

# On madness and free will: a Kantian debate in Denmark in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century

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*Abstract:* The so-called “Howitz-dispute,” which arose in Copenhagen in the second half of the 1920s, represents a sort of tear in a monotonous and uniform ideological fabric, whose consequences are destined to last until the middle of the century and ideally join together with the strongest continental currents. The dispute takes its name from the Danish professor of forensic medicine, Frantz Gotthard Howitz (1789-1826), who wrote in 1824 the treatise *On Madness and Ascribing Responsibility: A Contribution on Psychology and Jurisprudence*, in which he considered a problem to which the entire post-revolutionary civil society was looking for a fair solution, namely, the problematic relationship between madness and the ascription of responsibility. The treatise immediately evoked a number of critical reactions, since the author “accused” the Danish law of the time of being based on Kant’s view of morality. Howitz’s treatise has the merit of originality not only because, from a chronological point of view, it comes before many of the most important writings on the theme of madness and imputability (and its author is thoroughly acquainted with the international scientific literature on mental illnesses), but also because it shows how at the root of the Danish clinical and legal reasoning of the time, there was the Kantian moral doctrine.

*Keywords:* determinism; forensic medicine; freedom; Howitz F.G; imputability; Kant, Immanuel; morality; madness; reason; will.

*Exhaustive, l'identité n'est pas un critère.*

Michel Foucault (1969: 187)

*The relative difference here is no sorites from which the quality is supposed to appear by a coup des mains [sudden stroke], since it is within the specific quality.*

Søren Kierkegaard (1844: 131; SKS 4, 288; Eng. tr.: 90)

In a cultural context saturated with German romantic literature and philosophical idealism, the so-called *Howitzfejde*, or “Howitz-dispute”, which arose in Copenhagen in the second half of the 1920s, represents a sort of tear in a monotonous and uniform ideological fabric, a “breath of fresh air” (Høffding

1909b: 91)<sup>1</sup> destined to last until the middle of the century and ideally join together with the strongest continental currents.

In the wake of the introductory lectures on Schelling's thought, given at Elers Kollegium in 1801 by the Danish-Norwegian philosopher of nature Henrich Steffens (1773-1845) (Steffens 1803),<sup>2</sup> the philosophical Parnassus and in general the Danish intelligentsia was turned in the direction of *Naturphilosophie*. Therefore, the voice of a young Danish professor of forensic medicine, Frantz Gotthard Howitz (1789-1826), who claimed in a deterministic key the concrete reasons for a *homo phenomenon* (to which no *homo noumenon* would be opposed as *imperium in imperio*), was bound to raise a sensation and, above all, be disconcerting.

The real origin of the debate was a problem to which the entire post-revolutionary civil society was looking for a fair solution, namely, the problematic relationship between madness and the ascription of responsibility. In order to answer this question (which, on the juridical and medical side, had in theory already received an almost unanimous answer everywhere on the continent),<sup>3</sup> one had to consider an "epistemological demarcation" of the field of investigation and application: how to qualify madness? This was one of the problems of nascent psychiatric science, and it was this question that the 35-year-old Frantz Gotthard Howitz wanted to address when he wrote his treatise in 1824, *On Madness and Ascribing Responsibility: A Contribution on Psychology and Jurisprudence*.<sup>4</sup> We present here for the first time an English translation of Chapter Seven of this work, which concerns Howitz's criticism of the Kantian doctrine of freedom, by the eminent scholar of the Danish Hegelianism and Danish "Golden Age" Jon Stewart.

Although it appeared later as an independent monograph, the treatise was published initially as an article in the *Juridisk Tidsskrift* (Journal for Jurisprudence), which was directed by the influential and experienced jurist Anders Sandøe Ørsted (1778-1860), the future Danish Prime Minister. Howitz's writing set off the greatest controversy in the history of the Danish philosophy up until that time, namely, the above mentioned *Howitzfejde*. It involved promi-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Koch (2003c: 357-359). The Danish-German phrenologist Carl Otto (1825: 198) even talks about a "literary slavery", cf. Jacobsen (2007: 65).

<sup>2</sup> See Paul (1973), Koch (2004: 31-56); Stewart (2003: 204ff); Basso (2007: 88-94).

<sup>3</sup> A landmark in this sense was Napoleon's *Code penal* of 1810, see art. 64: "There can be no crime, or delict, where the accused was in a state of madness, at the time of the action, or when he has been constrained by a force which he had not the power to resist" (*The Penal Code of France* 1819: II, 14).

<sup>4</sup> *Om Afsindighed og Tilregnelser, et Bidrag til Psychologien og Retslæren*, in *Juridisk Tidsskrift*, 8, 1, 1824: 1-117. I've edited an Italian translation of the text in 2017, the present introduction is based on my preliminary essay to it. Cf. Basso (2017).

nent figures such as Anders Sandøe Ørsted – brother of the famous physicist Hans Christian (1777-1851) – the theologian and later bishop Jacob Peter Mynster (1775-1854), the aesthetician Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791-1860),<sup>5</sup> and the professor of philosophy Frederik Christian Sibbern (1785-1872), later mentor of Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855). It is also possible to find an echo of this debate in Kierkegaard himself.<sup>6</sup> It is worth noting that this dispute would also leave a meaningful legacy if we consider that as late as 1866 the title of the annual Philosophical Prize of the University of Copenhagen was *Did the Controversy on the Actuality of the Human Freedom of the Will that Occurred in the Past in Our Philosophical Literature Leave an Exhaustive and Sound Scientific Result?*<sup>7</sup> (The winner of the essay competition was the philosopher and historian of philosophy Harald Høffding.)

Howitz was a medical examiner, a doctor, named as a member of the Danish College of Health. One of his duties in this capacity was to evaluate the degree of responsibility of criminals, so that the jurists could make some sort of determination about what punishment was appropriate. In 1824 his long article on *Madness and Ascribing Responsibility* appeared. The editor of the journal in which it appeared, Anders Sandøe Ørsted, had written in 1798 a treatise on Kant's theory of freedom, *Over Sammenhængen mellem Dyds læren og Retslærens Princip* (On the Correlation Between the Doctrine of Virtue and the Principle of Law), a book that was characterized by the historian of the Danish philosophy Carl Koch (2003a: 44) as “the most mature fruit of the Danish Kantianism”.

