific type of joy is required. A type of joy that is constituted by both a 'lower' and a 'higher' aspect. The 'higher' type of joy is the idea of a true religious belief. That is, the belief in the possible divinity and perfection of humanity. The 'lower' type of joy, however, has to do with a completeness of life, with the possession of a *life energy* which is necessarily required to truly affirm one's religious belief. The tragedy of Ivan Karamazov's character in *The Brothers Karamazov* is found in his inability to appropriate, besides the 'higher' form of joy, this 'lower' aspect of joy. Ivan is unable to 'ground' the religious view of perfection in the earthly life. The opposite is the case for Dmitri Karamazov, who only possesses a voluptuousness of life, a thirst for earthly life, without connecting it to the true religious idea.[5]

In short, two strands of Christianity are at play in *The Brothers Karamazov*. On the one hand, there is the 'dark', Orthodox Christianity – represented by Father Feropont – that conceives humanity as sinful and imperfect. Opposed to this type of Christianity, is the mystical Christianity, that believes in humanity's potential to achieve a merger with God and thereby a plenitude of Being. This mystical plenitude is conceived as joy, which consists of two elements. Dostoevsky advocates for this strand of Christianity via the character of Father Zosima. It is against the background of this opposition, that we may trace the journey of Tarkovsky's Andrei Rublëv and brand him as a Dostoevskian hero.

3 Evlampiev, "The Concept of Joy in the Context of F. Dostoevskij's Understanding of the Essence of Religious Belief," 140.

4 Evlampiev, "The Concept of Joy in the Context of F. Dostoevskij's Understanding of the Essence of Religious Belief," 140.

5 Evlampiev, "The Concept of Joy in the Context of F. Dostoevskij's Understanding of the Essence of Religious Belief," 143.

Andrei Rublëv

Briefly put, the story of Tarkovsky's Andrei Rublëv is the story of a gifted artist who is struggling with his own art, religion, and a sense of purpose amidst great historical events. The story is set in 15th century Russia, or to be more accurate, the area that would *later* be part of what we would *now* consider 'Russia'. This was a turbulent time, as the Mongol-Tatar Golden Horde served as a constant threat, sacking and enslaving cities and rural areas. It is during this epoch, where violence was ever looming, that Andrei Rublëv lived.

The Andrei we meet at the beginning of the film is one who can only participate in the higher form of joy. That is, joy as the belief in the divine origin of humanity and the possibility of attaining perfection as a person. Here, Andrei's fate is akin to that of Ivan's. Andrei is not able to truly experience joy. What is required to experience joy in its totality, the 'lower' type of joy, is something Andrei cannot find. This is evident in act two, when Kirill, a fellow monk and icon painter, jealous of Andrei's talent, says of Andrei: "But he is lacking – fear and faith – the faith that comes from one's *heart*."[6] Andrei does not possess the voluptuousness of life, the life energy that is required to truly give weight to religious belief.

The Andrei we meet at the beginning of the film is one who can only participate in the higher form of joy.

This lack is further expressed in act four, when Andrei, whilst travelling, is confronted with a group of pagans performing their forest rituals in the nude, celebrating and holding joyous festivities. In the grip of curiosity, Andrei sneaks into the forest and quietly tries to observe the feast and the free acts of eroticism the pagans partake in. However, Andrei is discovered and bound to a pillar. He is freed by a naked pagan woman who tries to convince Andrei of the value of their way of life, but she is rebuked by Andrei, who describes their ways as beastly. In other words, it is sinful behaviour.

That same year, in 1408, Andrei, together with his entourage, completes the task they were given: furnishing the Assumption Cathedral in Vladimir with religious iconography. However, as Tarkovsky subtly demonstrates, the work of the artist is always subject to the whims of political conjuncture. That is, the brother of the Grand Duke of Moscow, eager to acquire power and frustrated with his brother, raids the city of Vladimir, assisted by Tatar forces. The Assumption Cathedral is plundered, and Andrei's works are destroyed.

6 Andrei Tarkovsky, dir., Andrei Rublëv (Columbia Pictures, 1966), Youtube, 00:21:09-00:21:24, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7a944HD-TJ0.

During the siege on the cathedral, one of the plunderers tries to rape a woman – a 'holy fool'[7] – that Andrei is sympathetic towards. To prevent this from happening, Andrei decapitates the rapist, but is left with an agonizing sense of guilt. Unable to cope with the fact that he has taken a life and broken over the destruction of his art and the emptiness of the violence in the world, Andrei vows to never speak or paint again.

Andrei's attempt to repent for his sins is representative of the aforementioned 'dark' Christianity. That is traditional Orthodox Christianity. Not only is Andrei's conception of himself as 'sinful' and 'imperfect' characteristic of this view, but Andrei's withdrawal from earthly life by refusing to speak or paint, by refusing to engage with the world and its people, is very 'Feropontian'. By severing his connection to the world, Andrei plunges into asceticism and acts akin to Father Feropont, Dostoevsky's representative of the worst facets of Orthodoxy.

Fifteen years after the sack of the Assumption Cathedral, Andrei remains committed to neither speak nor paint. However, the affairs of the world continue, and the Grand Prince orders the construction of a new bell tower for the city of Vladimir. Boris, an adolescent boy and son of a famous, but deceased bellmaker, convinces the Grand Duke's envoys to put him in charge of the construction, asserting that he is the only one to know the secret technique to do the job successfully, a technique he says his late father taught him.

While a few dozen workers undertake this monumental and strenuous task under the supervision of the confident and self-assured Boris, an aged Andrei quietly observes the young boy from afar, intrigued by the boy's ability to single-handedly organize the construction of such an arduous undertaking. As time passes and the project nears completion, Boris appears visibly tired and in disbelief with regard to his own success. The Grand Duke, his entourage, foreign diplomats, and the inhabitants of the city of Vladimir gather to witness the unveiling of the completed bell, eagerly awaiting the first ringing of the bell.

The moment of truth approaches and the tension is rising, as failure will surely have dire consequences for Boris. However, the bell successfully rings and the crowd erupts into joy, celebrating, cheering, and waving. Andrei is impressed by the joy that is created by Boris' work and realizes that his own work might bring about joy too. Whilst walking away from the crowd, Andrei discovers an utterly exhausted and sobbing Boris on the ground. Boris, who is unable to appreciate his own success, breaks down crying, admitting to Andrei that his father never told him the secret technique. In an absolutely beautiful moment of compassion, Andrei holds the boy in his arms and comforts him, breaking his vow of silence and uttering his first words after fifteen years, telling the boy:

7 In Eastern Christianity, a 'holy fool,' is one who acts in a foolish or insane as a form of piety. It may be considered a peculiar form of asceticism. This 'foolish' behavior is often done on purpose, but in the case of the 'holy fool' in Andrei Rublëv, this does not seem to be so.

> Don't [cry]… Don't… Look how it turned out… We'll go together… I'll paint icons, you'll pour bells. Hm? Let's go? Let's go to the Trinity [Monastery], let's work together. What a feast for the people. What *joy* he created, and still he cries.[8]

It is at this moment, when confronted with the joy Boris enables in people, that Andrei attains the "mystical plenitude of one's existence and his mergence with the whole universe."[9] Andrei discovers that true religious belief is found within the joy he discovers through Boris. The higher joy Andrei possessed is now complemented by the lower joy, the joy of the people that is brought about by art, festivities, and pleasurable things. Andrei changes from a Feropont-figure to a Zosima-figure: one who trades a strict, ascetic Orthodoxy for a mystical experience of joy, directed at the joy for *others*, for the *world*.

Conclusion

From the exposition on Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublëv* I provided above, it appears evident that many of the motives in Dostoevsky's view on religion reappear in this artistic representation of Andrei Rublëv's life. In the beginning, Andrei is steeped in 'dark' Orthodox Christianity, being able to only experience the 'higher' form of joy. In agony over his and the world's actions throughout the film, Andrei plunges further into this 'dark' Christianity, withdrawing from the world and its sins. However, when confronted with the joy that a young adolescent – Boris – brings about in the people, Andrei is reinvigorated and attains the mystical understanding that is found in joy to truly transform. It is on the basis of these points that I argue that Andrei Rublëv is a 'religious hero' in the Dostoevskian sense. I think there are many other facets of Andrei's story, subtle or explicit, that are worthy of the 'Dostoevskian' analysis I practiced above. These could be the topic for a longer, future essay.

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8 Не надо, не надо... Вот и всё... ну и хорошо... Видишь, как всё получилось... ну и хорошо. Вот и хорошо... Вот и пойдем мы с тобой вместе... Ну чего ты?... Я иконы писать, ты колокола лить... А?.. Пойдём?.. Пойдём с тобой в Троицу, пойдём работать... Какой праздник-то для людей... Какую радость сотворил и ещё плачет...

I am the first to admit that this translation is possibly very flawed. The translation has been brought about through a mix of my basic Russian, a dictionary, and online instruments. I am nonetheless of the opinion that it adequately brings forth the joy that Andrei discovers.

Tarkovsky, dir., Andrei Rublëv, 2:44:40-2:45:28

9 This quote originates from the faculty lecture Professor Evlampiev had given on 09-03-2020, titled "The reflections on true Christianity by L. Tolstoy, F. Dostoevsky and F. Nietzsche"

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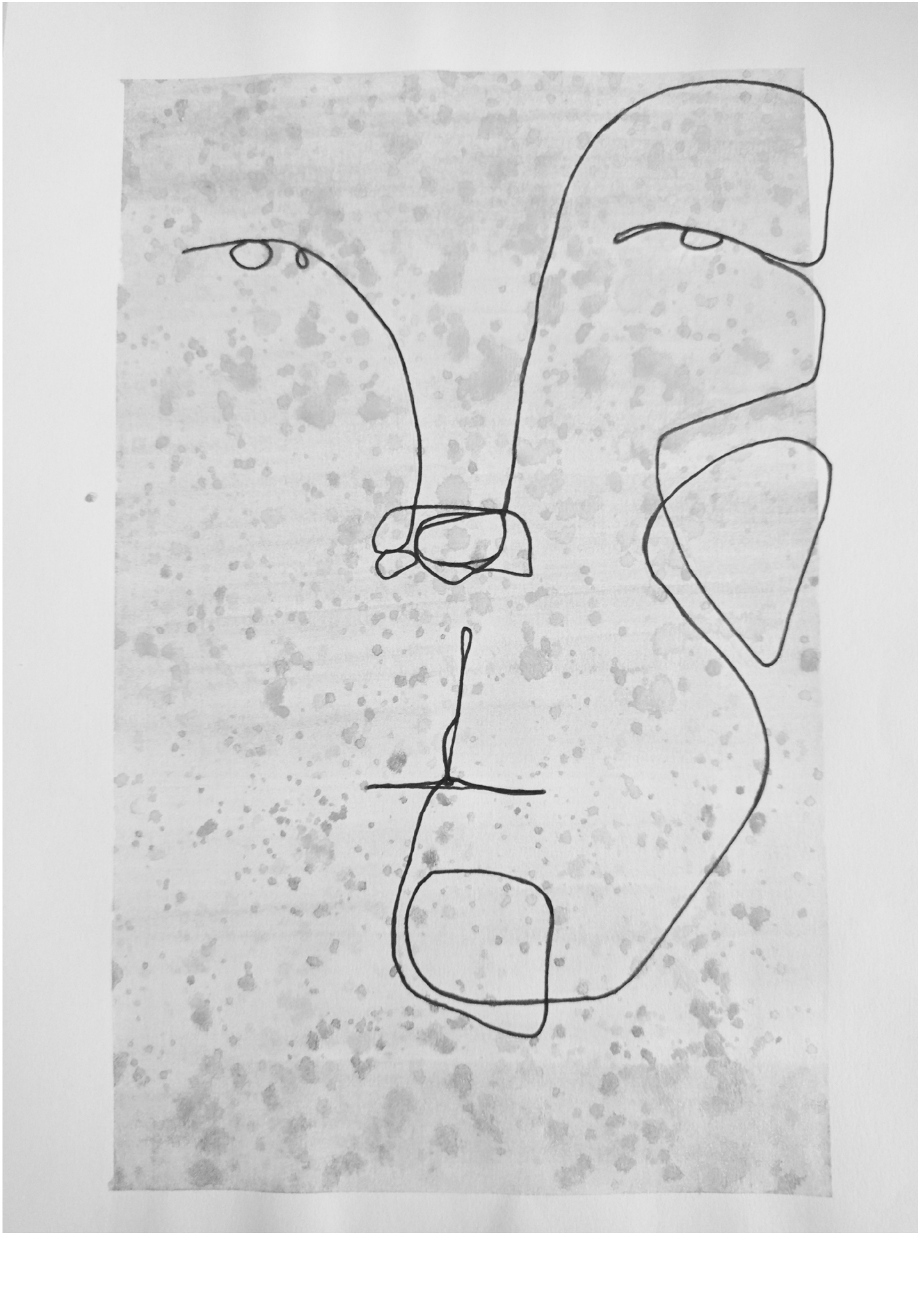

Off the Record

Jochem Snijders
translation: Janneke Toonders & Mireille Kouevi

Heleen Murre-van den Berg, part II

"The issue of social safety also remains topical: what kind of academic culture do we want to build together?"

This interview took place in September of last year (2021); the text has been somewhat updated to reflect the context of early March 2022.

First of all, congratulations on your appointment as the Dean of our faculty. You have challenging times ahead of you. To what extent did a sense of duty play a role in your acceptance of the position?
I would say that a sense of duty certainly played a role. However, now that I have held the position of Dean for about two and a half months, I also notice that I enjoy it. It is a privilege to be in this position and to lead this organisation – I realise that more and more. As vice-dean, I was, of course, already involved in the process, but it is rather different to actually be in charge.

Can you give an example of the more fun aspects of your new position as the Dean?
Despite the problems and issues of recent times, the FFTR is a beautiful faculty with a wide variety of interesting people. I always enjoy catching up with our faculty members and to hear more about the current stage of their research – with interesting stories, news or even breakthroughs that they have been experiencing in their field. It's a friendly group of people to be around every day.

Additionally, the university is going through an exciting period and, connected to this, the question of what we want to do with our education. The issue of social safety also remains topical: what kind of academic culture do we want to build together? I find it interesting to investigate how we can move from a culture that is driven by competition to one that is driven by joint progress. It is an excellent opportunity to be able to take the lead in this and to set its agenda.

Our faculty is in good shape: there are no acute financial worries. Nevertheless, funding, depends on so many things, and it is therefore never 100% stable. You always have to keep an eye on what has priority and what the other possibilities are.

What sort of topics are on the agenda?
In addition to the topic of social safety, there is another broader topic that I would like to address, namely, the academic climate more in general: what kind of context fosters healthy collegial relationships and creative and innovative academic work? Consider, for instance, the enormous competition to win a NWO grant.[1] Sometimes it seems that we are each other's competitors more than colleagues, both within the faculty and between faculties and universities. This is partly a financial issue, but also a substantive one: are there ways through which we can facilitate and advocate for cooperation? Can we, for example, initiate more joint projects? How can the combination of philosophy, theology and religious studies be made more fruitful within our faculty? In this respect, e.g., there is probably more to be gained regarding the track Philosophy Politics and Society (PPS). There are many cross-links to be seen between various disciplines, both in pure research and in terms of societal relevance and impact. Think, for instance, about the connection between sustainability, the inclusive society, democracy, religion, and health and disease. If we can further develop and strengthen these kinds of cross-links, great things can come out of it. It is important to stimulate people to work on such cross-cutting themes, and we are going to draw up a policy plan with that goal in mind. I would like to make concrete plans on how we can stimulate this sort of thing, financially and practically.

In this document we would like to state how we, as a faculty, "view ourselves", state the norms and values we stand for.