Thus, when Howitz's treatise appeared, it immediately evoked a number of critical reactions, since the author “accused” the Danish law of the time of being based on Kant's view of morality. Howitz criticized Kant's conception of freedom as the ability to determine one's own actions based on a correct *rational understanding* of the situation. According to Howitz, it is not true that human beings, as moral agents, are independent of everything empirical. Humans are complex entities, comprised of both elements, the natural and the rational. He argued against Kant's view – according to which there is an *a priori* practical reason that dictates that one follows the moral law – that the moral development essentially depends on the material organization of the brain. We will see in more detail what the objections are that Howitz raised against

<sup>5</sup> On the role of J.L. Heiberg in the dispute see especially Stewart (2007). We do not have here the space for a detailed account of the role of each participants in the dispute, for a complete survey see especially Thomsen (1924) and Koch (1980) (2008).

<sup>6</sup> See Basso (2018: 33-47) and Winkel Holm (1995), (1998).

<sup>7</sup> *Hvorvidt kan den i vor Literatur i sin Tid førte Strid om den frie menneskelige Villies Realitet siges at have ført til et blivende og udtømmende videnskabeligt Resultat?* Cf. Thomsen (1924: 5).

Kant: now it is important to note that what Howitz criticized in the Danish law concerning the issue of the mental illness and ascribing responsibility was its Kantian assumption.

From a legal point of view, in the specific case of Denmark, it is worth noting that already the *Danske Lov* [Danish Law] of King Christian V in 1683 (the first unitary Code of the Kingdom, which was the basic point of reference until the Danish penal reform of 1866) declared in the article 6-6-17 that a crime committed in state of *delirium* or *furor* could not be punishable, and even the jurists of the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century agreed with this: “Nobody can or ought to be punished for a crime, unless at that time he had been *morally free*”, and “nobody can be punished if his actions were not *free*”<sup>8</sup> (Nørregaard 1784a: 9, §§ 1008 and 1009).

The point here is to establish what precisely it means to be *morally free* and, especially, why a mad person is “not-free”? The most difficult issue in this sense seems to be to define the mad person as not being responsible for his own actions because he was “not free” to act according to a conscious will following a *rational* and *moral* criterion. But at this point the anthropological question arises: this question lies outside the medical field and essentially concerns the philosophical sphere. Thus, the philosophical sphere is the battlefield on which the Howitz-dispute was fought. And, in fact, this philosophical perspective defines the real originality of Howitz’s treatise that, otherwise, would be just one among a number of similar writings on the issue imputability at the time. Among the other authors, worthy of mention are, for instance, the so-called French “alienists”, like *Étienne-Jean* Georget (1795-1828) *in primis*, who between 1825 and 1826 wrote three treatises on this topic;<sup>9</sup> the German, Johann Christian August Heinroth (1773-1843), who as early as 1818 had claimed the necessity of a *psychisch gerichtlichen Medizin*<sup>10</sup> (judicial psychic medicine) and between 1825 and 1833 devoted two works to it;<sup>11</sup> and Adolph Henke (1775-1843), whose *Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der gerichtlichen Medicin* (Treatises on Judicial Medicine) of 1815 Howitz quotes in detail.

Therefore, Howitz’s treatise has the merit of originality not only because, from a chronological point of view, it comes before many of the most im-

<sup>8</sup> “Ingen kan eller bor straffes for en Misgierning, med mindre han haver havt moralsk Frihed paa den Tid”.

<sup>9</sup> Georget (1825), (1826a), (1826b). Beside Georget, see also Mathieu Orfila (1823) and especially François-Emmanuel Fodéré (1813), whom Howitz mentions in his treatise.

<sup>10</sup> Heinroth (1818: 250).

<sup>11</sup> Heinroth (1825; 1833).

portant writings on the theme of madness and imputability (and its author is thoroughly acquainted with the international scientific literature on mental illnesses), but also because it shows how at the root of the Danish clinical and legal reasoning of the time, there was the Kantian moral doctrine as it was presented in the *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre* (Metaphysical Elements of Justice), that is, the first part of *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, (1797, Metaphysics of Morals). There the presentation of the concepts of *Wille* and *Willkür* (translated here as “Will” and “will”, following the standard English translation) answered the need of conceiving the fundamental principles and concepts of morals *in concreto*.

Kant’s system of morals is based on an idea of Will considered as “the faculty of desire whose internal ground of determination...is found in the reason of the subject” (AA VI: 213; Engl. tr: 12-13).<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, the Will was explained in it as the faculty of desire regarded not, as is will, in relation to action, but “rather in relation to the ground determining will to action. The Will itself has no determining ground; but insofar as it can determine will, it is *practical reason* itself”. The will that can be determined by the *pure reason* – Kant concluded – is called free will, while the will that is only determined by inclination (sensible impulse, *stimulus*) would be animal will (*arbitrium brutum*). Human will, by contrast, is the kind of will that is *affected* but not *determined* by impulses; accordingly, “a part from an acquired faculty with reason”, it is not pure in itself, but it can nevertheless be determined to actions by pure Will. Kant writes: “Freedom of will is just the independence of determination by sensible impulses; this is the negative concept of freedom. The positive concept of freedom is that of the capacity of pure reason to be of itself practical” (AA VI: 213; Eng. tr.: 12-14).

<sup>12</sup> Howitz specifies that he refers exclusively to the *Metaphysics of Morals* because “it is, as far as I understand, the last of Kant’s writings dedicated to this issue and therefore it should be considered as his definitive thought in this regard”. For Kant’s quotations, Howitz actually draws above all from explanatory works on the work of the German philosopher, such as Kiesewetter (1795), whose Danish translation of 1797 was widely used, cf. Koch (2003b): 46 and Schmid (17953). Anders Sandøe Ørsted (1824a: 127), among other things, reproaches Howitz for not having chosen the most suitable Kantian textual places to explain the doctrine of freedom: “Kant is not wrong, at the point on which Prof. Howitz especially dwells – *which, moreover, is by no means the best source to explain Kant’s doctrine of freedom* – when he rejects the definition of freedom according to which the latter should consist in a faculty of choosing or not choosing the law, asserting that the possibility of deviating from the law is not a faculty, but a weakness”. Between 1790 and 1800 Kantian philosophy had a decisive role in Denmark in academic life and in cultural life in general. However, discussions on Kant in the journals of the time show a predominant interest in moral philosophy. Ørsted and the other followers of Kantian philosophy were particularly concerned with refuting the doctrine of happiness, according to the dictates of the *Metaphysics of Morals*, cf. Thuborg (1951), Koch (2003: 34), and precisely on this point Ørsted returns in his objections to Howitz.

Freedom of will, anyway, cannot be defined – as it has been defined – as the ability to make a choice (*das Vermögen der Wahl*) for or against the law (*libertas indifferentiae*), Kant states, even though “will as *phenomenon* provides frequent examples of this experience” (AA VI: 226; Eng. tr.: 19). For we know freedom (as it first becomes manifest to us through the moral law) only as a *negative* property in us, namely, that of not being *necessitated* to act through any sensible determining grounds. But we cannot present freedom theoretically as a *noumenon*, that is, freedom regarded as the ability of the human being merely as an intelligence, and show how it can exercise constraint upon his sensible choice; freedom cannot therefore be presented as a positive property. But we can indeed see that, although experience shows that the human being as a sensible being is able to choose in opposition to as well as in conformity with the law, his freedom as an intelligible being cannot be defined by this, since appearances cannot make any supersensible object (such as free choice) understandable. We can also see that freedom can never be located in a rational subject’s being able to choose in opposition to his (legislative) reason, even though experience proves often enough that this happens (though we still cannot comprehend how this is possible).<sup>13</sup>

According to Howitz (1824: 34), Kant is close to Pelagianism: the deduction of his conception of freedom from the existence of the moral law could be recognized in Celestius, a disciple of Pelagius, who stated: “If now man should be without sin, then he can be without sin, and if he cannot, then it could likewise not be obligatory”. Howitz even accuses Kant of being “Ultra-Pelagian”, since his view of freedom is not freedom to choose, a *libertas indifferentiae* between good and evil, but a “freedom of virtue”, so to speak, a “*Dydsfrihed*”, in Danish.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, a freedom that not only presupposes the possibility of the human being acting in a moral and rational way, but also the necessity of doing so, in accordance with the autonomy and the infallibility of the moral law.

Moving from such an idea of autonomy, that is, the idea of freedom as the ability of *pure* reason to be itself practical, the Danish jurisprudence of that time considered the foolish person to be “not-free”. He was not-free because he was “unable to determine himself according to a *rational* basis”. This was the definition of madness given by the above-mentioned German doctor and scientist A.C.H. Henke in his treatise of 1815. In the Chapter Six of his treatise,

<sup>13</sup> See AA VI: 226; Eng. tr.: 20: “Nur das können wir wohl einsehen [...] das die Freiheit nimmermehr darin gesetzt werden kann, daß das vernünftige Subject auch eine wider seine (gesetzgebende) Vernunft streitende Wahl treffen kann; wenn gleich die Erfahrung oft genug beweist, daß es geschieht (wovon wir doch die Möglichkeit nicht begreifen können).

<sup>14</sup> The term is coined by Howitz and appears in the official Danish dictionary of Christian Molbech (1828-1833: 620), under the entry “Valg” (Choice).

Howitz (1824a: 26) considers this definition to be emblematic. The Dane's attention is directed towards the "rational basis" mentioned in this definition of madness because – especially according to the leading research of the French "alienists" of that time – it was now accepted that "there exists a kind of madness that does not have its basis in the *reason* disorder" (Howitz 1824a: 26). Pinel's so-called *folie raisonnante*<sup>15</sup> is an example of madness in which reason perfectly works, and in this direction, we could also mention the so-called "moral insanity" described by the English doctor James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848) in his *Treatise on Insanity and Other Disorders Affecting the Mind* of 1835. A foolish person, in this sense, would be perfectly able to conceal his madness, and, moreover, according to the definition of madness as "the inability to determine oneself according to a rational basis", we should also include among the "foolish" infants, drunken people or somnambulists. Then, if in the final analysis, to lack freedom means being unable to determine oneself according to a *rational* basis (and this expression in the Kantian system refers to the conclusions of the so-called practical *reason*, that is to the moral law), then the distinguishing trait of madness would be the lack of morality, something that is negated by experience, Howitz says, moreover, because there are a lot of cases of melancholiacs suffering from moral scruples.

Coming back to the point of departure: who are really the foolish? Are they "free"? But especially, what is freedom? Is the so-called "sane" human being free? In this context what Michel Foucault (1972: 533; Eng. tr.: 515) wrote in his *History of Madness* is meaningful: "The madness of the nineteenth century would tirelessly recount the winding journeys of *freedom*".

According to Howitz, the human being himself isn't free, since every human action is necessarily determined by a motivation that weighs more than another motivation, and the so-called rationality is nothing but a *capacitas motivorum* (the ability to weigh up, to evaluate motivations). Freedom as *capacitas motivorum*, Howitz says, should be freedom legally considered, a freedom that has nothing to do with morality. Following the English empiricists, Howitz talks about a *necessary* influence of the motivations: motivations, both the rational, good ones, those connected with public utility, and the bad ones, on the one hand, are the necessary product of an innate organization, and, on the other hand, depend on the circumstances so that "every choice, without exception, presupposes that one of the two moments is heavier than the other one. A determination of the will, independent from any motivations, would be like an effect without a cause, both in the sphere of the morals, and in the physical one" (1824a: II-III).

<sup>15</sup> See Georget (1825: 72).

Howitz's perspective is thus just the opposite of the Kantian one. As the doctor writes in the introduction of his treatise (1824a: II) : "My research on nature had indicated to me a direction that is incompatible with the Kantian doctrine on morals, thus instead of moving [...] from the discrepancy between the physical world and the spiritual one [...], drawing from one of the most secure bases of my thought, I decided to considered the human being in his actual unity, as an inhabitant of the planet Earth, subject to the properties of nature and completely like the other animal creatures, to which he is almost totally similar".