It is not only you who acquired a new position in our faculty but also Annabel Dirkzwager who is this year's student assessor. Last year the two of you viewed how to handle the "cultuurtraject" *following the Paul Bakker incident from opposite directions. How has this influenced the contact between you and Annabel?*
[Laughs:] The contact is fine, sure enough. The students nominate the assessor, and afterwards, we as a board speak with whoever is being nominated. If that goes well, the assessor is appointed. With Annabel, we certainly saw no reason not to have her appointed as assessor. It is as simple as that, and I am pleased with this decision. She is closely involved in the current trajectory and participates actively in all our discussions in the board. Every assessor brings their own themes and contacts with them, and the decisions of the board surely benefit from that.

1 The NWO is the Dutch Research Council [Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek].

Let us focus on the discussion of social safety within our faculty. Students were promised to be kept informed about the developments of the cultuurtraject. So far, the updates have been vague in content. Can you tell our readers about the process that has taken place "behind the scenes"?

At this point [September 2021], we are at a kind of turning point. We have completed the *cultuurtraject*, which was guided by Twynstra Gudde. Yet that was only the start of a more elaborate follow-up process. The earlier discussions, in which case studies were discussed, went well. Certainly these contributed to a better understanding of the issues involved, and how they could be handled in the future. Soon, there will be a meeting with the faculty in which we aim to draft a document that focuses on the social climate of our faculty. In this document we would like to state how we, as a faculty, "view ourselves", state the norms and values we stand for and define the appropriateness of the various relationships between students and teachers, as well as between staff members. In addition, the conversation must continue: we cannot stop once we have this document.[2] The reporting and reviewing procedures must also be as transparent as possible for students. We just had our first meeting with students, who provided some good suggestions. It is a complicated process in which there is room for improvement. We are therefore trying to involve students: after all, it is not only about how lecturers relate to students and colleagues, but also about how students can relate to lecturers and each other as well. Besides the meetings with students, we continue to discuss these issues in the FSR.[3] At the moment, we are looking for a fruitful way to take the discussions further, and whether students can also have conversations among themselves, for example.[4] By early March 2022, further conversations among staff and students have taken place, procedures for reports and complaints are improved and made accessible (also online), we've restarted our training program for staff (that because of Covid-19 was mostly discontinued), and an Advisory Committee on Social Safety and Inclusion (ACSSI) to the Faculty Board, which also includes students, has started its work.

I think it is inevitable to reflect on the return of Paul Bakker. Has he regained the trust of the faculty?

Indeed, in the sense that we expect him to teach again in the future and take up his work in the faculty. Those who have been involved in the reporting have been

2 In October, the faculty board decided on the basis of the discussions with the staff that this draft document would not suit the needs of the Faculty well enough, and decided to wait for the (more concrete) University Code of Conduct; at this point [early March] the University Code of Conduct has yet to be finalized.

3 The FSR is the Student Faculty Council.

4 *Editorial note*: A few students started the "Social Safety Care Club". They wrote a statement that you can also read in this issue.

included in this process. They know what is happening, and can live with it. At the same time, though I am confident that a workable situation has arisen, we also know that students continue to have a lot of trouble with the idea that Paul Bakker will return to teaching, and we take this very seriously, aiming to involve the students in this conversation.[5] As things look now, we work towards Paul returning to teaching during the upcoming academic year, though we're still discussing the details of that. As a board, we will continue to work on this. Paul himself is certainly aware that there is still a lot of work to be done here.

Were there elements in the cultuurtraject *that had to go back to the drawing board?*
No, what the *cultuurtraject* mainly does is to get the discussion going. For a large part, it is clear what is right and what is wrong. In the Bakker case, for example, which we indeed discussed during our talks, no one said, "oh, it's not that bad." The issue was that many of the regulations were not made explicit, and in certain respects, the way we deal with each other at the faculty was left very vague. This is a recurring problem in academia. What do we do, for example, with students who aggressively interrupt a lecturer? Or senior lecturers who bully younger PhD students or staff? We tended to let this kind of behaviour go and only intervene when it really got out of hand. This is ingrained in the system and also partly the result of the individualistic way we work at the university. For a long time, some people who were higher in the hierarchy, such as full professors for example, believed that their academic status would let them get away with a lot of things. We started a conversation on this, and this contributes to keeping everyone accountable in the future. We have been too cautious and self-focused for too long, which is also due to the climate of competition and rivalry that I mentioned earlier.

We have been too cautious and self-focused for too long, which is also due to the climate of competition and rivalry that I mentioned earlier.

So far, in the updates on the cultuurtraject*, we have seen few conclusions from the various rounds of discussions.*
That is absolutely right; we are only just starting to get there. At the moment, concrete documents are being drafted. The document we are working on now is mainly a staff document. It would be nice if we could draw up something similar for the students. I think that two different codes of conduct would be helpful. An "A" and a "B" version, so to speak, with more or less the same structure. The main thing is not to circulate too many versions and interim reports of discussions because then soon no one

5 As of early March 2022, the faculty organized two rounds of conversation in which also the rector, prof. Han van Krieken, is involved.

will remember what you are talking about. Ideally, we should be able to present one version that can be amended once or twice, something substantial to work with in the coming years.

Speaking of which: there is now also a confidential advisor for academic integrity.
This position actually has been around for a while, but thanks to our discussions, the value of it has come back into the picture. There are many issues within this academy: what do we do in case of plagiarism, for example, or how do we deal with data from PhD students? Especially in the last ten years, there has been a lively discussion about these kinds of issues. This is also closely related to the competitive environment. The first public cases involved people who, at a certain point, felt so compelled to keep publishing to stay at the top of a ranking that they started making up data. Ideally, you would quickly remove such poisonous structures from the academy, but that is a long process. In any case, you still have to deal with limited funding that has to be divided among many people; also in the future there will be many applicants for one job. There is no way to change this overnight. Yet these issues are increasingly being discussed, also in consultative bodies such as the KNAW or the UvN[6] – and, by extension, national politics. Ultimately, it is at least partly a money issue: competition for scarce resources plays a significant role in how people treat each other.

In our previous interview, you said that we used to have confidants within the faculty but that this did not work well. Now we have contact persons at the university level whom students can approach in case of undesirable behaviour. Are they specially trained for this?
Indeed, the old system has been overhauled. Some of the counsellors have stayed on, but a significant part of the group has been freshly hired, paying more attention to training and competences; in the past confidential counsellors were often not well enough equipped to deal with this type of reports. In addition, of course, students can always turn to the student advisors with a problem. The student advisors can function as intermediaries between students and confidential advisors. How we organise this for PhD students – another vulnerable group – is still under discussion.[7]

What happens behind the scenes when someone reports a problem to a confidential advisor?
That depends very much on the person reporting. Sometimes it suffices to leave it at the initial report – for instance, because the person who is reporting wishes to

6 The KNAW is the The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences [Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen] and the UvN refers to the Universities of the Netherlands [Universiteiten van Nederland].

7 In the meantime the faculty board has decided to continue to have a Faculty Counselor for PhD students.

remain anonymous and doesn't want a follow up involving the Faculty or University board. If a number of reports – there may be five, but sometimes one or two reports are enough – strongly point in a particular direction, the dean is contacted. The confidential advisors might inform me about the outlines while protecting the anonymity of the reporter(s) and the person reported about, depending on the reporters' wishes. It is challenging to take concrete measures if there is no concrete complaint. Ideally, we should also be able to respond to vague complaints. By this, I do not mean that the events reported are vague, but that they cannot always easily be converted into a concrete complaint or report. In addition, the principle of hearing both sides of the argument also applies: initially, you have to adopt an unbiased attitude towards the person being complained about. Sometimes, it is possible to start a conversation via an anonymous report. In other cases, this is more difficult.

Sometimes, it is possible to start a conversation via an anonymous report. In other cases, this is more difficult.

Let us discuss a concrete problem: we know the story of a student who was assaulted by a fellow student. That student went to a confidential advisor and was then offered the choice of talking to the person in question or entering into the official complaints procedure. Both options seem traumatic to us. Can such a person not be helped in any other way?
I cannot say anything specific about this, except that some things were discussed in the background between the confidential advisor and us. In general, as a university, it is difficult to do anything in cases where it concerns only students. Someone who works for us can be held accountable. With students, this is much more difficult.

Suppose someone who has been reported applies for a position as a tutor or student assistant. Does the report have any influence on that?
That depends on all sorts of things. If the one who is selecting the tutor or student assistant is aware of the report, it will probably influence their chances of getting the job. In most cases, however, the information will be confidential. As a board, we constantly discuss whom we want to nominate for a specific position and whom we do not want to select. There is always a tension between being meticulous and careful on the one hand, and protecting the privacy of the people concerned, on the other. Ultimately, our job is to put the right people in suitable positions.

Is there feedback from the confidential advisor to the student advisor when a report is made, or does a student have to report the same thing twice to different people?
That depends on whether the person reporting gives permission for this to happen and whether the line of communication was already running through the student

advisor. Since last summer, I have had relatively much contact with the confidants. They call or e-mail me when something is wrong and let me know what I should pay attention to, as far as this is possible within their framework of confidentiality. I really believe that this way of going about it works. In my previous positions, for example, we received an overview once a year of the incidents that had been reported to the confidential counsellors. At that point, there was little you could do as a board. So, this mutual communication is a good thing, but it remains complicated: not everything can be passed on to us.

Suppose that the conversation with a confidential counsellor is unsatisfactory for a reporter. Where else can they turn to?
Students are always free to approach another confidential counsellor. There will also be an 'ombudsfunctionaris' for employees.[8] This person will deal with general matters that cannot be resolved through the usual procedures. This may relate to confidential counsellors, but, for example, also to whistle-blowers who are unable to get anywhere after they have raised an issue within their faculty. This person will mainly deal with more general issues and not with individual cases. However, if it ultimately turns out that the confidential counsellors do not function well, then this might be a matter for this officer. At this point, there is not yet a national 'ombudsfunctionaris'. National regulations for matters such as this have advantages and disadvantages: when such an officer is further removed from local university politics, they can look at specific issues with a fresher view. However, this distance can also turn it into a body that has no real power.

Thus far, we have mainly discussed the reporting procedure. Here, the focus is primarily on the moment when a report is submitted to a confidential counsellor. The person reporting must then find their feet again at the university. To what extent can the university provide psychological support to whistle-blowers?
Of course, there are student psychologists, but the problem is that there are not enough of them. However, this problem is nationwide: there are also enormously long waiting lists at the GGZ.[9] I know quite a few people who need help and can't find it. Still, you raise a good point here, and I think it is indeed a good idea to look at how we can tackle this and increase the number of student psychologists or other kinds of support for both students and staff members.

8 "Nancy Viellevoye benoemd als ombudsfunctionaris Radboud Universiteit," Actueel, Radboud Universiteit, 20 December, 2021, https://www.ru.nl/nieuws-agenda/nieuws/vm/2021/december/nancy-viellevoye-benoemd-ombudsfunctionaris/.

9 The GGZ is a national mental health care organization [Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg].

To what extent does the process and your role in it live up to the expectations you had beforehand?
To a large extent, it meets my expectations. Because of the pandemic, we have been rather limited in our possibilities. I am looking forward to upcoming consultation sessions with students that will again take place physically. The online discussions we have had so far have also gone very well, but something was missing there. If you can't meet in real life, for example, to have coffee after a meeting, it is more difficult to gauge whether you've got everyone on board. The starting points are now largely clear; it is now a matter of bringing them to life. In a sense, the past period was a dry run: there was much discussion about relationships, but online contact has a different dynamic than contact in the corridors and lecture halls. We will have to get used to that dynamic again. Now that the university has reopened, it is an excellent time to get on better terms with each other than before. In this respect, it helps tremendously that everyone is happy to be back at the university: people are really looking forward to it again and are prepared to do their bit. This will only help this process.

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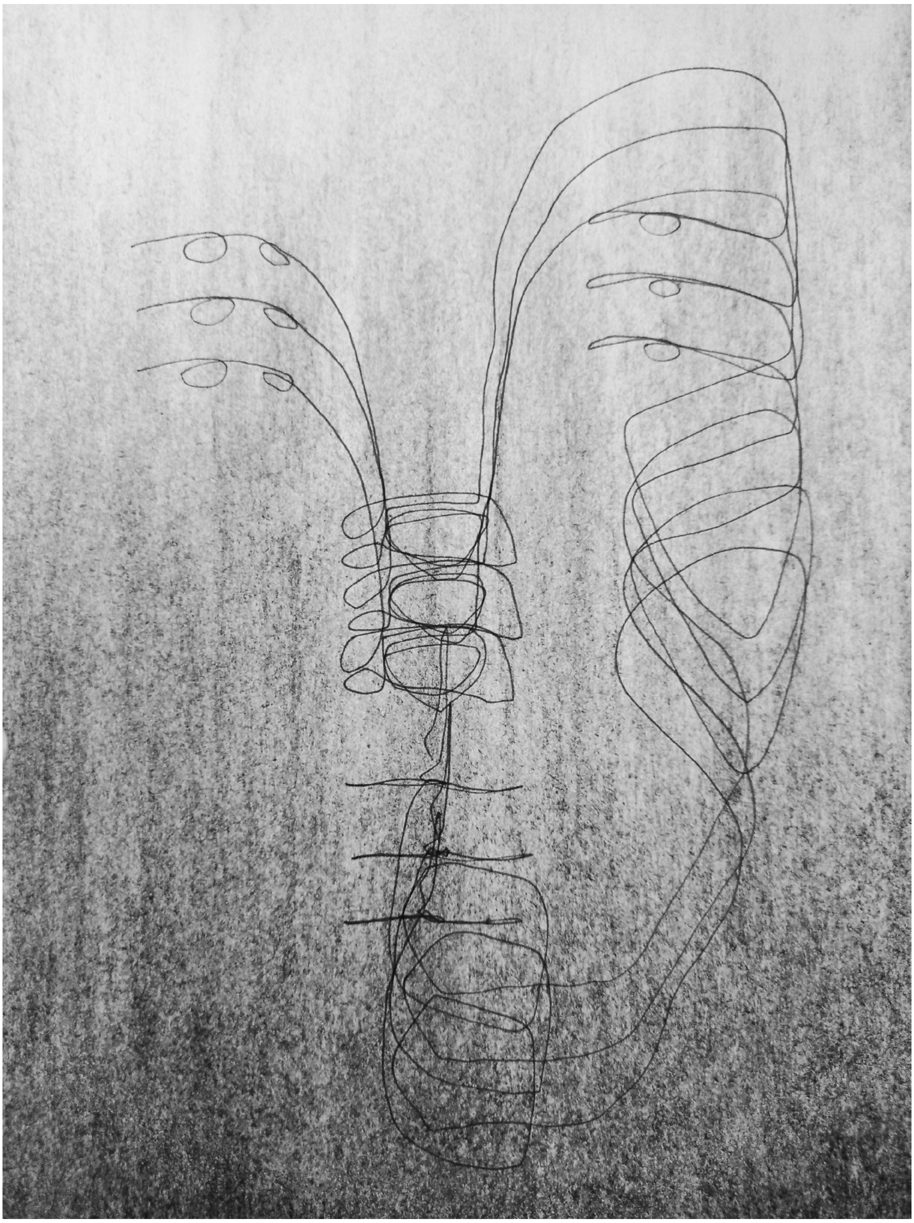


“The Social Safety Care Club”

Paula Müller

On the 7th of October 2021, four of my fellow students (Annabel, Hanna, Luka and Anneloes) and I, decided to found what would soon be called the *Social Safety Care Club*, or in short: SSCC. It all started in what may be familiar to any (ex-)Radboud student reading this, our beloved *Culture Café*. Cozily seated in the big brown chairs, sipping a hot beverage of choice, we discussed an issue close to all of our hearts: social safety. Now, already a few months later, I was asked to write down our motivations for starting this club.

We noticed that many of us had experienced something in relation to social safety – or rather unsafety – or had some concerns about the topic in general. Sharing our own thoughts and experiences that day was, to say the least, a relief. Finding each other, on equal footing as students, and being able to freely share and reach out, took a bit of weight off our shoulders. In that moment we realized that something very valuable was happening, something that we wanted to facilitate for a bigger part of the student population at our faculty.

Our initial idea was simple: creating a safe space. The first requirement was that it would be strictly for students, to provide a space where hierarchy and power relations are not at stake. The space is thus reserved for all the students who are dealing with any kind of feelings of unsafety or concerns about social safety, may they be seemingly insignificant or incredibly profound. We reserved a room in the Erasmus building for every Tuesday of the rest of the semester, created an Instagram account (as any 21st century organization must to gain a bit of traction), and designed colorful posters. Ever since, on Tuesdays, we enter this safe space together, eat cookies, share and listen.

While trying to formulate what the SSCC should provide, we realized our aims were twofold. First up was the creation of a space for recognition and belonging. We had all heard of different individual cases of students at the faculty, that would fall under the broad header of social safety. Unfortunately, many people, us included, who go through something concerning social safety are unaware that other people might be going through something similar or have done so in the past. Experiencing feelings of unsafety can cause loneliness or feelings of alienation, even in a small and relatively close-knit faculty as ours. Solely the sharing of experiences and stories, can lead to recognition, bring relief and lead to a sense of belonging. These are seemingly basic things, but they can make a big difference when you go through something, and we aspired that the SSCC renders this.

It is no secret; the topic of social safety has been on the faculty agenda in the past years. Although a faculty board engaging in the topic so explicitly might be a significant step forward in times still notably marked by silence and unwillingness to act within institutions, we were left unsatisfied with the place created for students to add to this topic. Students have very different experiences within universities than, for example, senior staff-members. Therefore, as our second aim, we wanted the SSCC to provide a platform not only for voicing personal experiences but also for what 'lives' among students regarding specific questions of social safety within universities.

Now, how do we approach all this? We have weekly 'walk-in' hours every Tuesday during which we take a problem-based approach and are guided primarily by what the students present want to talk about. Next to this, we have monthly theme meetings in which we discuss more specific topics, such as the "culture traject" the faculty is going through, or diversity within the academic world.

As we emphasize that any concern or issue is welcome in our 'regular' share meetings, we talk about a diverse range of topics. For example, we have talked about the correct use of pronouns by teachers and fellow students in the classroom. In university systems such as OSIRIS you can already select your preferred pronoun, but this is not yet something everyone is aware of – or sensitive to – in daily university life. We have also discussed the classroom environment in times of increased political polarization between left and right. These tensions can occasionally manifest themselves in the classroom as well. Or, as a final example, we have exchanged thoughts about the experience of a lack of diversity among teaching staff, especially for those who are a member of an underrepresented group, such as women, people of color and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. In our sharing meetings, we make sure that we give attention to each topic raised, and openly discuss questions such as: how do you, as a person, deal with such feelings of unsafety? How can we build an environment for the constructive discussion of these issues in class?

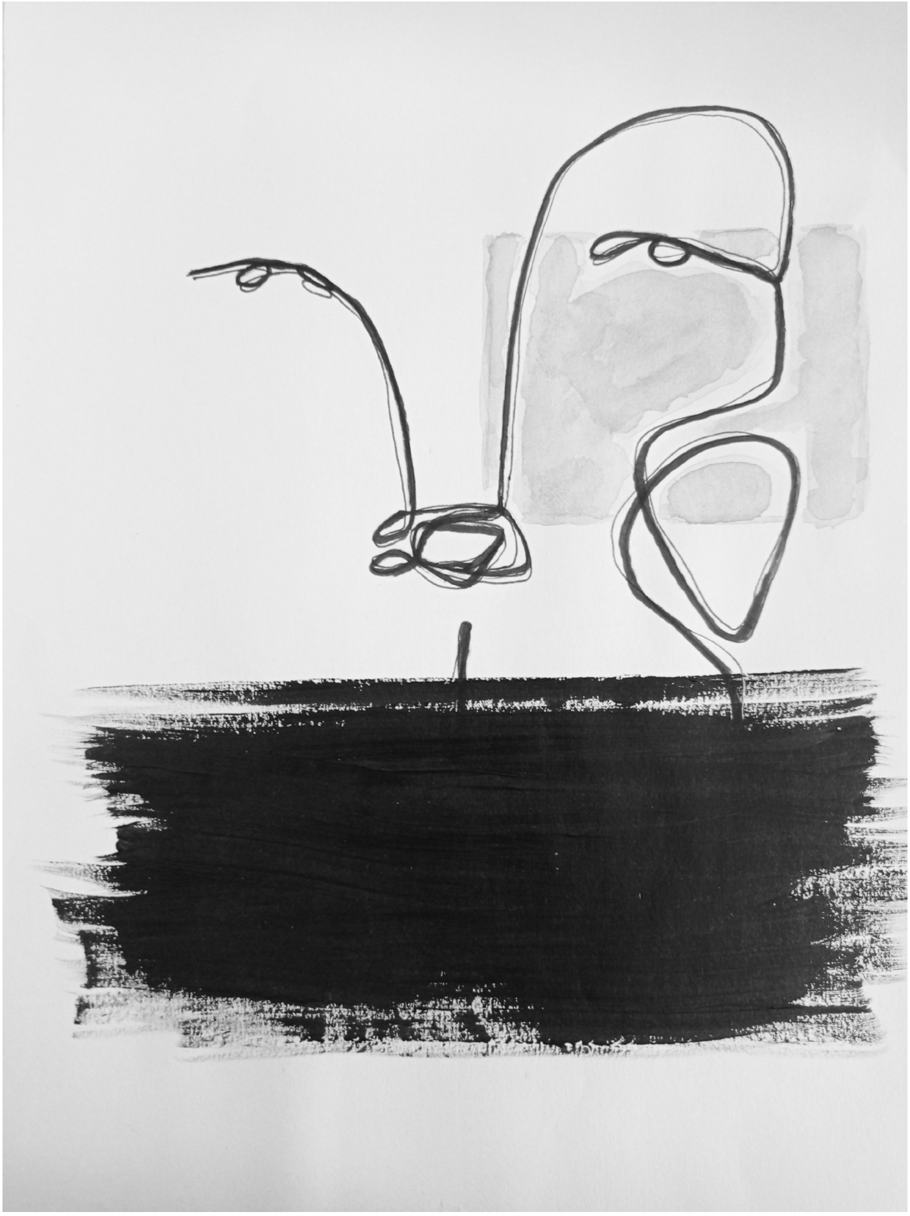
We believe that the university must be an open place for everyone, and to be able to welcome everyone means that it must be safe for everyone.

Needless to say, the more private and sensitive stories concerning misconduct or personal grievances remain within the four walls of our meeting room. Especially during those moments of sharing, we are very explicit about the fact that we are not in the disposition of offering any psychological or professional help. Instead, we try to make students aware of the many places they can go to within the university when they experience any problems. You can think of the team of student advisors present in each faculty, or the university-broad trust persons you can rely on.

Next to there being a significant group of students that is unaware of these possibilities, or unsure where exactly they must go with their concerns, we understand that it can also be scary to open up, ask for help, or file a complaint. Taking this step is a big one, especially due to your vulnerable position. Here, the SSCC comes in, by no means replacing any of the existing resorts for troubled students, but creating a new, additional one, albeit with a slightly different character. A safe space among equals, both in position and relative age, who listen to you, provide you with information about where you can go for help within the university, and offer to accompany in the proceeding process. It can be a place for those who do not dare to take the first step alone.

To close, I want to share that at the foundation of the SSCC lies this: We believe that the university must be an open place for everyone, and to be able to welcome everyone means that it must be *safe* for everyone. Safe to develop, to learn, to exchange knowledge, to gain experiences. And if the SSCC, by simply opening our doors every Tuesday, can add to this in any shape or form, we are proud to do so.

The Social Safety Care Club meets once a week on Tuesdays in the Erasmus building in room E16.18 at 12:30-13:30. We are active on Instagram (@socialsafetycareclub), and with any question/thoughts/input can be contacted via socialsafetycc@gmail.com.



Social Safety and Inclusive Visibility within the LGBTQI+ Community

Mart van Doorn

While leaning against the teacher's desk, standing in front of a class of twenty kids together with my colleague, I try to put into words how my parents reacted when I told them I was transgender. Hoping the class in front of me will take any of my words home, I emphasize that they can identify with any sexuality or gender that they feel most comfortable with. At this moment, it is not at the forefront of my mind that, while I am part of a minority group, I can only convey my experience through the eyes of a white person. It also does not occur to me, in that moment, that if some of the kids in the class who are not white found out that they were also not cisgender[1] and/or heterosexual, their experience could not even be close to my own.

My name is Mart van Doorn. I am a Philosophy, Politics and Society student, and I volunteer for COC Regio Nijmegen. Social safety has been of great concern to the faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, yet this is, of course, not the only space where social safety needs to be improved. I was asked by *Splijtstof* to write something about my work as a volunteer for COC. COC is a national LGBTQI+ rights organization with many different groups and teams for specific people and activities. I have been active in the organization since I was 15 years old. I first joined as a participant in activities for the youth department, where I learned a lot about the queer community. Ever since I started studying at Radboud University, I have been working as a volunteer for the educational team of the region of Nijmegen, eventually joining the regional board last year. I have learned a lot as an (LGBTQI+) activist during these years, and I have also started *un*learning certain things. I want to share some of these things from my personal perspective and look into an issue that connects to it and that we have struggled with within the educational team.

Growing up, I was conditioned to view the world and my society in a certain way according to certain norms. I do not blame my parents or any influence in my youth for this because it is a societal and systemic issue. Luckily, I have always had a very strong female figure in my childhood; my mother has never confirmed the patriarchal male norm for me. However, so far, I have clashed with a bunch of other norms, one by one. The first one I found myself conflicting with was the heterosexual norm when I discovered I was not straight. The second one was the cisgender norm when I found out I was transgender. I realized that the way in which I identified myself was not considered to be the standard in a society that holds these cisgender and heterosexual norms. As a consequence, I was not always assured of my social safety, just like others

1 When someone's sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

who do not conform to society's norms. However, because the two deviations from these societal norms related to *my own* identity, I did not question any other norms with which *I* did not personally clash.

While working to improve social safety for LGBTQI+ people, I simultaneously followed a PPS minor called "Identity and Exclusion"[2], where I learned about intersectionality.[3] I soon realized that minorities are not demarcated as clearly as I previously assumed when I was a teenager. All I knew were my own experiences, those of being queer and white (in a predominantly white, western country). This was the first time external insights made me clash with another norm: whiteness and the assumption that white is the standard. Moreover, the existence of whiteness as the standard is often still denied or ignored by those who are privileged by it. This results in the exclusion of non-white people from important aspects of society and forces them to adapt instead of their experiences being seen and valued. When I learned about intersectionality and started to actively listen to the experiences of people of color (POC), it became clear to me that the struggles of minorities are all interconnected. I realized that these struggles should all be taken into account and that there are no clear categories when it comes to social safety.

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Volunteering as a LGBTQI+ educator means that our team gives 90-minute workshops or seminars on LGBTQI+ identities, on issues like feeling safe and respected in social situations, and on the concept of cis-heteronormativity.[4] Our goal is to inform people, to humanize LGBTQI+ identities, and to give anyone the opportunity to see beyond the cis-heteronormativity in (Dutch) society. We realize that it matters who stands in front of a classroom, so we have always tried to make sure that there is diversity within the couple scheduled for a class. For example, suppose there are two non-binary and two asexual educators available. In that case, the non-binary persons will not be paired up for the sake of diversity. Still, the first conversation I had with our team about the lack of diversity was only a year ago. Ever since I joined the

2 https://www.ru.nl/courseguides/fftr/bachelor-pps/pps-modules/identity-exclusion/.

3 Intersectionality is a broad collection of theories that explores the ways in which different forms of oppression and exploitation can intersect. Theories of intersectionality are thus particularly sensitive to the ways various marginalized identities both have things in common, as well as differ from each other.

4 Discourse based on the assumption that cisgender and heterosexuality are the norm and privileged over any other form of sexual orientation.

team, it has always been completely white. Before, I had never noticed that this was an issue, but as soon as I started seeing the norm of whiteness in my own social environment, I realized how fundamental it is in structuring my environment. Ever since I (and several colleagues) have felt increasingly uncomfortable advocating for diversity or discussing the topic with exclusively white people and have started addressing it. How can we claim to advocate for LGBTQI+ rights when all we really know and represent is *white* LGBTQI+-ness?

As soon as we started to have this conversation as a team, we ran into uncomfortable situations and questions (which is not a negative thing since discomfort is a necessary evil). We wondered how we could recruit more people of color for visibility without profiling or using anyone for their skin color. We needed to find queer POC and make them feel comfortable in an otherwise completely white team. About half a year ago, I asked Naomie Pieter (who is the founder of Black Pride and other antiracist and queer organizations) for advice on recruiting more people of color. She asked me what *we* had to offer *them*. This might seem like a very logical question, but it was precisely what we – or at least I – needed to hear. So, this has been one of our points of focus that we have started working on. For instance, we followed a workshop by a non-binary person of color (Suus te Braak), who made us see that what queer POC need from us is the same thing (or at least very similar to) what we would need from any cis/straight environment. For me personally, this means that people do their own research and try to make us visible. Based on this, we created a shared "diversity and inclusion" document, where we share resources within our team and work on showing a more inclusive selection of experiences in our seminars. We will keep asking POC for advice (within the realm of their comfort and willingness) and investigating how to educate ourselves. Hopefully, this will create a safe and valuable environment for POC to join our team. I think this is a necessary basis for recruiting a more diverse team and supporting our cause of inclusive representation.

Inclusive representation in our educational team is so important because, in my opinion, social safety starts with visibility. This entails that, for people of a certain identity to feel safe and fulfilled in their needs, this identity first needs to be acknowledged, seen and accurately represented. Our work can potentially positively affect the extent to which (white) LGBTQI+ persons feel safe. However, the intersectionality of being LGBTQI+ and a person of color is completely overlooked.[5] People who identify with both already have an even bigger disadvantage in society than people who only identify with one of these. The least we could do within our team is include them and try to make them feel seen.

We are still far from where we want to be, but we are working on getting there. I would encourage everyone, especially people working for an organization that

5 Of course, inclusivity is not only about gender, sexuality and race, but in this particular situation we chose to direct our focus on this intersection of forms of oppression.

is mostly (or exclusively) white, to do the same and take a critical look at how you present yourself to others. This is a process that is worth the effort, as long as we stay aware of the issue and keep actively working on improving (inclusive) representation and listening to the personal experience(s) of other minorities in the process. This is not only important but also very valuable and interesting. Besides that, it is only the beginning, and we should keep striving for more because social safety in the broader sense of the word should include everyone.