In this direction, according to Howitz (1824a: 2), madness would be a "limitation in the use of the faculty of reason, because of an affection of the material organs that cause the activity of the (so-called) mind". To be more precise, in Howitz's perspective it is not correct to talk about body and mind in a dualistic way, but rather it would be correct to express oneself in terms of material substratum and function. Then, since madness manifests itself by means of acts, "it consists in a lack of rational self-determination due to the physical cause". In this sense, the "rational self-determination" is nothing but the faculty of deliberately acting or not acting, determined by "rational representations". These representations are namely "rational" – they are ideas – in so far as they *correspond* to real objects, and they work as rational motivations when they make it possible to expect the advantageous consequences of an action for the acting subject or for anybody else. Here Howitz (1824a: 16-17) explains what he means with the conformity between "representation" and its "real object"; this conformity namely means "accordance":

Such a conformity is attested by the accordance among human beings with regard to the sensible impressions. The human sane understanding abstracts by experience a certain rule in thought and in desire, and in such a representation are subsumed all the ends of society and the way in which human beings interact with one another. At the root of this rule there is the accord among human beings concerning the sensible impressions, the judgement on things and on what is attractive and repulsive. Probably this accord is not perfect, but if it didn't exist, it wouldn't be possible to recognize any basic equality above the different individual shades due to the different age, sex, temperament, innate aptitude, education, state, nation, historical epoch, etc. Without this basic equality there wouldn't be any common experience, any public opinion, truth, common good or evil, and human beings would have never realized anything together.

If we run into a man who lacks such a basic equality – if, for instance, he hears voices that others do not hear, he sees something shining that the others see to be dark, he is afraid of consequences where according to all the others there are no causal relationship, or vice versa he does not recognize an evident danger or he is attracted by



something that those like him judge disgusting... – if we run into a man like that, we will consider him wrong, and if he does not accept to be persuaded, we will consider him mad, *mente alienatus*, as the ancients said, *aliené* in French, that is, someone who is deviant, or led astray from a condition that, even if it is not primitive, is, however, considered the normal condition for the human being in general.

Of course, we cannot say that a man who lacks of rational representation is necessarily mad. It might be possible that his rational representations have a weak influence compared to his sensitivity, and in this case he would act in a thoughtless or immoral way. Nevertheless, the man acts in an insane way only in the case when the imperfections of his understanding or the lack of influence of the latter are due to a physical illness.

Howitz's moral perspective is actually a utilitarian view combined with a deterministic view of nature, where natural necessity, however, does not conflict with an idea of freedom as possibility to determine oneself rationally, but it is rather opposed to constraint.

What Howitz rejects is the philosophical view that considers human being as a *homo duplex*, made from the one side of a soul having will and from the other of weak flesh, a sensitivity that can be yet defeated by a strong will. This is the idea that was at the root of the liberal-conservative view of the law.<sup>16</sup>

“When Galileo presented his grand discovery” – Howitz comments in another essay dated 1825 (1825: 51), that is, in the last act of the dispute – “he found himself forced to fight the general prejudice according to which the celestial bodies belonged to another order of being in comparison with the known world, and they weren't subject to the earthly law”.

The natural condition of the human being considered in his entirety – so also in his materiality – that is, the state of the human being as a natural being, the contingent configuration of his components (as they would arrange themselves, for instance in the case of an illness) can have an invincible effect on his will. Since this effect manifests itself with a *natural necessity* that excludes imputability, this necessity cannot be understood as we usually understand sensitivity from a philosophical, moral, juridical or religious point of view, that is, as something that can be overcome by free will. Foucault (1972: 533; Eng. tr.: 514) would have commented a century and half later: “The madman was freed from his association with crime and evil only to be locked into the rigorous mechanisms of a determinism. He was only completely innocent in the absolute of a non-freedom”.

Howitz (1824a: 64) opposes to the view of a *homo duplex*, the idea of a *homo*

<sup>16</sup> See Holst Scherg (2006: 84-86).

*triplex*, whose will can deviate from the optimum conditions not only because of irrationality or immorality, but because of something physical, a brain illness: this affection is called madness. “The defect of the organization cannot be removed by will, it cannot be removed by motivations”, and especially “it cannot be changed by the series of causes that we call spiritual”.

Nevertheless, Howitz insists that it is important not to confuse the doctrine of determinism with fatalism. This happened on occasion of the publication of Étienne-Jean Georget’s writing on madness and imputability of 1826, *Discussion médico-légale sur la folie ou aliénation mentale*. Since he refused the conviction of the murderer if he was insane – that is, if he was affected by a “lésion de jugement” or a “lésion morale” (Georget 1825: 10, 15), the French physician was accused by an anonymous writer in the *Journal des débats* (18th February 1826) of encouraging fatalism because he would have defended an equivalence between murder and illness that is totally incompatible with the moral laws. This objection had also been raised against Howitz, even if from a more pragmatic point of view. Specifically, Anders Sandøe Ørsted, in a work that followed Howitz’s treatise, *Et Par Ord i Anledning af den foranstaaende Afhandling* (A Few Words on the Occasion of the Aforementioned Treatise), objected that the meaning of the sentence as a deterrent, would have risked being lost if the popular belief had turned to fatalist positions (Ørsted 1824a: 135).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, if a crime could have been judged as something inevitable under particular physical conditions, one would have considered vain every effort towards morality. This was actually already an idea at its planning stage if we consider, for instance, the words of the Belgian Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874): “We are able to enumerate in advance how many individuals will stain their hands with the blood of their fellow creatures, how many will be forgers, how many poisoners, pretty nearly as one can enumerate in advance the numbers of births and deaths which will take place” (Quetelet 1831: 80-81).<sup>18</sup> It is in these years indeed that we see the beginnings of *anatomical pathology and the use of statistics in medicine*.

The fear of Howitz was thus the possibility of considering *every* crime as justifiable due to a lack of freedom because of a physical disease. Nothing could be more wrong.

In order to examine the question, the presence of a doctor was necessary who could recognize the connection between a so-called “moral lesion” and a brain affection, according also with the medical policy of the time.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. also Waaben (1997: 45-46).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Radzinowicz (1966: 36).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Georget (1821: 139-140): “Le cerveau est le siège immédiat, la cause organique essentielle,

This was what Howitz (1824a: 15) claimed in the fourth chapter of his work. He claimed that the doctors should always be consulted in uncertain cases, and their final judgement concerning mental insanity should never be invalidated by any court of law. But at that time the jurisprudence did not have any rule about the necessity of consulting a doctor, and in such cases the decision was simply delegated to the judge (Ørsted 1815-1822: 123). As Michel Foucault states in his lectures at the Collège de France in 1973-1974, “we see a very strange process in the courts in which doctors – who were not called on by the prosecutor or by the president of the court, and often not even by the lawyers – gave their opinion on a crime and, as it were, tried to claim the crime for mental illness itself” (Foucault 2003: 249; Eng. tr.: 249).

Foucault explains this process with political reasons rather than scientific or juridical, and this is interesting for us, because it will be an accusation that also was levelled against Howitz by his contemporaries, since the doctor’s claim to have the final word was considered a claim to power. This is another thorny subject raised by Howitz.

The objection that Ørsted made against Howitz in this case was the impossibility in many cases of tracing the presence of a brain affection before the autopsy and sometimes even after it. In this last case one could say that there would actually be a “leap” between the empirical observation of a deviant behavior and the conclusion that its origin lies in a physical disease, a kind of belief. Nevertheless, Howitz was totally sure about the deterministic theory, even if he was not a follower of phrenology, which also in Denmark had many followers, among them the physician Carl Otto (1795-1879), who was actually the only one to side with Howitz when the treatise of 1824 was published. In the wider debate on the subject there were even some physicians – such as Joachim Dietrich Brandis (1762-1845) – who were critical of their own group. Again in the *Juridisk Tidsskrift* in 1824, Brandis stated in his essay *Om den Juridiske Bestemmelse af Afsindighed* (On the Juridical Determination of Madness) that the role of the doctors in a trial in which a mad person is involved can be only as a consultant, while the final decision should be taken only on the basis of a positive law (Brandis 1824: 206). But Howitz, for his part, is firm in his position. Although no follower of phrenology, he was an attentive observer of the most recent progress of morbid anatomy. The third chapter of Howitz’s essay tries to demonstrate that madness is *always* determined by a physical illness, and he shows that this thesis is supported by the research of scientists such as

l’instrument principal de tous les phénomènes intellectuels, des sensations, des combinaisons de l’esprit, des passions, des affections, le point de départ des mouvements volontaires, enfin de toutes les opérations de l’organisme qui se font avec conscience”.

Spurzheim (1776-1832) – the former pupil and collaborator of Gall – Nasse (1778-1851), Vering (1773-1829) and, of course, Georget.

The publication of Howitz's treatise followed the occurrence of some real episodes of doubtful cases of madness, in which it seemed there were discrepancies between madness as a psychic condition and its somatic causes. One particular case was so odd that it had been presented at the Royal Danish Society some years earlier by the physician Johan Daniel Herholdt (1764-1836).<sup>20</sup> Herholdt's case dealt with the strange sickness of a 26-year-old patient, Rachel Hertz, who showed various odd symptoms such as temporary paralysis, insensibility, insomnia, urine retention etc. without any evident physical affliction. In some periods, the symptoms mysteriously disappeared, but only for a while. Dr. Herholdt and his assistant were unable to diagnose the disease. Some years later Rachel began suffering pains in her abdomen. Herholdt examined her and found a hard lump causing unendurable pain at the touch of it. When he cut into the tumor he discovered inside a black sewing needle. In the following years Dr. Herholdt cut out no less than 389 needles from her abdomen. Rachel Hertz became a sensational story for the newspapers. People in Copenhagen talked about "the sewing needle girl", and she became known even abroad.<sup>21</sup> The patient had explained that many years previous she had swallowed a needle case. She was a very clever girl and was perfectly able to reason and discuss with other people. Since, due to other reasons that we cannot go into here, the case was inexplicable, the doctors decided to observe the girl secretly, and they discovered that she was a pretender, as they said, who simulates her symptoms and that she had put the needles under skin by herself. Some years later Breuer and Freud would have easily defined this as a typical case of hysteria. The patience of course was not a liar, even if it was not possible to find the organic causes of her disease.

Dr. Herholdt expressed his wonder in 1826 in his private journal asking: "Does a kind of madness that does not have its basis in the perturbation of the reason really exist?" These words are a quotation from Chapter Five of

<sup>20</sup> *Udtog af Dagbøger over Rachel Hertz's Sygdomme i Aarene 1807-1826: med tilføiede Bemaerkninger* [Excerpt of Diaries of Rachel Hertz's Diseases in the Years 1807-1826: with Remarks Added], Gyldendalske Boghandling, Copenhagen 1826, was translated also in German in the same year, under the title *Auszüge aus den über die Krankheiten der (Copenhagener Nadelschluckerin) Rachel Herz, während der Jahre 1807-1826 geführten Tagebüchern*, Seidelin, Copenhagen. Four years earlier Herholdt had documented the course of the young girl's illness in his work *Observatio de affectibus morborum virginis Havniensis cui plurimæ acus e variis corporis partibus excisæ et extractæ sunt*, Havniæ, 1826. The most complete monograph on this topic is Michelsen's (1989). See in particular pages 20-36. See also Christensen (2009: 727-741, Eng. tr. 2013: 415-423).

<sup>21</sup> See Christensen 2009: 728-29; Eng. tr.: 416.

Howitz's treatise (1824a: 23). Where lies the *discrimen* between madness and mental health if it is not in the correct use of the faculty of reason? What is the boundary between the two states? And especially, who is the legitimate authority to establish it if in the end the only possible *discrimen* is the decision? This is another question that Howitz puts to the jurists and thus to the philosophers when they consider freedom as an ontological (transcendental) condition, which does not allow of gradations, since it is or not, *aut Caesar aut nihil*. Since, according to Howitz, freedom is simply a *capacitas motivorum*, there are different degrees in it, a gradation that depends on the condition of the whole that the man is.

The accusation that Howitz thus leveled against the (Kantian) jurists was the claim to recognize *a priori* "a clear line between madness and sanity" (1824a: I) without acknowledging the existence of a series of problematic intermediate stages. We find here in a sense the Greek paradox of the sorites that the Sceptics used in order to demonstrate the impossibility of distinguishing truth from falsity: at what point, when moving one grain of sand after another, can I say that there is no longer some grains of sand but a mound? Is the mound something that is ontologically different from a grain? If it is not, the point is that one has to "invent" the reality of the concept of mound.

If such a clear line does not exist – Howitz says – is it fair that the law has to establish it? Moving from experience, Howitz states, we see that there exist degrees in freedom as *capacitas motivorum*. Moreover, the physician adds, the extremely wide classification of mental disorders is due to the impossibility of constraining the actuality into the boundary line established by the methodical intellect. The normal condition of the brain, as well as that of the body in general is never absolutely perfect, but always shades off into disease (Howitz 1824a: 63).