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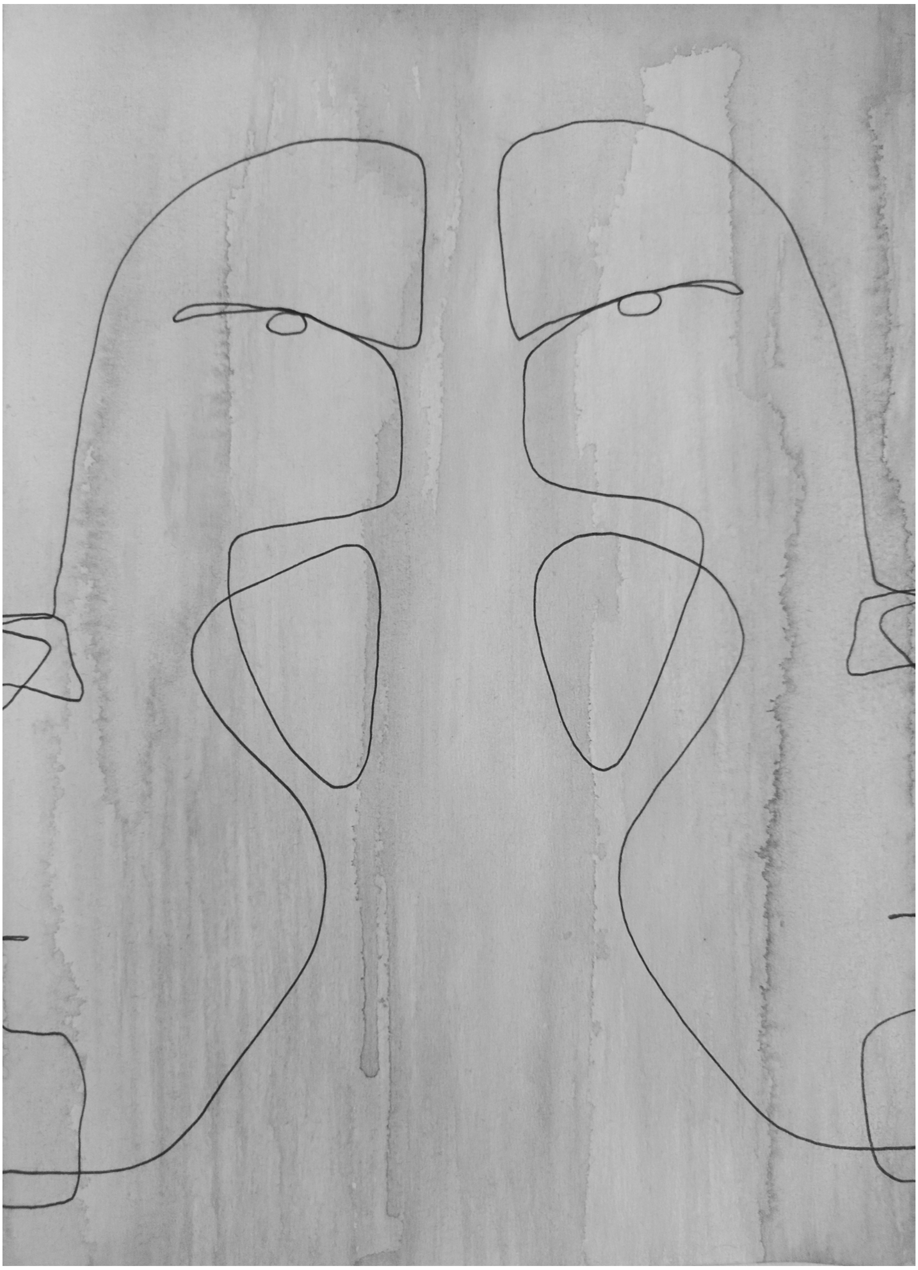


A Place to Talk

Environments in Cicero's *De oratore* and Berkeley's *Three Dialogues*

Kyrke Otto

The history of the philosophical dialogue is, perhaps more than that of any other philosophical genre, deeply and systematically marked by the intertextual presence of its founder. Whether we are looking at St. Augustine´s *De ordine*, David Hume´s *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, or Iris Murdoch´s *Acastos*, references to Plato are never far. It is not just that Plato happened to be the *first* one to practice and popularize the form in Western philosophy – it is also the fact his dialogues are so undeniably *good* that makes it necessary for anyone who practiced the form after him to acknowledge him as a model.

What makes a good philosophical dialogue? According to Vittorio Hösle, the author of one of the most illuminating and influential books on the genre, "writing good philosophical dialogues requires a twofold talent, philosophical and literary."[1] This is to say that, on the one hand, a good dialogue must contain interesting philosophical claims and arguments, but, on the other, that it must not be reducible to those arguments without significant loss of meaning – otherwise, one might just as well have written a treatise. In addition to claims and arguments, a good philosophical dialogue must contain such literary elements as vivid characters, engaging sequences of action, or beautiful descriptions of the surroundings in which the conversation is taking place.

However, it is not enough that a dialogue merely sports philosophical and literary qualities side by side: a really good writer of philosophical dialogues must have the ability to combine these two qualities into a significant whole. This is to say that the philosophical arguments must be relevant for the real-life context in which they are embedded and that the choice for the dialogue's specific characters, action sequences, and surroundings must have philosophical significance. Plato was a master at this integration: as recent scholarship has tended to point out, the 'literary' elements of his dialogues are never mere ornamental frills but can always be shown to be significantly intertwined with the philosophical 'core' of the texts.[2]

This essay will look at the reception of one specific 'literary' aspect of the Platonic dialogue, namely the description of the surroundings in which the conversation takes

1 Vittorio Hösle, *The Philosophical Dialogue. A Poetics and a Hermeneutics*, trans. Steven Rendall (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 37.

2 See, e.g., Charles Harry Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic dialogue: the philosophical use of a literary form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Christopher J. Rowe, *Plato and the art of philosophical writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Andrea Capra, *Plato's Four Muses: The Phaedrus and the Poetics of Philosophy* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2014).

place. It will do this by considering two dialogue series that engage in intertextual play with the scenic aspects of a Platonic dialogue: Cicero's *De oratore*, the setting of which refers to the *Phaedrus*, and George Berkeley's *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous,* the setting of which shows similarities with that of the *Protagoras*. The approaches that Cicero and Berkeley take to the literary and philosophical aspects of the dialogue are often painted as each other's opposites. Cicero's dialogues, on the one hand, are praised for their literary qualities but are never regarded to be particularly philosophically interesting or original. Berkeley's dialogues, on the other, are recognized as offering clear and illuminating philosophical arguments but are hardly taken seriously on a literary level. By juxtaposing these two disparate authors in this essay, I hope to shed some light on the different ways in which one specific characteristic of the Platonic dialogue, the setting of the scene in which the conversation takes place, has been received and reworked in the history of the genre.

Writing on trees: Cicero's *De oratore* and Plato's *Phaedrus*

At the beginning of Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates runs into his eponymous friend just outside the city of Athens. After Socrates has convinced Phaedrus to read him the speech that he has brought along, they walk down the Ilissos to find a nice shady spot to sit down and shelter from the hot midday sun. They find one under a plane tree, and Socrates waxes lyrical about the lovely nature of the place. The tree is wonderfully tall and chirping with cicadas, the wind is blowing gently, the water of the Ilissos is cool and clear, and the grass is so lush and soft that one can comfortably rest one's head upon it. Phaedrus finds Socrates's enthusiasm comical and says that the fact that he never tends to leave the city makes him act like a tourist. Socrates acknowledges this, admitting that he prefers to stay in the company of people in the city because he is fond of learning, and "landscapes and trees have nothing to teach me."[3] Phaedrus and Socrates sit down under the tree and begin to read and talk.

Far from attempting to give a complete account of the relevance of the setting of the Phaedrus, I will here very briefly consider one prominent aspect of it. Andrea Capra, in his 2014 book Plato's Four Muses: The Phaedrus and the Poetics of Philosophy, has argued that "in the Phaedrus Plato is … at his most self-referential" and that this is closely connected with "the unparalleled importance of the natural landscape" in this dialogue.4 The plane tree – πλάτανος in Greek – under which Socrates and Phaedrus sit down is particularly crucial in this regard. As Capra convincingly shows, Plato was very probably "punning on his own name … since "Plato" was soon interpreted as a nickname related to the adjective platys, from which the word platanos, plane-tree, was also derived."5

3 Plato, *Phaedrus* 230d.

4 Capra, *Plato's Four Muses*, 17.

5 Capra, *Plato's Four Muses*, 18.

What is the philosophical significance of this self-referential pun? It can readily be understood when we consider that one of the most central themes of the *Phaedrus* is the relationship between the spoken and the written word. Socrates heavily criticizes the latter, saying that written texts are inferior and potentially dangerous because they cannot count on the presence of their author to defend their intended meaning. Plato, however, did, of course, produce written works – the *Phaedrus* is itself a written work, even if it is one that *simulates* oral communication. Plato was clearly aware of this paradoxicality, and we might read his choice to situate the dialogue under a *platanos* as a playful way to acknowledge it – especially when we remember Socrates's remark at the beginning of the work, where he says that he prefers talking to people in the city over being in the countryside because "trees have nothing to teach me."

What is the philosophical significance of this self-referential pun?

Let us now turn to Cicero's *De oratore*, a series of three dialogues written in 55 BCE. Unlike the *Phaedrus*, these are indirect dialogues: they contain a preface by Cicero himself, in which he addresses his brother and writes that he will recount a discussion that took place between a number of prominent Roman politicians and orators over the space of two days in 91 BCE, "so that you may learn what men renowned above all others for their eloquence have thought about the whole subject of oratory."[6]

De oratore explicitly establishes the *Phaedrus* as an intertext – the reference to Plato's dialogue is made by the characters themselves, who liken their own situation to that of Socrates and Phaedrus. The men have gathered in the garden of Crassus's villa and are leisurely walking around. After a while, Scaevola, upon spotting a plane tree, suggests the following:

> "Crassus, why do we not imitate Socrates as he appears in the Phaedrus of Plato? For your plane tree has suggested this comparison to my mind, casting as it does, with its spreading branches, as deep a shade over this spot, as that one cast whose shelter Socrates sought – which to me seems to owe its eminence less to 'the little rivulet' described by Plato than to the language of his dialogue – and what Socrates did, whose feet were thoroughly hardened, when he threw himself down on the grass and so began the talk which philosophers say was divine, – such ease surely may more reasonably be conceded to my own feet." "Nay," answered Crassus, "but we will make things more comfortable still," whereupon, according to Cotta, he called for cushions, and they all sat down together on the benches that were under the plane tree.[7]

6 Cicero, *De oratore* I.ii.

7 Cicero, *De oratore* I.vii.28-29.

At face value, this passage may look like nothing but a playful acknowledgement of the fact that Plato also dealt with the topic of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* – an instance of the kind of intellectual humour that we might indeed expect to encounter among the erudite Roman men of Cicero's party. We might go one step further and notice the difference between Cicero's and Plato's scenes: our Roman orators find themselves in the private comfort of Crassus's villa, and they lie down on actual cushions rather than on the soft grass that Socrates praised for its upholstery qualities. This can be seen as a reflection of the different ways in which our two authors approach the topic of rhetoric: Plato's characters were moving on unconquered terrain, whereas Cicero's are comfortably expounding existing rhetorical theory.

However, this analysis remains on the level of the dialogue-internal reference; we can also consider it from the point of view of Cicero-the-author. Cicero has Crassus, who can more or less be read as the author's mouthpiece, reflect on the paradoxical quality of Plato's critique of rhetoric, which is phrased in rhetorically cunning and effective ways.[8] By acknowledging this paradox, Cicero-the-author is also subtly pointing to the complicated relationship between his own (written) work and its subject (spoken language). In the introduction, Cicero tells his brother that he himself was not present during the conversations he recounts (that took place 36 years ago!), but that he only obtained some cursory and undetailed information about what was discussed through Cotta.[9] This, of course, is a typically Ciceronian 'humble brag': *De oratore* is a very intricately crafted work, and by saying that he was not himself present at the conversation, Cicero underlines its fictional nature and thereby his own literary achievement. In this way, *De oratore* echoes the self-referential nature of the *Phaedrus,* and it is able to do so in part by letting the conversation take place under a plane tree.

Plato's characters were moving on unconquered terrain, whereas Cicero's are comfortably expounding existing rhetorical theory.

The garden at dawn: Berkeley's *Three Dialogues* and Plato's *Protagoras*

Let us now turn to our second case study, which concerns Plato's *Protagoras*. The account of Socrates's visit to the eponymous sophist is embedded in a conversation between Socrates and an unnamed friend on the following day. The friend wishes to know what Socrates has been up to, and Socrates tells him the story. Very early the previous morning, some time before dawn, Hippocrates comes knocking on Socrates's door to tell him that Protagoras has come to town and is staying at Callias's place. Hippocrates desperately wants to visit him (as early as possible, as he wants to

8 Cicero, *De oratore*, I.x.47-48.

9 Cicero, *De oratore* I.ii.5; I.vii.26.

be sure that he will find Protagoras at home) and urges Socrates to accompany him. Socrates answers that it is still far too early and proposes to take a walk around the garden until the sun comes up. He reassures Hippocrates that Protagoras is one to stay inside anyway, so he need not worry about missing him. During their stroll, Socrates questions Hippocrates about his fervent wish to meet Protagoras and forces him to admit that what he desires is to become a sophist like him. The sun is just rising, and in this first light of day, Hippocrates can be seen to blush at his admission. After continuing their conversation for a while, they finally set out for Callias's house. Arriving there, they are initially barred entrance by a doorkeeper, who has overheard them talking and thinks they must be sophists; he is of the opinion that there are already far too many of them in the house. Socrates convinces him – a remark that is surely also directed at the reader – that he and Hippocrates are no sophists, and the doorkeeper reluctantly lets them pass. Inside, they indeed find an impressive number of people who are all following Protagoras around as he strolls through the house. The space is resounding with unintelligible conversation. After having observed this scene for a bit, Socrates and Hippocrates approach Protagoras and start their discussion.

The quiet walk that Hippocrates and Socrates take through the garden at dawn stands in sharp contrast with the bustling scene they encounter inside Callias's house. The sharpness of this transition is further underlined by their encounter with the stubborn doorkeeper. What is more, Protagoras is characterized as someone who likes to stay inside, while Socrates gained his fame by asking people questions outside, on the streets. Vittorio Hösle has convincingly argued that this contrast between inside and outside should be interpreted allegorically: the spaces through which Socrates and Hippocrates move "allude to the descent into the underworld (*Nekyia*) in Homer and foreshadow the metaphysical topography of the Allegory of the Cave."[10] The allusion is further strengthened by the two quotations from book 11 of the *Odyssey* that Socrates uses to describe the scene inside.[11] Callias's house is a cave full of sophists, where an intelligible conversation is impossible; philosophers roam out in the open, where the sun is shining.

Let us now turn to the *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, a work first published in 1713 by George Berkeley. At first glance, it seems that Berkeley has little interest in the 'literary' possibilities of the dialogic form. The text basically reiterates the arguments for Berkeley's immaterialist doctrine that he had first presented three years prior in *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, and the characters – who have no personality, backstory, or even real names – delve into these arguments rather unceremoniously and perhaps ungracefully. However, the dialogue

10 Hösle, *The Philosophical Dialogue*, 214.

11 Plato, *Protagoras* 315b-d.

does contain a very short introduction in which the conversation is placed in a particular setting, and this setting is continuously referred to throughout the course of the work. It is this element of the *Three Dialogues* that I would like to examine here.

Berkeley's text does not refer to a Platonic intertext as explicitly as Cicero's: the characters themselves do not reflect on the type of conversation that they are having. However, I think one can make the case that the scene-setting of the *Three Dialogues* is reminiscent of the beginning of Plato's *Protagoras*. It is very early in the morning, the sun is just rising, and Philonous (who should be read as Berkeley's mouthpiece) runs into Hylas, who is taking a walk in the garden. Philonous briefly remarks on the beauty of their surroundings:

> Can there be a pleasanter time of the day, or a more delightful season of the year? That purple sky, these wild but sweet notes of birds, the fragrant bloom upon the trees and flowers, the gentle influence of the rising sun, these and a thousand nameless beauties of nature inspire the soul with secret transports; its faculties too being at this time fresh and lively, are fit for those meditations, which the solitude of a garden and tranquillity of the morning naturally dispose us to.[12]

The pair, however, does not dwell long on their *locus amoenus* but instead dives headfirst into a considerably technical philosophical conversation. The main topic of this conversation is Philonous's claim that immaterialism is a plausible doctrine, that it does *not* lead to skepticism about the reality of the outside world, and much less to a lack of ability to share, appreciate and enjoy this world.

If we consider the matter more closely, it seems quite significant that Philonous opens the conversation with an appreciative remark about the garden in which he and Hylas are taking their walk. Indeed, it might even be read as a response to the opening scene of Malebranche's *Entretiens sur la métaphysique et sur la religion*, in which Theodore asks his conversation partner Ariste to go inside because the outside world might be enchanting but should ultimately be considered a distraction: one needs to go inside to withdraw into oneself to concentrate upon the inner truth.[13] Berkeley wishes to counter the idea that immaterialism leads to skepticism about the outside world – and thus situates his dialogue outside.

Throughout the course of the dialogues, Philonous points at the surroundings of the garden with increasing insistence. On day one, he remarks on "the beautiful red and purple we see on yonder clouds" and draws Hylas's attention to the fact that "in

12 George Berkeley, *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne. Volume Two*, eds. A.A. Luce and T.E. Jessop (London: Nelson and Sons, 1948), 171.

13 Nicolas Malebranche, *Dialogues on Metaphysics and on Religion*, eds. Nicholas Jolley and David Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3-4.

looking at this flower, you perceive white."[14] On day two, Philonous exclaims: "Look! are not the fields covered with a delightful verdure? Is there not something in the woods and groves, in the rivers and clear springs that soothes, that delights, that transports the soul?"[15] Later, in an exchange strikingly similar to G.E. Moore's infamous anti-skeptical 'Here is one hand' argument, Philonous insists on "the reality of things" and asks Hylas "to fix on some particular thing; is it not a sufficient evidence to me of the existence of this *glove,* that I see it, and feel it, and wear it?"[16] On the third day, he tells Hylas to "[a]sk the gardener, why he thinks yonder cherry-tree exists in the garden, and he shall tell you, because he sees and feels it; in a word, because he perceives it by his senses."[17] A little later, he apparently even picks one cherry off the tree and puts it in his mouth: "I see this *cherry*, I feel it, I taste it: and I am sure *nothing* cannot be seen, or felt, or tasted: it is therefore *real*."[18]

Berkeley wishes to counter the idea that immaterialism leads to skepticism about the outside world – and thus situates his dialogue outside.

In conclusion, although the minimal scene-setting elements of the *Three Dialogues* do not appear to carry much philosophical weight at first glance, they do, on closer inspection, appear to be intimately related to the theoretical content of the text. Berkeley's characters are oriented towards the outside world rather than having turned their gaze 'inwards'. By asking the reader to imagine a real garden with real clouds, real gloves, and real cherry trees, Berkeley demonstrates that immaterialism does *not* lead to skepticism about or a rejection of reality. Through Philonous's increasingly enthusiastic engagement with the garden, Berkeley attempts to show that a rejection of the concept of 'matter' does not impact our capacity to believe in, enjoy, or share the outside world. The dynamics between inside and outside spaces is hence as important in the *Three Dialogues* as it is in the *Protagoras*.

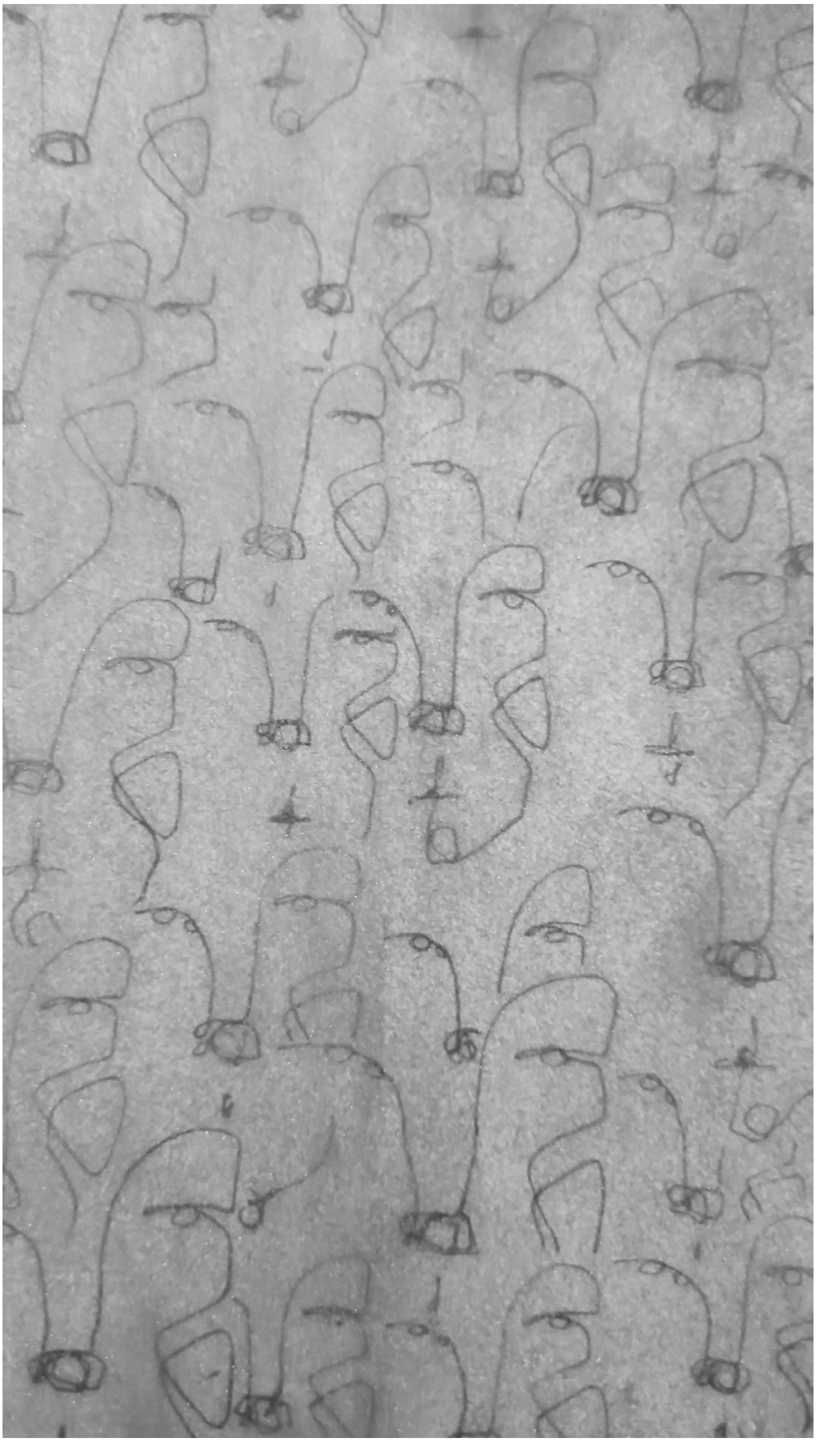
14 Berkeley, *Works*, 184; 196.

15 Berkeley, *Works*, 210.

16 Berkeley, *Works*, 224.

17 Berkeley, *Works*, 234.

18 Berkeley, *Works*, 249.



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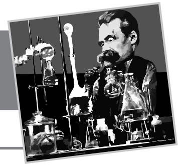

Sidney de Laat

Nina de Boer

“Als er in dat gehele proefschrift één zin staat waarvan iemand denkt “Hier kan ik iets mee in het dagelijks leven”, dan is dat al mooi meegenomen. Ik wil dat wat ik doe, niet slechts abstract blijft. Ik zou dan ook graag *voor* mensen schrijven, en niet slechts over mensen.”

Ik spreek met Nina de Boer, promovenda aan de Radboud Universiteit. Nina heeft een Liberal Arts & Science Bachelor gevolgd aan het Amsterdam University College. Ze heeft ook een onderzoeksmaster in de Neurowetenschappen en een onderzoeksmaster in de Filosofie van de Neurowetenschappen gevolgd. Daarnaast heeft ze klinisch onderzoek gedaan bij het AMC. Op dit moment doet Nina onderzoek naar netwerkbenaderingen in de psychiatrie, waarbij wordt gepoogd om psychiatrische stoornissen op een nieuwe manier te conceptualiseren en af te stappen van het idee dat psychiatrische stoornissen één oorzaak kennen.

Wat kun je zeggen over je onderzoek, dat zich richt op de ‘netwerktheorie van de psychiatrie’?
Mijn onderzoek – dat je in één *catchphrase* ‘netwerkbenaderingen in de psychiatrie’ kan noemen – hangt samen met twee aspecten: een ontologische en een methodologische. Dat betekent dat ik kijk naar hoe psychiatrische stoornissen ontologisch gezien, maar vooral ook methodologisch/epistemisch gezien als ‘complex’ kunnen worden beschouwd. Kunnen we dus met de bestaande netwerkmethodes, psychiatrische stoornissen beter duiden dan met de ‘traditionele’ onderzoeksmethodes, die zich focussen op één oorzaak? Kunnen deze modellen recht doen aan die psychiatrische complexiteit, of niet?

Enerzijds zijn veel clinici en onderzoekers in de psychiatrie van mening dat men niet meer moet zoeken naar *de* oorzaak van een psychisch probleem of een psychische kwetsbaarheid. In plaats daarvan moeten we ernaar streven om de complexiteit juist te behouden, in plaats van haar te reduceren tot een oorzaak. Dit is een idee dat ook steeds meer voet aan de grond krijgt vanuit wetenschappelijk en maatschappelijk oogpunt. In het verleden is er een flinke strijd geweest tussen aan de ene kant een groep die psychiatrische stoornissen terugvoert op biologische gronden, en aan de andere kant een groep die deze terugvoert op de sociale omgeving. In de afgelopen jaren is er daarentegen steeds meer begrip voor het idee dat *al* die factoren samen een rol spelen in het veroorzaken van een psychiatrische stoornis. Dus niet slechts biologische oorzaken, maar óók psychologische, existentiële, en opvoedings- en omgevingsfactoren zijn van belang. Op deze manier grijpt mijn onderzoek in op ontologische aannames over wat een psychiatrische stoornis *is*.

Anderzijds is er ook een methodologisch aspect. De afgelopen twintig jaar is er een enorme opkomst geweest van 'netwerkwetenschap' of '*network science*'. Deze biedt methodologische handvaten om complexe systemen of complexe netwerken te bestuderen. Je kan namelijk wel vaststellen dat een systeem complex is, maar het is ook belangrijk om te onderzoeken of we door psychiatrische stoornissen als netwerken te bestuderen, andere inzichten kunnen opdoen. Dat is belangrijk, want je kan wel zeggen "psychiatrie is complex", en dat alles dynamisch is, belangrijk is, en elkaar beïnvloedt, maar daar schiet je niet zoveel mee op. Het zou meer toevoegen als we methodologische handvaten vinden waarmee we patronen in de complexiteit kunnen ontwarren. Het probleem is alleen dat iedereen 'complexiteit' anders definieert. Doet de definitie die men gebruikt in netwerkwetenschap recht aan de specifieke complexiteit waar wij geïnteresseerd in zijn in de psychiatrie? Het kan zijn dat de conclusie is: psychiatrie is te ingewikkeld en we kunnen er geen patronen in ontwaren. Dat weet ik nog niet.

Op deze manier grijpt mijn onderzoek in op ontologische aannames over wat een psychiatrische stoornis is.

Kan je ook zeggen wat de toepassing van zo'n netwerkbenadering concreet inhoudt?
Het standaardvoorbeeld dat wordt gegeven door de voorstanders van de netwerkbenadering, zoals Denny Borsboom van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, is van iemand die last heeft van slaapproblemen. Deze slaapproblemen zorgen ervoor dat iemand niet zo goed kan concentreren, wat er vervolgens voor zorgt dat je gaat piekeren, omdat je moet studeren voor een tentamen of iets dergelijks. Dat piekeren veroorzaakt weer slaapproblemen, wat vervolgens weer zorgt voor een gebrek aan concentratie, enzovoort. Op deze manier ontstaan er 'probleeminstandhoudende patronen', om een term te gebruiken die ik van *Redesigning Psychiatry*[1] heb.

Vanuit dit perspectief wordt de stoornis dan begrepen als een systeem van factoren die elkaar in stand houden. Wat daar interessant aan is, is dat dit niet betekent dat de biologie en omgevingsfactoren niet relevant zijn. Die zijn ergens ook een onderdeel in dat systeem. Maar, binnen bestaande netwerktheorieën wordt naar mijn idee niet echt duidelijk gemaakt hoe biologie en omgeving samenhangen

1 *Redesigning Psychiatry* is een organisatie die nadenkt over verbeteren van de psychiatrische praktijk.

met deze symptoomcirkel, en om die reden ga ik in mijn onderzoek kijken of deze netwerkbenadering uitgebouwd kan worden. Dat betekent dat je kijkt of je biologische factoren en omgevingsfactoren – en andere typen factoren die je relevant acht in de psychiatrie – kan incorporeren in deze netwerktheoretische wijze waarop je psychiatrische stoornissen conceptualiseert.

Hoe zit dat precies met die 'traditionele' opvatting binnen de psychiatrie? Je hebt dus aan de ene kant de biologische kijk op psychiatrische stoornissen, en aan de andere kant een sociologische kijk? Wat is de spanning tussen die twee opvattingen? Kan je daar iets concreter in zijn?

Ik moet ten eerste benadrukken dat ik niet voor de gehele psychiatrie kan spreken. Psychiatrie is sowieso een ongelofelijk heterogeen vakgebied, en er zijn weinig behandelaren of onderzoekers die volledig in het ene of in het andere kamp zitten – het ligt allemaal wat genuanceerder. Vanaf de jaren '80 kan je echter wel zien dat de pendel erg richting de biologische psychiatrie is gaan zwaaien. Deze tendens komt ook voort uit bepaalde nieuwe technologische innovaties uit de laatste jaren: apparaten die ons genoom of de hersenen beter kunnen bestuderen. Het idee was dat wij dankzij deze innovaties eindelijk de 'kern' van psychiatrische stoornissen met behulp van biologisch onderzoek konden vinden.

Eerst werd deze kern gezocht in de genetica: genen zouden hetgeen zijn wat ons het échte inzicht geeft in psychiatrische stoornissen. Later is de focus verplaatst naar de hersenen. Denk aan *Wij zijn ons brein* van Dick Swaab: onder veel mensen heerste het idee dat we 'problemen' in ons gedrag kunnen reduceren tot problemen in de hersenen. Dat betekent dat wanneer er iets 'mis' is met hoe wij denken, redeneren, of wat dan ook, dat een hersendefect is. Er is dus iets 'mis' met je hersenen en dát zorgt ervoor dat je verschillende symptomen hebt. Als we dit probleem in de hersenen vervolgens op een of andere manier – met medicatie of een andere behandeling die inwerkt op de hersenen – kunnen *fixen*, dan is het probleem 'opgelost'.

Het geloof in de biologische kern werd ook versterkt door het feit dat medicatie ook oprecht werkt voor een groep mensen. Dat ondersteunt erg het idee dat de kernoorzaak van de psychiatrie iets biologisch is. Dit neuroreductionistische perspectief is iets dat door weinig mensen – met uitzondering van bepaalde neurowetenschappers – expliciet wordt uitgedragen, maar waar wél vaak impliciet van wordt uitgegaan in de psychiatrie. Het *National Institute of Mental Health* in de Verenigde Staten ging bijvoorbeeld een lange tijd mee in deze tendens.

De andere tendens die je ziet is het begrijpen van psychiatrische stoornissen vanuit de sociale omgeving. Je kan namelijk doen alsof het probleem dat iemand heeft een puur biologische oorzaak heeft, maar je kan niet wegkijken van omgevingsfactoren. Ben je bijvoorbeeld opgegroeid in een arme omgeving of niet? Dat kan een rol spelen. Socioculturele normen spelen ook een rol in wat wij als 'normaal' beschouwen. Homoseksualiteit werd bijvoorbeeld lange tijd als psychiatrische stoornis aangeschreven. Zoiets heeft te maken met hoe wij mensen omgaan met diversiteit: welke diversiteit wij pathologisch achten en welke niet. Je kan dus zeggen dat socioculturele normen én de omgeving een rol spelen. Het is interessant dat in de geschiedenis periodes waarin men voornamelijk focust op biologische oorzaken zich af lijken te wisselen met periodes waarin men meer focust op sociale oorzaken. Zo hebben in de afgelopen jaren bijvoorbeeld een aantal psychiaters populair-filosofische boeken geschreven die op een cultuurkritische manier kijken naar de psychiatrie.