In distinguishing between the imputability and non-imputability, freedom and non-freedom, possibility and impossibility of a psychological constraint, madness and sanity of human understanding – Howitz states – we arrive at concepts that can be useful when we refer to the distant extremes of the opposite state. But the situation is different if we consider the many degrees and we compare the minor madman to the so-called "free man", "whose intellect is strongly restricted by a congenital organization, blind with prejudices, clouded with drunkenness or depression" (1824a: 79-80).

The case of Rachel Hertz was well known in Copenhagen and raised a great debate, but it was another clinical case that directly led to the decision by the young professor of forensic medicine to write his essay in 1824. This case is certainly less striking than that of the "sewing needle girl", but perhaps more problematic since now what is at issue is a case of attempted murder.

The young maid Anne Marie Lorentzen was eighteen years old in November 1821, when she tried to strangle the old Mrs. Bagger, whom she worked for in Copenhagen, in her sleep with a handkerchief. The murder failed because after hearing the commotion, the landlord's daughter downstairs decided to go into the Bagger house, thus interrupting Lorentzen's action. Anne Marie then, gripped by anguish and, as if awakened by the state of exaltation in which she found herself, fled to Kastellet to commit suicide, but instead of making the extreme gesture, she finally resolved to go to the police. She was then taken to the General Hospital, where she was treated for a week and then arrested. The young woman did not remember what had happened at the bed of Mrs. Bagger, who had been found by the landlady on the ground. Lorentzen confined herself to declaring that she felt that she had been the prey of an "invincible inner strength". The case was submitted to the College of Health in Copenhagen, where the medical record of the young woman was studied and her medical history reconstructed.<sup>22</sup> The College – Howitz in the first place – expressed itself by declaring that Lorentzen had acted in the instant of the attempted murder in a state of "unconscious fury" attributable to "a physical illness" and therefore was not attributable. On May 13th, 1822, the city court acquitted the young woman, but with a reservation: Her present state (at the time of her absolution) was considered "healthy". The altered state that had caused her to commit the criminal act had been judged to have passed, and therefore legally it would not have been necessary to apply article 1-19-7 of the *Danske Lov* which dictated that mentally ill people dangerous for the community would have to remain in police custody. Nevertheless, the girl was placed under the supervision of the authorities. The Supreme Court ratified the sentence on June 20, 1822, but found itself forced to contact the Danish Chancellery immediately afterwards because it had not been able to define in what exactly the "surveillance" should have consisted. They then returned to consult the College of Health, which did nothing but request a solemn declaration from Lorentzen which assured that she would immediately turn to a doctor in contact with the police if she perceived anew the signs of the illness that preceded her criminal action. When it came to voting in the College, in July 1822, Howitz wrote in his own judgment that Lorentzen should have been "treated by the authority with all possible respect and humanity", so that she could convince herself of the opportunity to go to the doctor and to the police "without fear, like her guardians and her defenders". It was the first time in the history of Danish justice that the authorities expressed themselves in such compassionate and solicitous terms about a criminal (Waaben 1997: 38).

<sup>22</sup> See the recordings of the trial in Lange (1822).

At the beginning of his 1824 treatise, in fact, Howitz listed the motivations that had led him to try his hand at a theoretical treatment of the problem, which had to be examined in its ideological components in order to root out the prejudices that founded a certain way of proceeding in criminal proceedings. Following the discussion of the Lorentzen case examined at the College of Health, in fact, Howitz declared that he had had the opportunity to hear various opinions on the subject both from the doctors and from the jurists. He noticed that the latter placed a too strict boundary around the madness, ignoring the intermediate degrees, the gradual transition between madness and “normal human reasoning”. However, not satisfied with having empirically demonstrated his position and shown the Kantian terrain at the base of the jurists’ prejudices, he considered it appropriate to enter into a “metaphysical and moral investigation”, that was the beginning of the subsequent dispute. Another essential point for Howitz was to defend himself against the accusation of being a follower the so-called theory of pleasure, since for him the pursuit of pleasure, or of what is beneficial to oneself, did not coincide with selfishness. Kant’s objections to the eudemonistic doctrine are known, in particular that of Wolff or Helvétius, since this doctrine would deny the autonomy of morality by making it heteronomous. For Howitz, however, who expressly mentions Bentham – “one of the greatest living jurists of England” (Howitz 1824a: 60 footnote) – and his *Traité de législation civile & pénale* of 1802, morality is the doctrine of happiness for social life, and virtue is the art of living happily among men. Therefore, the “morally good” is what springs from the reasons of the common good. The correspondence between will and instinct of happiness should therefore never be denied, unless the instinct of happiness is exchanged with low selfishness and sensuality, “since it has been forgotten that in man there are also instincts like the sense of humanity, motherhood, honor, whose satisfaction requires the sacrifice of sensitive desires. The instinct of happiness together with reason must consider the most remote consequences; it must be determined by hope and fear, and one has to remember the old rule *nocet empti dolore voluptas*” [pleasure bought by pain is injurious]<sup>23</sup> Howitz 1824a: 55).

In short, Howitz declared – now quoting Locke: “Where is that practical truth that is universally received, without doubt or question, as it must be if innate?” (Locke 1690: I, II) – that it seems indubitable that morality is founded on the coexistence of men and their mutual social relationships, while the categorical imperatives would be absolutely mute if man were still living in *statu solitudinis*. This would not conflict with Howitz’s deterministic view of free-

<sup>23</sup> Horatio, *Epistulae*, I, 2, 55.

dom understood as *capacitas motivorum*, where man's love for good or for what is of public utility (moral law) as well as his propensity to strive in the direction of eternal life would be nothing but a particular kind of motive alongside sensitive ones. It is evident that in this case the physician, far from proposing a deontological order and trying to found it, merely emphasizes the functional structure of his necessitarian theory of motivations.