Aan de ene kant kan je dus niet de omgeving wegschrijven, wat soms gebeurde in de biologische georiënteerde psychiatrie, maar aan de andere kant kan je de biologie ook niet wegcijferen. Het lijkt mij te simpel om te zeggen dat alle mensen met een psychiatrische diagnose *alleen* lijden vanwege socioculturele normen. Deze normen alleen verklaren bijvoorbeeld niet waarom medicatie werkt. Dat vind ik zelf altijd een stom voorbeeld, maar het is wél zo: medicatie *doet* iets, en dat kan je niet alleen sociocultureel verklaren. Waarom nemen we niet die verschillende perspectieven – het biologische, het sociale, het psychologische, het existentiële – mee in één theorie?

Waar gaan die 'traditionele' opvattingen de fout in?

Het hoofdprobleem is dat deze opvattingen uitgaan van het bestaan van één oorzaak, waaruit de symptomen ontstaan. Dat is een veels te simplistische kijk op wat er speelt. Het veronderstelt ook dat biologie en omgeving geïsoleerde entiteiten zijn. Binnen de biologische wetenschappen, bijvoorbeeld in de genetica, zie je 'epigenetische fenomenen', waarbij de omgeving invloed heeft op de genexpressie. Om een voorbeeld te geven: je ziet bij de kinderen van ouders die leefden ten tijde van de hongerswinter, en dus door omstandigheden sterk ondervoed waren, dat die omstandigheden generaties lang doorwerken. Wat dus door de omgeving is veroorzaakt, heeft effect op de genetische code.

Dat vind ik zelf altijd een stom voorbeeld, maar het is wél zo: medicatie doet iets, en dat kan je niet alleen sociocultureel verklaren.

Dat geeft dus aan dat er sprake is van een integratie tussen biologie en omgeving. Daarnaast is het ook zo dat wij als mens onze omgeving vormen. Het is niet zo dat de omgeving er 'gewoon' is, en dat wij daar niks mee doen. Wij interacteren met onze omgeving op een bepaalde manier, gedeeltelijk vanuit biologische behoeftes. Dus het is niet zo dat je twee, losse, statische entiteiten hebt waarbij het óf de een, óf de ander is. Daar geloof ik niet in.

Vertalen deze theoretische tekortkomingen zich ook naar een tekortkoming op praktisch niveau? Of zijn mensen eigenlijk net zo goed geholpen met een theoretisch 'inadequate' benadering?

Ik vind het moeilijk om daar een uitspraak over te doen, want ik ben geen behandelaar. Desalniettemin is het een gegeven dat er een behoefte is aan een bepaalde verandering in de psychiatrie. Er zijn tegenwoordig genoeg mensen die aankloppen bij de GGZ. Waarom dat zo is, is een ander verhaal, maar onderzoek heeft laten zien dat voor slechts zo'n veertig procent van de mensen behandeling helpt. Er zijn gewoon veel mensen waarvoor behandeling niet aanslaat. De vraag is of dat kan liggen aan het conceptuele kader wat we hanteren, maar het blijft een feit dat behandelingen niet even goed werken. Daarnaast is het ook zo dat wetenschappelijk onderzoek laat zien dat er geen enkele factor is die volledig kan voorspellen of iemand psychische klachten krijgt. Dan is het interessant als je een netwerkbenadering hebt die vanuit een andere set aannames redeneert. Ik wil niet zeggen dat deze nieuwe benadering heiligmakend gaat zijn, alles gaat oplossen en zorgt voor een betere praktijk. Het is uiteindelijk gewoon een andere manier om naar de dingen te kijken. Misschien dat dat voor sommige mensen helpt.

Er is ook een organisatie genaamd *Redesigning Psychiatry*. Deze brengt psychiaters, *designers* en filosofen samen om na te denken over het verbeteren van de psychiatrische praktijk vanuit een patroongeoriënteerd perspectief. Zij werken met de gedachte dat het in de praktijk zinvoller zou kunnen zijn om over je klachten na te denken als probleeminstandhoudende patronen. Dat is ook iets dat je als filosoof niet moet vergeten. Het is immers vrij makkelijk om dingen abstract te maken wanneer je je bezighoudt met data of wetenschapsfilosofie. Uiteindelijk gaat het echter om mensen in een bepaalde praktijk.

Om deze reden vind ik het praktische element vanaf begin af aan belangrijk. Toen ik begon met mijn onderzoek en naar het perspectief van netwerkbenadering keek, was ik ontzettend onder de indruk. Ik kreeg meteen het gevoel dat dit gewoon *klopte*. Die ervaring heeft mijn kijk op de psychiatrie nogal veranderd, en hoewel ik met steeds meer nuance kan kijken naar netwerkbenaderingen, ben ik er toch echt van overtuigd dat er iets in de netwerkbenadering zit dat mensen écht kan helpen. Ik geloof dat deze netwerkmodellen mensen kunnen helpen een ander begrip te geven aan wat psychiatrie nu is, of wat hun klachten nu precies zijn.

Je probeert tegen wat heilige huisjes te schoppen, die ook nog eens betrekking hebben op een (psychiatrische) praktijk. Jaag je daarmee wel eens psychiaters, of andere wetenschappers, in het harnas?

Ik heb niet veel psychiaters gesproken die het oneens zijn met wat ik doe, dus ik weet niet zeker of ik tegen heilige huisjes schop, maar dat is denk ik een kwestie van *selection bias*. De psychiaters die ik spreek zijn immers degenen die het interessant vinden wat ik doe. Mijn onderzoek is ook niet per se een kritiek op de psychiatrische praktijk. Er zijn genoeg psychiaters die meebewegen met het idee dat de dingen toch wat ingewikkelder zijn dan we altijd hebben gedacht. Ik moet ook zeggen dat ik minder aan psychiaters heb gedacht dan aan de mensen met een geleefde ervaring voor wie dit onderzoek belangrijk kan zijn. Die zitten meer in mijn achterhoofd.

Ergens hoop ik wel dat ik mensen in het harnas *kan* jagen, want dat betekent dat de dingen die ik zeg verder reiken dan de filosofie. Ik denk dat dat ook mijn uiteindelijke doel is: om iets te creëren dat een goed filosofisch werk is, maar óók iets dat meer reikwijdte heeft dan slechts de filosofie. Dus als er een psychiater is die erg kritisch over mijn onderzoek is, dan is dat goed want dat betekent dat ik iets naar buiten heb gebracht wat het waard is om kritiek op te hebben.

Het is duidelijk dat je écht wat wil bewerkstelligen met je onderzoek. Wat wil je precies bereiken?
Ik denk dat iedereen die in de academische wereld zit eigenlijk méér wilt dan slechts een discussie op gang brengen onder een twintigtal mensen. Maar ik zou het al mooi vinden als ik een discussie kan aanzwengelen onder academici. Dat is denk ik ook het enige waar je in eerste instantie naar kan streven. Het denken in termen van netwerken heeft heel erg míjn eigen kijk op de psyche veranderd, en het zou mooi zijn als iemand mijn onderzoek leest en denkt: “Dit is een interessante manier om te kijken naar de dingen waar ik last van heb.” Als er in dat gehele proefschrift één zin staat waarvan iemand denkt “Hier kan ik iets mee in het dagelijks leven”, dan is dat al mooi meegenomen. Ik wil dat wat ik doe, niet slechts abstract blijft. Ik zou dan ook graag *voor* mensen schrijven, en niet slechts *over* mensen.

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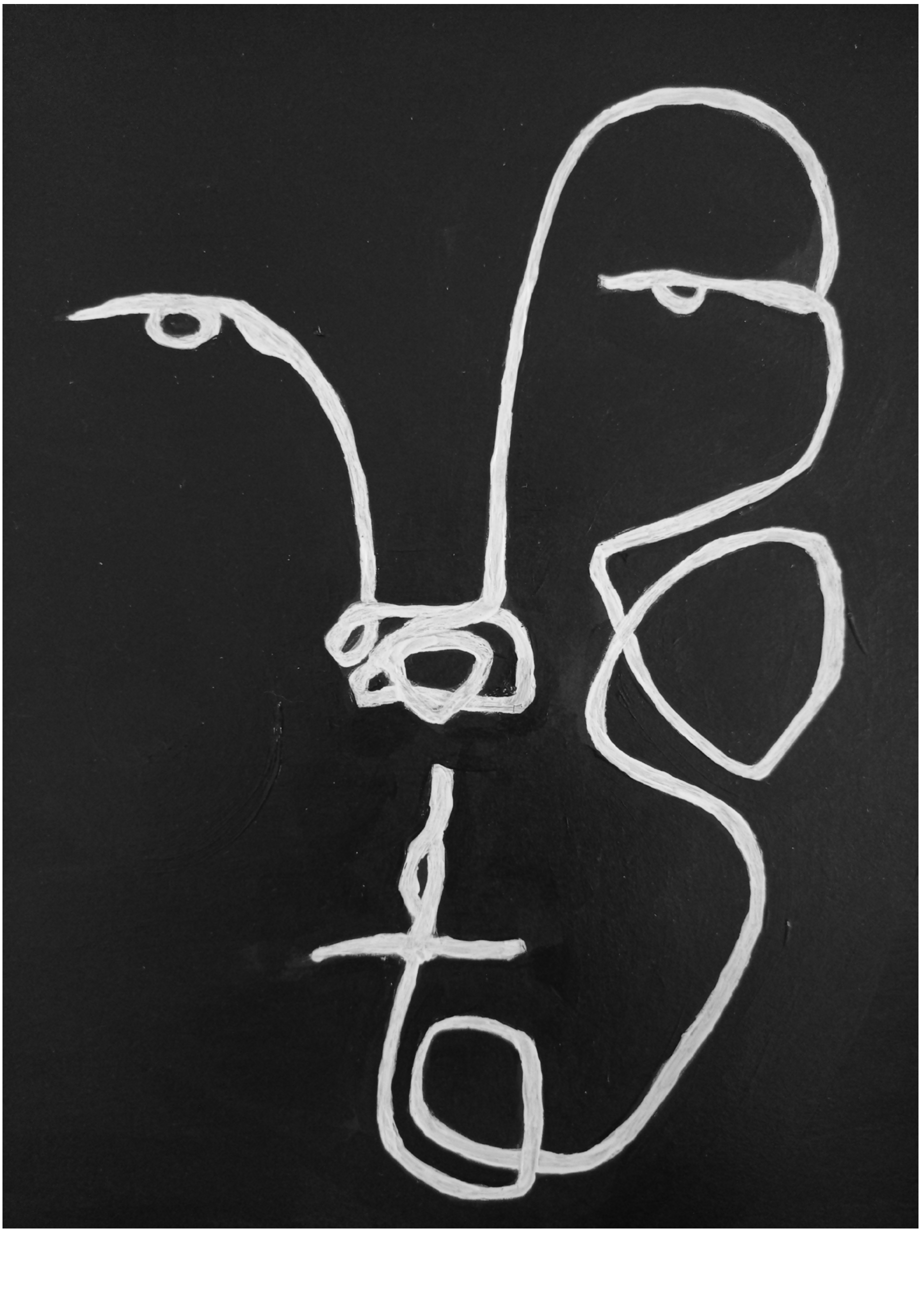

Noh Face

The Suffering Other

Mireille Kouevi

Figure 1 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB" Mononoke, YouTube Video, 17:19, accessed 21-01-2021.

The story of the *Noppera-Bō* (のっぺらぼう, faceless one) is one of the five independent short stories in the anime *Mononoke* that has been framed in the aesthetics of *Noh* (能), Japan's oldest surviving theatre with its distinct use of masks.[1] *Noh* masks (能面 Nō-men or 面 Omote) are the defining factor in Noh theatre and date back to the fourteenth century. The term *Noh*, derived from talent or ability, was originally derived from *Sarugaku* (猿楽), which translates into "monkey music" with the "*Saru*" (猿), referring to the Chinese zodiac monkey deity, explaining its connection and ties with the gods.[2] *Noh* tells the stories of the supernatural world of gods and spirits, with the interplay between song and dance.[3] The most important role within a *Noh* is the one of the *Shite* (仕手). He is the leading actor and the one that is wearing the masks, which allows him to represent different roles such as a deity, woman, gods, spirit, or demon.[4]

A *Noppera-Bō* in Japanese folklore is a *Yōkai*[5] (妖怪, supernatural entity) that perfectly blends into human society because it resembles an ordinary human with the difference of having no face. These types of *Yōkai* are rather innocent – mischievous at best – since all they do is approach people and scare them by showing off their true form. In the anime *Mononoke*, we follow the story of the protagonist *Kusuriuri* (薬売, Japanese for medicine seller), who throughout the anime remains to be the only constant. The only thing known about the *Kusuriuri* is his occupation as a merchant; his origins and motivation remain unknown. There is also a hint that he is, at least partially, a *Yōkai* himself, due to his odd appearance and special powers.

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1 *Yokai.com*, s.v. "Nopperabō," accessed 21-01-2021, Nopperabō | Yokai.com.

2 Edwin Lee, "The Spirit of 能' – Oldest surviving form of theatre in the world," YouTube Video, 1:45-:1:52, 06-07-2018, accessed 21-01-2021, 'The Spirit of Noh 能' - Oldest surviving form of theater in the world - YouTube.

3 "Noh Theater," *Japan-guide.com*, 08-06-2020, accessed 21-01-2021, Noh Theater (japan-guide.com).

4 "Noh Theater," *Japan-guide.com*, 08-06-2020, accessed 21-01-2021, Noh Theater (japan-guide.com).

5 *Yōkai i*s the umbrella term for supernatural entities, which includes spirits, monsters and demons which can be both good and bad. They are not evil by nature but if a *Yōkai* is turns to be a evil spirit they fall into the category of Mononoke.

In each story, the objective of the protagonist *Kusuriuri* is to exorcise the *Mononoke*[6] (物の怪) by killing it with his sword.[7] For the story of the *Noppera-Bō*, we follow *Kusuriuri* in his interaction with Ochou, a young woman on death row for killing her husband and his family. Nonetheless, *Kusuriuri* is convinced that the crime against the husband and his family could not have been committed by Ochou; he is convinced that this was the work of a *Mononoke* and seeks to find out the truth about the killings. In the context of the anime, *Mononoke* refers to a vengeful and evil spirit (怨霊, Onryō) of a deceased person. To kill the *Mononoke,* the *Kusuriuri* needs to determine its Form (形, *Katachi*), Truth (誠, *Makoto*) and Reason (理, *Kotowari*). Only then is he able to unsheathe his sword. The Form determines what type of *Mononoke* it is, while the Truth refers to the human wrongdoing that has caused the *Mononoke's* existence, and the Reason refers to the continued presence of the *Mononoke.*

What stands out in this particular arc is not only its beautiful images but also the problematics of the cultural expectation of the Neo-Confucian values for women throughout the Tokugawa period.

The *Noppera-Bō* arc is quite an interesting short story that takes place in episodes six and seven and is an allusion to the tradition of Noh and is referenced in the use of Noh masks as the central topic of the episodes. What stands out in this particular arc is not only its beautiful images but also the problematics of the cultural expectation of the Neo-Confucian values for women throughout the Tokugawa period. The cultural expectations were set by the Neo-Confucian values, which were aimed at dictating a correct way of life based on principle (禮, *li*) and matter (氣, *qi*).[8] *Li* as a principle refers to the "pattern or order to the world of the cosmos".[9] It is one of the key philosophical terms used in early Confucianism. *Qi*, on the other hand, as matter must be seen as the "vital force or material force that functions as the dynamic force or matrix

6 A *Mononoke* is an evil spirit or soul of either a living or dead person that either possesses or curses other people. The term itself, is often used as an umbrella term to categorise all forms of supernatural entities that can be encountered, however, a *Mononoke* is of evil and vengeful nature due to some traumatising event that was experienced in their lifetime.

7 The fact that *Kusuriuri* is wearing a sword is going against the rules of the caste system in feudal Japan. Only samurais, during the Tokugawa period were permitted to wield swords. This is the reason why most characters throughout the series are shocked when they see *Kusuriuri* carrying the sword.

8 "Neo-Confucianism Beliefs," James Stuart, Classroom, accessed 22-02-2022, Zen & Taoism (synonym.com).

9 *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v., "Neo-Confucian Philosophy," last accessed 22-02-2022, Neo-Confucian Philosophy | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (utm.edu).

out of which all objects or events emerge and into which they all return when their career is completed."[10] Thus, the goal of the Neo-Confucian philosophy and its values was aimed to encourage and nurture a universal understanding of the good life that is based on "self-cultivation as a path not only to self-fulfillment but to the formation of a virtuous and harmonious society."[11]

Confucian teachings (both the traditional and its variations) focus on the importance of family and unity. Moreover, family is the most foundational formation of society and women played a central role in educating their offspring about the structures and values of both the family and society.[12] Although grandmothers and mothers had important and respected positions in their family, a young woman would have to gain her place in the new family.[13] This respect was not automatically guaranteed by simply marrying into the family of the husband but rather based on her capacity of producing offspring to keep the ancestor line alive. Thus, by giving birth and raising the children in accordance with the Neo-Confucian values, a woman was able to secure her position as a respectable figure that is fulfilling her duty as not only a good wife and wise mother but also as the daughter of a long history of descendants. Thus, the role of the Neo-Confucian value of the good wife and wise mother from the Tokugawa Period and its expectations were shaping the cultural expectation of women simultaneously articulating not only in the political project of creating a national identity but also resulting in the marginalisation of women and their livelihoods.

In this essay, I will investigate to what extent the anime *Mononoke* promotes the Neo-Confucian value of the good wife, wise mother and whether this value can be traced back to the Meiji period. First, I will begin by introducing a broad summary of the *Noppera-Bō* episode focusing on the analysis of the transformation of Ochou becoming the *Mononoke* and the personification of the *Hannya* mask (般若). Then, I will define the Neo-Confucian values for women and their connection to the expectations of women in Japanese society and how they relate to the play within the anime. By doing so, I aim to analyse how the 'monsterfication' of Ocho relates to the Japanese cultural self and the notion of becoming a suffering other in empathy. After this, I will outline how the Neo-Confucian values have impacted the cultural ideas and identity of Japan in the Meiji period focusing on the notion of government and extended families.

10 *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v., "Neo-Confucian Philosophy," last accessed 22-02-2022, Neo-Confucian Philosophy | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (utm.edu).

11 "The Song Dynasty in China," Asia for Educators, accessed 22-02-2022, The Song Dynasty in China | Asia for Educators (columbia.edu).

12 The Song Dynasty in China | Asia for Educators (columbia.edu)

13 The Song Dynasty in China | Asia for Educators (columbia.edu)

Becoming the Hannya

In the *Noppera-Bō* episode, the *Kusuriuri* visits Ochou, a woman that was sentenced to death. The crime that she committed was the violent slaughter of her husband Satsuki Kazuma and his family.[14] Although her fate is written in stone, *Kusuriuri* questions whether Ochou alone is responsible for the death of the family. Moreover, he is convinced that she must be innocent and that the killings must be the work of a *Mononoke*, or in other words, she must be possessed. Soon after *Kusuriuri* begins questioning the young woman on whom she killed, a mysterious figure appears that *Kusuriuri* at first mistakes for the *Noppera-Bō*, the *Mononoke* responsible for Ochou's crimes. However, the Form, Truth, and Reason all come from Ochou herself, revealing that she is the one that became the *Noppera-Bō*. Ochou has turned into a *Mononoke* as the result of years of abuse by her mother and husband. By trying to please everyone else, Ochou has 'lost her face' and identity and became a mindless servant. Brutally murdering her husband and his family was her coping mechanism to deal with the daily abuse.

Figure 2 Dym Sensei, "Noh Masks (面,Men): The Spirit of Noh Theatre" YouTube Video, 16:51, accessed 21-01-2021.

Ochou's story of suffering to please her mother, in particular, demands for the most famous *Noh* mask, the *Hannya*. Moreover, the *Hannya*, belonging to the category of *Onryō*, represents suffering and malicious spirits.[15] In ancient Japanese folklore, the suffering of a woman caused by a loved one is what transforms her into an otherworldly being that is unable to fully move on to the Beyond.[16] Obsessive attachment to an earthly feeling, jealousy, for instance, is one of the most associated feelings with *Hannya*.[17] *Hannya* is specifically used for the women that transformed into "evil spirits because of their obsessive attachment to an earthly feeling".[18] In the case of Ochou, *Kusuriuri* states, "[t]he intertwined fates of men give the *Mononoke* its Form."[19] When an *Ayakashi* (アヤカシ, the collective category for *Yōkai*, otherworldly beings)

14 In the Japanese family system around the Edo period, women were expected to cut the ties with their family and become part of the household of the husband after their marriage. A wife in this case is not necessarily part of the family, but part of the household.

15 "Spirit masks 怨霊面," *JPARC Consortium*, accessed 21-01-2021, Spirit masks 怨霊面 – JPARC.

16 Gabriela Herstik, "The Cunning Female Demons and Ghosts of Ancient Japan," *Vice.com*, 30-01-2016, accessed 21-01-2021,The Cunning Female Demons and Ghosts of Ancient Japan (vice.com).

17 "Spirit masks 怨霊面," *JPARC Consortium*, accessed 21-01-2021, Spirit masks 怨霊面 – JPARC

18 "Spirit masks 怨霊面," *JPARC Consortium*, accessed 21-01-2021, Spirit masks 怨霊面 – JPARC

19 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB" *Mononoke*, YouTube Video, 3:10-3:23, accessed 21-01-2021, Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB - YouTube.

"clings onto a person's thoughts and feelings, it becomes a *Mononoke*."[20] Moreover, it is the fact that Ochou attempts to accept her mother's cruel love and the wavering state of her heart that turns Ochou into the *Noppera-Bō*, explaining the use of the *Hannya* to represent Ochou's current mental state.[21] Ochou is now experiencing a moral dilemma. On the one hand, she longs for her mother's love and approval, which she only gets whenever she lives up to the expectations of her mother and the family. On the other hand, it is clear that to live up to these expectations means for Ochou to give up her individual needs and submit herself to the higher-order and play her part in painting the bigger picture.

Good Wives and Wise Mothers in the Tokugawa Period

The *Noh* play performed by *Kusuriuri* within the episodes of the *Noppera-Bō* sheds some slight insight into the socio-political condition of women in the Tokugawa period. During the Tokugawa period, the shogunate centre of attention was on the nation and the family.[22] Neo-Confucianism became the prominent political theory, and its teachings were "typically understood in relation to the socio-political world of humanity, beginning with the individual and […] [their] moral and intellectual perfection, the family and its pursuit of harmony and order, and the polity, and its pursuit of pursuit of peace and prosperity".[23] Moreover, Confucianism implied a natural cosmic order which determined the hierarchy patterns for the patriarchal society. Beginning with the ruled being below the ruler in the social hierarchy.[24] The nation and the family both required a set of obligations of loyalty and filial piety (*kō*).[25] As the academic and feminist Dr Yasuko Morihara Grosjean, who has focused the majority of her academic life on the marginalisation of women in Japan, states, "[t]hese obligations of loyalty and filial piety rest upon the concept of *on*, i.e., blessing, goodness, kindness, favor, benevolence, which the higher bestows on the lower."[26] The receiver, on the other hand, is expected to "have the proper sense of gratitude expressed in *chu* and *kō*, i.e., loyalty, to his lord [or whoever is in the hierarchy above the person,

20 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB" *Mononoke*, YouTube Video, 3:10-3:23, accessed 21-01-2021, Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB - YouTube.

21 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 2) ENG SUB" *Mononoke*, YouTube Video, 14:42-14:55, accessed 21-01-2021, 14:50-14:58.

22 Yasuko Morihara Grosjean, "From Confucius to Feminism: The Japanese Woman's Quest for Meaning, Ultimate Reality and Meaning vol 11, no. 3 (2018): 169, accessed 21-01-2021, https://doi.org/10.3138/uram.11.3.166.

23 Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, s.v. "Japanese Confucian Philosophy," accessed 21-01-2021, Japanese Confucian Philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

24 Grosjean, *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 168.

25 Grosjean, *Ultimate Reality and Meaning,* 169.

26 Grosjean, *Ultimate Reality and Meaning,* 169.

may it be one's parent, the elder within the family or the government]."[27] Therefore, the combination of on, *chu* and *kō* form the basis of individual moral behaviour and harmony (*aiwa*) within the social realm.[28]

The feminist historian Okuda Akiko has claimed that in Japan, the "patriarchal community structure of the samurai society and the concomitant ie system of the military community with its resultant ideology, which played the main part in the perpetuation of patriarchy."[29] During the Tokugawa period, the patrilineal-household system was the basic structure of passing on inheritance, leaving elite women and women with property with nothing.[30] The only way a woman was able to secure property was through marriage. The patrilineal-household system was politically motivated to marginalise women by diminishing their "inheritance rights and circumscribed their marriage and childbearing patterns."[31] Further, the marginalisation of women was entailed within the Neo-Confucian tradition, as it ascribed the 'natural' submissive and therefore subordinated role of women concerning their natal families and in-laws.[32] The classic teachings of the *Four Books for Women* advertised by the Song scholar Zhu Xi (1130-1200) was at the centre of the Neo-Confucian tradition and became the standard principle for women's education.[33] The main goal of these teachings was to assure the success and continuation of the patrilineal-household system and stress the importance of the inner and domestic space as the space of women.[34] In these texts, the Neo-Confucian virtues for women – involving purity, chastity, obedience and filial piety – were laid out.[35] More precisely, "[w]omen were encouraged to be industrious and conduct themselves with proper decorum and dignity."[36] In other words: women were expected to manage the household and educate their children, especially the daughters. Mothers were advised to be good wives by devoting themselves to filial piety and teaching their daughters the very same values.

27 Grosjean*, Ultimate Reality and Meaning,* 169.

28 Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Xiao," accessed 21-01-2021, Xiao | Confucianism | Britannica.

29 Barbara Ambros, "The Edo Period: Confucianism, Nativism, and Popular Religion. Women in Japanese Religions." *Women in Japanese Religions*. (New York: New York University Press, 2015): 97-98 accessed 21-01-2021, https://doi.org/10.18574/9781479898695.

30 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 98.

31 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 98.

32 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 102.

33 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 102.

34 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 102.

35 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 102.

36 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 102-103.

Becoming the Suffering Other

The Neo-Confucian lecturer Tejima Toan promotes the idea that for a woman to become a good wife and wise mother, she must first discover her 'original heart' to master the Neo-Confucian values for women.[37] The expression 'finding one's heart" in this sense relates to the idiom of "finding it in one's heart", and the ability to be able to convince oneself "to do something […] that is emotionally difficult."[38] Toan writes, "women could best accomplish this ideal through marriage, because it would teach them how to reduce their egotism."[39] In *Mononoke*, *Kusuriuri* enters the inner world of Ochou, and Ochou is confronted with conflicting emotions. She has to decide to either conform to the cultural expectations of her becoming a good wife and later a wise mother or acknowledges her personal desire to free herself from the cultural expectations of the patrilineal-household and run the risk of 'losing her face' to keep her sense of being and agency. According to *Kusuriuri*, "[t]he human face is nothing more than its exterior appearance[,] [i]f I accept this face, it is quite easy to make it my own."[40] However, by becoming a *Noppera-Bō,* Ochou has lost not only her face but also her human exterior, which *Kusuriuri* indicates in his reference to the way the characters of the term "face" can also as be read as "exterior" in Japanese.[41]

Figure 3 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 1) ENG SUB" Mononoke, YouTube Video, 18:52-18:55, accessed 21-01-2021.

The *Noppera-Bō* must be seen in the light of the idiom of 'losing one's face' as the result of Ochou being unable to fully find the heart to give in to her mother's wish of her being able to marry into a wealthy family. Losing one's face generally refers to a person losing their status or respect as a consequence of either experiencing public humiliation or as the result of committing a crime or going against the conduct of a culture. Therefore, the transformation of Ochou into the *Noppera-Bō* calls for the analysis of its function as the dialectical Other.[42] The dialectical other, or

37 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 106.

38 Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "find it in one's heart," accessed 21-01-2021, Find It In One's Heart | Definition of Find It In One's Heart by Merriam-Webster (merriam-webster.com)

39 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 106.

40 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 1) ENG SUB" *Mononoke*, YouTube Video, 18:59-19:10, accessed 21-01-2021,

41 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (Part 1) ENG SUB" *Mononoke*, YouTube Video, 18:52-18:55, accessed 21-01-2021,

42 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture (Seven Theses), *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* (University Minnesota Press, (1996): 7, accessed 21-01-2021, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttsq4d.4-

in the case of Ochou the *Noppera-Bō*, is a monster that exists outside of the boundaries of culture. By Ochou becoming the Noppera-Bō through resisting the cultural expectations, she turns into a monster. According to the academic and editor of the book *Monster Theory Reading Culture,* Jeffrey J. Cohen, defines the Monster as the dialectical Other. As the dialectical Other, the monster "is an incorporation of the Outside, the Beyond – of all those loci that are rhetorically placed as distant but originate Within."[43] Although the monster, as Cohen writes, differs in its presentation and biological makeup, it is the linguistic creation of the Other aimed at marking the clear and exaggerated cultural difference between the cultural subject and its contrasting Other.[44]

Upon careful examination, it is clear that the *Noppera-Bō* represents this exact linguistic creation of the Other, through it relying on the idiom of 'losing one's face'. Ochou has violated the cultural code by not being able to find her heart, the condition needed for her to master the Neo-Confucian values for women. This turns her into an unvirtuous woman that is tainted by her incapability of letting go of her egotism. Her thoughts became impure, and her escapist fantasies of slaughtering her husband and his family can be interpreted as her way of rejecting the Neo-Confucian values of obedience and filial piety. Because she violated the cultural expectation for women, even if it is just within her mind, she becomes impure, and her inner shame and guilt results in her transformation into the Other, the *Noppera-Bō.*

However, Ochou, as both the *Noppera-Bō* and the embodiment of the *Hannya,* is not the only *Hannya* that appears. Ochou's mother is clearly pictured as the *Hannya* within the series. No matter how twisted the love of Ochou's mother's love appears, Ochou is not the only female character that turns into the *Hannya* due to the cultural expectation of the Neo-Confucian values for women in this anime. Considering the marginalised position of women during the Tokugawa period, regardless of the cruel love and high expectation that Ochou is experiencing. The cruel love and high expectation regarding the Neo-Confucian values, and teaching them to Ochou, is the best thing that her mother could have done to ensure not only the honour of the family but also the fate of Ochou. At first, this might sound a bit harsh, and one might ask themselves whether Ochou's mother actually loved her daughter or has made the right choice regarding Ochou's upbringing. Sadly it is the only thing that she could have

Figure 4 Toei Animation, "Mononoke 7 Nopperabou (part 1), Youtube video, 17:31-17-43, accessed 21-01-2021.