It is especially in the chapters §§ 5, 11 and 12 of his treatise that Howitz discusses the problem of the effective identification of a mental pathology and related nosology. It is difficult for an action carried out under the aegis of madness to be a rational action, he writes, but this does not mean that every irrational action is to be blamed for madness; otherwise, even simple-mindedness and strong passion would both be faces of madness. The determining factor for Howitz always remains in the cause of criminal action, or *physical* illness, even if this not always (immediately) provable. Although some types of real madness due to physical causes depend on a complete lack of reason – idiotism – or on a fixation on certain ideas, there are other kinds that seem to depend more on the *lack of influence* of reason than on its defective nature. In that case reason would suggest the right thing, but its advice would either be too weak or would intentionally not be followed. This is the case, for example, of that pathological “gloominess” that manifests itself without presenting false ideas, but only with transformed feelings, tendencies and passions. These so-called fixed *passions* (note the difference from fixed *ideas*) would also be caused, for Howitz, by physical defects in the brain and can even be more dangerous than fixed ideas. For example, the so-called *iracundia morbosa* belongs to this group of afflictions, a condition in which a person would be driven to an extraordinarily intense state of anger and consequently to violence for the most insignificant reasons. Another type of affection that falls within the group is the *sine mania sine delirio* or the *furor transitorius* described by Pinel (1809), which consists of a similar access of temporary anger accompanied by the desire to destroy and kill. People in this state are often not aware and sometimes even ask those close to them to move away: in other words, there is no other mental disorder except for the urgent homicidal desire. According to Pinel, it is still quite simple to be able to distinguish these outbursts of fury from true moral depravity because in general they manifest contradictoriness with respect to the habitual character of the person involved. In the case of *iracundia morbosa*, by contrast, this contradiction does not manifest itself; instead there is an agreement between the innate temperament and the insurgent illness. And here Howitz proposes to distinguish between *constitutional*, idiopathic, and *accidental* madness, a



distinction that does not seem to find any comparison in any of the authors he read: in short, *iracundia morbosa* would be a kind of “constitutional” madness, while *mania sine delirio* would be an “accidental” illness. Moreover, the more “physical” the instinct is whose satisfaction is coveted by madness, the more evident it is that the cause of the illness should be recognized not in a lack of reason, but in its non-use as a motivation for action: that is, instinct influences the will and decides, despite the objections of reason. And this would be the case with diseases such as nymphomania, satyriasis, *appetitus gravidarum* and dipsomania (alcoholism understood as physical illness). In the case of similar states, Howitz states that he thought it more appropriate to place the essence of madness in the lack of rational self-determination due to physical illness, than in the lack of reason *tout court*. The latter case, which has already been seen in part, is that of the *folie raisonnante*.

In short, we see a proliferation of classifications due precisely to the impossibility – and Howitz is perfectly aware of this – of bringing reality into the “signs of demarcation established by the ordering intellect” (Howitz 1824: 79). The normal state of health of the brain, as well as of the whole body, is never absolutely perfect, but “always fades in disease” (Howitz 1824: 65). When one distinguishes between imputability and non-imputability, freedom and non-freedom, the possibility and impossibility of a psychological constraint, madness and normality of the human mind, such concepts, declares Howitz, may very well have a reality and be perfectly usable when referring to “the far extremes of opposing states”; however, the situation is quite different if we observe the intervening degrees and confront the slightly insane with the so-called “free man” “whose intellect is strongly limited by a congenital organization, blinded by prejudices, clouded by drunkenness, pathologically demoralized” (Howitz 1824: 80). It is inevitable to encounter difficulties in wanting to establish borders scientifically, the same difficulties encountered by the “systematic philosopher of nature in the passage from plants to animals or from alkalis to soils” (*ibid.*). It is on this point that, as we have seen, Howitz rages against the jurists, insofar as they would not consider these gradual degrees. In other words, there are mental states which, due to limited freedom (i.e., self-determination according to the normal human intellectual capacity), could be considered analogous to madness. And since the latter is not a reason for imputability, then one should believe that the states related to it should appear to be subject to less imputability. In reality, if in the past they were considered as extenuating reasons of punishment, modern criminalists, for Howitz, would now deny them any influence in attenuating the positive penal code: “According to them, degrees in the freedom of the act are not a scale of measurement of punishment, as are degrees of immorality”. Here Howitz quotes

the *Eunomy* by AS Ørsted, the *Lehrbuch des gemeinen in Deutschland gültigen peinlichen Rechts* by P.J.A. Feuerbach of 1801, as well as the Danish decree of 18 December 1767, which already contained the statement that “no middle way can be assumed between this lack of use of reason, which completely excludes the application of the penalty and status of the person in whom such a penalty must be applied” (Ørsted 1804-1812: § 77).

In this way a “clear difference” would be established between all those who, based on the words of the decree, “are defrauded of the use of the intellect” and those who are in possession of it, or between “absolute impunity, on the one hand, and the most severe imputability, on the other. The border is called *capacitas motivorum*, which is supposed to be now present, and now completely missing”, in the same way that, according to the Kantian doctrine, “freedom is either completely present or not at all” (Howitz 1824: 46). The doctor knows from experience that in many points, far from being clearly distinct conditions, they become confused, and “there are degrees from a man in an asylum to a man in a sociable condition. And vice versa there are degrees between the mental state that allows the possession of civil rights and that which denies them, and thus it is always impossible to determine whether legal freedom (*capacitas motivorum*) was present at the moment a crime was committed. At the same time there is a great similarity between the many for the whom the threat of punishment is put in place and the many others who avoided this penalty due to the absence of *capacitas motivorum*” (Howitz 1824: 92).

Then Howitz proceeds to closely observe some of these intermediate steps or stages between madness and normal human reasoning. He lists six categories: 1) cases of intermittent madness”, or so-called *lucida intervalla*; 2) the *follia partialis*, which is characterized by fixed ideas; 3) the lowest degrees of each type of madness; 4) the stages of development of the disease and the recovery from the disease itself (see the case of Anne-Marie Lorentzen); 5) *status semisopidus*, or half-sleep, hypnagogic states and other similar transient delusions of physical origin; 6) vices and passions of the so-called “free” man.