43 Cohen, *Monster Theory: Reading Culture,* 7.

44 Cohen, *Monster Theory: Reading Culture,* 7.

done to ensure not only Ochou's fate but also her own. As Ochou stated, after her father's death, the pension was confiscated due to the fact that women under the *Bishu* (備州, samurai) system were not allowed to hold any property or economic benefits in order to ensure the survival of the patrilineal-household system. The only thing that the mother could have done, for Ochou and the honour of their family name, is to marry her daughter off into a higher class and wealthy family. This, unfortunately, contributed even more to the suffering of Ochou because now the responsibility of carrying the family honour lies upon her shoulders. Further, after the wedding scene, the mother completely disappears out of the picture, meaning that she has completed her role as a good wife and wise mother by passing on the values to the next generation. The disappearance of the mother can be explained by the fact that after the wedding, the young woman is expected to cut ties with her natal family and completely devote her life to serving her husband and his household.[45] Female oppression under the Neo-Confucian values in this anime becomes the genuine cause for the demonisation of the hurt female by "blurring the boundaries between personal and national bodies."[46]

With the rise of the Meiji period, the Neo-Confucian values became an important aspect of the cultural identity, and so did the notion of good government. As stated earlier, the obligation of loyalty based on the concept of *on* and the concept of *chu* were central to the shogunate to structure the family but also the nation and guarantee harmony. This can be explained by Japan referring to itself as *sokoku* 祖国 (land of ancestors), which roughly translates to both mother- and fatherland.[47] By referring to itself as the mother- and fatherland, Japan ascribes the government a parental role, continuing the cosmic order within Neo-Confucianism and/by determining the hierarchy patterns for the patrilineal society. The government, or the head of state, occupies the highest position, and by becoming the ruler, it turns the citizens of the state into the ruled on that have to express their gratitude in *chu* and *kō*. This means that the family structure of the *ie* system, governed in Neo-Confucianism, is transferable to the governmental structure, saying that a good government is a harmonic one. As children of the government, each citizen is expected to bring honour to the family by being a good citizen. This is done by being an obedient and loyal citizen. This means that for women, the narrative of the good wife, wise mother, continues to exist, and it remains to be a central task to assure the continuation of the patrilineal system.

The anime *Mononoke* does promote the Neo-Confucian value of the good wife, wise mother in a sense that the play criticises its central aspect. The play does so

45 Ambros, "The Edo Period," 106.

46 Cohen, *Monster Theory: Reading Culture,* 10.

47 Word Hippo, "What does 祖国 (*Sokoku*) mean in Japanese?", accessed 21-01-2021, What does 祖国 (Sokoku) mean in Japanese? (wordhippo.com).

by emphasising the aspect of becoming the suffering Other based on empathy that is expressed through Ochou's love for her mother. Furthermore, Ochou's escapist fantasies of brutally killing her family become a sign marking her lack of empathy and turning her into a *Mononoke*. Although Ochou loves and respects her mother, she remains means to an end to the goal of her mother and her task that was set by the cultural expectation of raising a virtuous daughter. Ochou is unable to cope with the cultural expectations and ends up becoming the *Noppera-Bō* and losing her sense of identity. In the process of becoming a good wife and good mother in accordance with the Neo-Confucian tradition, the anime illustrates that one can become the *Hannya* not only by rejecting cultural expectations but also through the upholding of cultural expectations as we have seen it in Ochou's mother. The *Noppera-Bō* in the anime *Mononoke* functions as a societal mirror that is aimed at showing the contradictive nature of the *Hannya*, making it hard to position oneself on whether the actions of Ochou or Ochou's mother were justified.

Many of these stories are aimed at the moral education of the hearing subject and inform them about morality by introducing them to the cultural expectations and the conduct of a society.

To conclude: legends, stories, and tales have a shared distinct feature. Many of these stories are aimed at the moral education of the hearing subject and inform them about morality by introducing them to the cultural expectations and the conduct of a society. As for the case of the story of the *Noppera-Bō*, it is aimed at the exact opposite. The story of Ochou and her suffering is targeted at showing the double-edged sword of becoming the suffering other due to empathy. Further, by thematising the socio-political condition of women during the Tokugawa and Meiji period, it puts an emphasis on the central notion of the extended family and whether one should reject or accept the implied cultural norms. The importance of questioning this concept is that it is still present in the Japanese culture and impacts the daily life and position of women.

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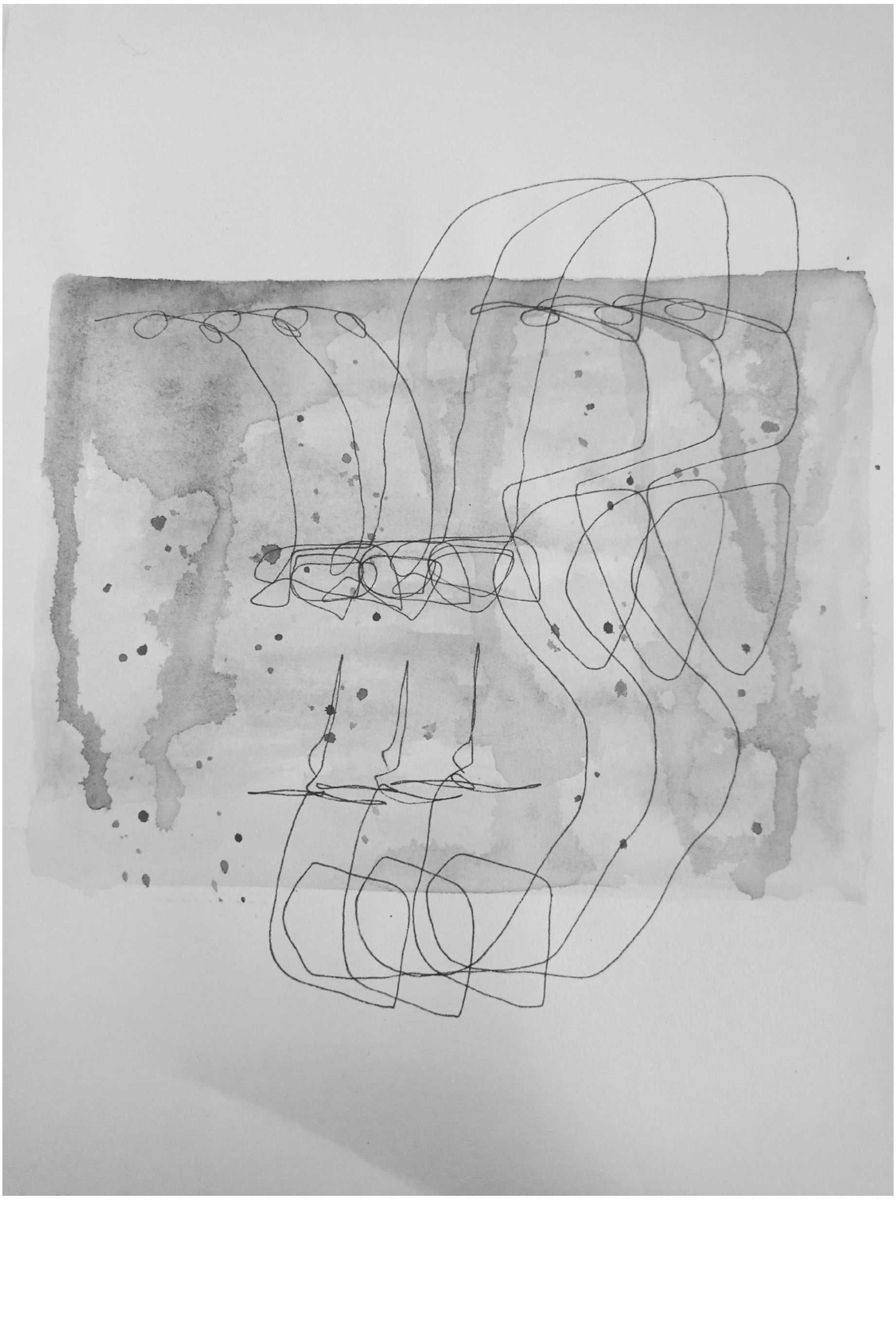

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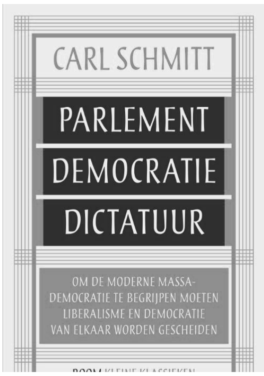

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In *Parlement, Democratie, Dictatuur* beschrijft de notoire filosoof en rechtsgeleerde Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) de teloorgang van het parlementarisme in Duitsland aan het begin van de 20e eeuw. Schmitt, die zich in 1933 als lid aanmeldde bij de Nationaalsocialistische Duitse Arbeiderspartij en later veelvuldig verfoeid is om legio antisemitische en fascistische geschriften van zijn hand, onderzoekt in dit werk welke principes achter het parlementarisme verscholen gaan. Hij komt tot de conclusie dat het parlement tot een 'praktisch-technisch middel' is verworden dat niet langer beantwoordt aan zijn onderliggende uitgangspunten, te weten openbaarheid en discussie (p. 40). Schmitt bepleit een rigoureus alternatief.

Hoewel het eenvoudig is Schmitt zijn gedachtegoed bij voorbaat van de hand te wijzen, daar het gelieerd is aan het Nazisme, en despotisme vrij baan lijkt te geven, is het nuttig zijn standpunten zo onafhankelijk en objectief als mogelijk te benaderen. Een betoog voor dictatuur valt heden ten dage (terecht) niet in goede aarde, maar Schmitt zijn kritiek op het parlementarisme biedt, zoals ik in het navolgende zal betogen, niettemin verhelderende handvaten om ons huidige tweekamerstelsel – en zijn manco's – beter te begrijpen.

Zo stelt Schmitt dat het parlement is ontstaan als een arena voor een "*Kampf der Meinungen*" (p. 36). Het faciliteren van eerlijke en openlijke discussievoering, waarbij het draait om het overtuigen van de ander, is het bestaansrecht van een parlement. Schmitt bemerkt dat het geloof in openbaarheid en discussie echter verloren is gegaan (p. 39). De functie van het parlement is niet langer "de tegenstander van de juistheid of waarheid van een mening te overtuigen, maar (…) een meerderheid te verkrijgen die in staat is te regeren" (p. 38).

Dit sentiment is ook vandaag de dag uiterst relevant. Lobbypraktijken, achterkamertjespolitiek en compromissen zijn immers de dagelijkse gang van zaken in zowel de Eerste als de Tweede Kamer. Zo houdt de Tweede Kamer een eigen lobbyregister bij en vormt de opzienbarende wens een kritisch politicus – met een inmiddels zeer brede achterban – te 'sensibiliseren'. Het feit dat, onder meer de minister-president in hoogsteigen persoon zich dit, 'niet actief kan herinneren' is een van vele aanwijzingen dat in Nederland politiek 'achter gesloten deuren' bedreven wordt. Ook het 'geven en nemen' in formatiebesprekingen en het dientengevolge laten vallen van 'stokpaardjes',[1] waarop vaak een groot deel van het kiezersbestand juist zijn stem had gebaseerd, laat zien dat de Schmittiaanse blik op politiek als berekenend compromissen sluiten geen fabel is. Met het rapport 'ongekend onrecht' in het achterhoofd, speelt het opkomend Haags gebruik van kreten als 'transparantie', 'eerlijk bestuur', 'nieuw leiderschap', en 'omkijken naar elkaar', dan ook op schrijnende wijze in op het in Nederland afnemende vertrouwen in (en groeiend verlangen naar) de openbaarheid van het bestuur.

Dat een "*Kampf der Interessen*" – in welke volksvertegenwoordigers blind en doof voor weerwoord het eigen belang vertolken – afbreuk doet aan het eigenlijke doel van het parlementarisme is zonneklaar, meent Schmitt. Later wordt Schmitt zijn betoog echter meer omstreden: hij keert het parlementarisme de rug toe en bepleit een democratische dictatuur. Dit begrippenpaar lijkt op het eerste gezicht wat vreemd. Volgens Schmitt is een democratische dictatuur echter allesbehalve een contradictie. Want, zo stelt de Duitse rechtsfilosoof, liberalisme – waar parlementarisme (ook historisch beschouwd) een exponent van is – en democratie kunnen en moeten begripsmatig strikt van elkaar worden gescheiden (p. 55). Een liberaal staatsbestel kan immers ondemocratisch van aard zijn, en een illiberale staatsinrichting democratisch (p. 49). Men neme als voorbeeld een grondwet – een liberale notie – die niet democratisch tot stand is gekomen of (andersom) een democratische overheid die grondrechten niet waarborgt. Erkent men de noodzakelijke onderscheiding tussen liberalisme en democratie, dan blijkt een democratische dictatuur niet *per definitie* uitgesloten, zo meent Schmitt. Het enkele feit dat een dictatoriaal model niet liberaal is, betekent volgens Schmitt geenszins dat van een ondemocratisch bestel moet worden gesproken.

Voor een goed begrip van Schmitt zijn ideale staatsinrichting is zijn specifieke opvatting van democratie dus van cruciaal belang. Schmitt: "Elke waarachtige democratie berust op het feit dat niet alleen gelijke zaken gelijk, maar dat met een onvermijdelijke consequentie niet-gelijke zaken ook niet-gelijk worden behandeld." (p. 40). Schmitt doelt hier niet op het belang van een gelijkheid van alle mensen, zoals dat in de Universele Verklaring voor de Rechten van de Mens en tal van grondwetten wordt geproclameerd. Neen, gelijkheid impliceert ongelijkheid. Niet iedereen kan gelijk zijn (p. 41).

De democratie dient te allen tijde homogeniteit na te streven en te waarborgen (p. 41). Is een volk eenmaal homogeen, dan kan een betrouwbare democratische volkswil tot stand komen, die de macht van een dictator kan legitimeren (p. 50). Zie daar: een democratische dictatuur. Het gehanteerde homogeniteitsbegrip is echter schrijnend.

1 Denk bijvoorbeeld aan de handhaving van geldende euthanasie-regelgeving, het behoud van de geldende maximumsnelheid, of de afschaffing van een basisbeurs voor studenten.

Dat een zekere mate van consensus onder het volk het democratiegevoel ten goede komt betwist ik niet, maar de moeiteloosheid waarmee Schmitt de 'eliminatie' van het heterogene bepleit, doet huiveren, wetende welke gruweldaden er enkele jaren na het schrijven van dit werk plaats zouden gaan vinden. Met deze redenering vest Schmitt niettemin zijn democratische dictatuur.

In het verdere verloop van zijn tekst bespreekt Schmitt onder meer de ontwikkeling en positie van het Marxisme en het belang van een gedeeld geloof in mythen. Hoewel de latere hoofdstukken waarin deze onderwerpen aan bod komen de interesse van de lezer wekken, zijn zij erg casuïstisch en bovendien erg complex. Dit komt de samenhang en leesbaarheid van het betoog niet ten goede. Het punt – parlementarisme is verloren en een democratische dictatuur is het alternatief – is in de eerste hoofdstukken reeds gemaakt en wordt voorts enkel nog illustratief onderbouwd.

Ook is het Schmittiaanse betoog voor een democratische dictatuur naar mijn mening zacht gezegd gekunsteld en ronduit dubieus.

Schmitt confronteert ons met enkele zwakteboden die eigen (kunnen) zijn aan een parlementair bestel. Dit instituut strekt tot open discussie, maar fungeert vaker als een podium voor belangenvertolking. Zo zijn de door Schmitt in Weimar gesignaleerde lobbypraktijken, achterkamertjespolitiek en compromissen ook in Nederland aan de orde van de dag. Van belang is niettemin Schmitt zijn argument in zijn tijd te plaatsen en dusdanig te relativeren. Het parlementarisme was in 1926 een relatief nieuw fenomeen in de chaotische Weimarrepubliek. Het falen van de politiek destijds is dan ook geenszins een garantie voor de ongeschiktheid van het parlementaire model in zijn totaliteit. Ook is het Schmittiaanse betoog voor een democratische dictatuur naar mijn mening zacht gezegd gekunsteld en ronduit dubieus.

Kortom, hoe u ook oordeelt over de kritiek op het parlementarisme of de definiering van 'democratie', het essay van Schmitt mag verbazen en houdt scherp. *Parlement, Democratie, Dictatuur* zet aan tot denken en is , ondanks – of misschien wel juist vanwege – de vele negatieve connotaties, een werk dat eenieder eens op zou moeten nemen en in een zucht uit zou mogen lezen.