As a premise of his phenomenology, Howitz highlights how the common prejudice in those who have no empirical or theoretical familiarity with madness is the belief that it is always “total”, that is to say, always and in any case as *dementia* or *manias generalis et absoluta*. In other words, it is believed that a person who once performed acts that authorize us to call him mentally ill, will persist in a state of unbroken madness until death. However, it is enough to visit an asylum for only an hour, Howitz warns, to realize that even those who have been declared mentally ill are not always and in all respects insane. There are periodic states when the illness stops in an unpredictable way (intermittent), and during such a state the two poles of the interval ei-

ther do not express themselves at all (*intervalla lucida* or *dilucida*) or do so to very low degree (*intervalla obscura*). Thus, these people cannot be reasonably exempted from the imputability for all their deeds: this is why it is necessary for a doctor who knows the disease to evaluate it. In short, one imagines the lucid intervals as “isolated bright spells in a long night”, but in reality the situation is exactly the opposite, that is, there are numerous dangerously mentally ill people, declared as such only following a paroxysmal attack lasting some days or a few weeks, but then for months or a whole year they are calm and harmless and sometimes even in full possession of their faculties. Of course, Howitz continues, it cannot be said that the judges did not take into consideration periodic madness and lucid intervals; indeed they seem to have placed their attention “exclusively” on this sort of interval, as if it were a bridge capable of leading by madness to freedom and normal human reasoning. This can be seen by looking at the Danish law and its interpreters: “Those who are endowed with the use of the intellect at intervals, in those moments should be considered like other rational men, or as beings able to act freely; therefore, they should be punished for their misdeeds, while in other periods they should be placed in the class of fools” (see Nørregaard 1784a: 89 and Hurtigkarl: 1813-1820: I, 8).

Another frequent mistake concerning the idea of periodic madness, Howitz continues to warn, is to consider every *lucidum intervallum* as absolute, while often such *lucida intervalla* consist in an attenuated degree of disease. In short, the *insania remittens* – an attenuated degree of disease – would be exchanged with the *insania intermittens*, or a temporary cessation of the disease. At the level of jurisprudence, to put these semi-lucid intervals in the class of those where the perfect normal state takes place, would be very unfair, says Howitz. However, modern criminalists have denied the *obscura intervalla* in a legal sense, and when such an event instead is verified in a crime, they considered it necessary to have to “do violence to the truth”, assuming that either there was no interval or that there was an *intervallum lucidum*. But, Howitz says, let’s not forget that the life of the defendant depends on such a decision.

The second category of psychological states in which the infirm of mind could be considered *capax motivorum* is that of *insania partialis*, the so-called *monomania*. Most of the mentally ill who are subject to a dominant fixed idea are able to reason and judge correctly everything that has nothing to do with their fixed idea.

A third objection to the assertion that the mentally ill must be considered unconditionally as a *non capaces motivorum* concerns the slightest degrees of madness, which are encountered both inside and outside civil society, in mental hospitals. This applies in the first place to that class of patients who call

themselves “infantiles” or “imbeciles” and whose state is considered as a more or less generic paralysis of mental faculties. Whether it is a congenital defect, which has taken over with old age, which is the consequence of some pathology or due to an accident, if it occurs in mild degrees, the subjects who are affected show signs of being able to distinguish what is lawful from what is not and of being motivated by fear of punishment. This is also true for another class of semi-infirm minds: the depressed and the melancholic, who, generally, are in asylums because of a so-called *raptus melancholicus*, but in such cases the disease is attenuated.

So what is now the “psychological criterion” on the basis of which we can distinguish these subjects from the depressed and the melancholy who are instead outside the asylums and who – on basis of the Decree of 18 December 1767 – were judged to possess the use of reason? In reality they are both equally vulnerable to the possibility of *raptus melancholicus* and to committing or attempting to commit crimes. To say that both should be now considered in a state of *lucidum intervallum* is not correct, because the fixed idea in them remains, and anger is not only a degeneration of the existing pathological mental state. To define this state as an *intervallum obscurum* would seem closer to the truth, but not in the view of modern criminalists, for whom this expression should be abandoned and its concept reduced to non-freedom or imputable freedom, an extremely arduous operation for the honest judge.

According to Howitz, the melancholic is not the only partially insane person that in the milder degrees of the disease could be considered *capaces motivorum*, but this applies to almost all types of madness and above all to partial madness. The fourth case, which we have already seen with Miss Lorentzen, shows, on the one hand, the development of the disease and, on the other, the convalescence from it. Madness rarely breaks out without warning, but only the “expert of the human soul” is able to listen to these warnings and prevent their consequences.

In the fifth case we speak of sleep as a condition of non-freedom, and consequently the moment in which the individual wakes up or falls asleep is a state of transition from freedom to non-freedom. The *status semisopidus* therefore entails a state of delirium. It is rare for this condition to become an object of reflection for the judge, but there are examples of assassinations carried out in a hypnagogic state, or where “terrifying images coming from the realm of dreams have been projected into people who actually surrounded the subject in question. Then, these obscure sensitive impressions began to recall the subject’s conscience from its lethargy” (Howitz 1824: 108). This state, Howitz points out, is not comparable to that of the sleepwalker or to magnetic sleep since these two cases are conditions of total non-freedom, while the first case is

a transition: it is more similar to the incipient or vanishing intoxication caused by alcohol and narcotic substances, or to the state that immediately follows convulsions or coma. Suicide is often carried out in this state.

The sixth, and last, case is presented by Howitz in an almost provocative way, to convince his readers how incorrect it is to establish a clear boundary between madness and non-madness. The same so-called “normality” is not in fact exempt from paroxysmal excesses in which the subject, in the moment of action, is probably not *capax motivorum* at all. We refer to jealousy, for example, or the fury of revenge. “I do not believe”, Howitz concludes, “that the threat may have some influence when the passion has reached such intensity” (*ibid.*: 112). And in these cases of excess Howitz also includes the love that charms reason or the religious enthusiasm that drives us to do something against reason, as in the case of the African sorcerers who throw themselves from the heights with the intention of injuring themselves. Finally, Howitz closes in an almost moralizing way: “Among men in society, we come across fixed ideas at least as often as we encounter in the dominant affects, and they also have the same analogy with *insania partialis*. What are our factiousness, our obsessions, our innumerable prejudices and the false conclusions that decide our way of acting despite all the objections, if not fixed ideas? What are our infinite kinds of superstitions, if not the same thing?” (*ibid.*: 116).

The “*Howitzfejde*” would cause a great deal of controversy even many years after the untimely death of its initiator in April 1826. It is an emblematic episode, and, therefore, it is worthy of attention: through it, it is possible to perceive a *Zeitgeist* that is embodied in the institutional reality of an age and a country, informing the choices of a society and consequently its material structure, to the point of rendering the physical organism of this society indistinguishable and the principles that inform it. If therefore this “*Zeitorganismus*”, as one can rightly define it, develops in its inseparable components following a global movement, it would be the exclusive task of the philosopher to analyze it, in an attempt to reach an awareness about the way in which everything interacts and gives life to those changes that define a world as properly human.

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