

ANALECTA HUSSERLIANA  
THE YEARBOOK OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH  
VOLUME CXVI

*Founder and Editor-in-Chief:*

ANNA - TERESA TYMIENIECKA

*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning  
Hanover, New Hampshire, USA*

Published under the auspices of  
*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning*  
A-T. Tymieniecka, President

*For further volumes:*  
<http://www.springer.com/series/5621>

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka  
Editor

# Phenomenology of Space and Time

The Forces of the Cosmos and the  
Ontopoietic Genesis of Life: Book One

 Springer

# Cosmic Order and Exoneration of the Beautiful: Visions of the Problem in Contemporary Philosophy

Ella Buceniece

*The fact that Cosmos is comprehensible, that it complies with certain regularities, is an awesome one. This is the most salient feature of God, revealing Himself in the harmonious order of being. When I inquire into some theory or other, I keep asking myself: if I were God, would I have made the same arrangement of the world.*

Albert Einstein

**Abstract** Cosmos for the Greeks stands both for the orderly arrangement and for the manifestation of the beautiful, allowing to capture and to remember the real world: physics, metaphysics, anthropology and aesthetics have been closely bound together. However, with the passage of time these spheres have fallen asunder and have undergone re-grouping: ‘cosmos’ and ‘the beautiful’ are separated by a cosmic distance nowadays. The beautiful (*pulchrē*) (St. Thomas Aquinas) has been marginalized, placing the ‘decorum’ as an artificial ornamentation not related to the truth, to occupy the central place. Just like ‘cosmos’ has turned from an orderly beauty of the Universe into ‘cosmetics’, designed to overcome the natural order of things.

The attempts to recapture the orderly arrangement and the unity of both notions – that of the cosmos (micro- and macro-) and of the beautiful (in its ontological sense) by the present-day philosophy, and to exonerate their inherent unity, forms the central core of the present investigation.

---

E. Buceniece (✉)  
Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Latvian University,  
Akademijas laukums, 1, Riga LV-1940, Latvia  
e-mail: [e.buceniece@gmail.com](mailto:e.buceniece@gmail.com)

“Philosophy views the world as a cosmos of being, and thereby the world becomes an objective world, as against our conceptions of it. Thus, philosophy begins as a cosmology, applying its theoretical interest to the corporal nature” – so writes Edmund Husserl in his work “Crisis of European Humanity and Philosophy”.<sup>1</sup> Rightly understood – he goes on – the initial meaning of it (philosophy) means nothing more than a universal science – a science about cosmos, about the unity or singularity of everything-that-exists (Allenheit alles Seienden). However, it is only with the Greeks that we are confronted with a universal (“cosmological”) life-interest in the manner of a novel “theoretical” form, which shows forth – due to its incipient causes – by way of essentially new philosophical and philosophy-related aggregate of sciences (mathematics, astronomy).<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the first understanding of the cosmos coming from the Greeks, according to Husserl, apprehends the cosmos as the wholeness of the world, as a universal order and orderliness, revealed by the theoretical placement, and simultaneously it also comprises the universal (field) “cosmos” of scientific cooperation.

Another feature of the understanding of the cosmos coming from the Greeks is concerned with the idea of ornamentation, of harmony as the visible manifestation of the “beautiful”. This aspect is stressed by H. G. Gadamer in his work about the topicality of the beautiful: “The regular orderliness of the sky presents us with the most salient visualization of the order, that nature may offer. The passage of the years, the periodical changes of the monthly and daily rhythms provide experiences of continuity, of safe orderliness for our lives”.<sup>3</sup> Philosopher and authoress Iris Murdoch also looks for the understanding of the beautiful in the direction of the ancient world, accentuating, as she does, the more anthropological facets. In one of her novels she makes a protagonist say:

Plato says, that out of all the spiritual values that are concealed, but which become apparent by looking deeply into the human soul, the one most fully visible here on earth is beauty. It is only with difficulty that we can apprehend reason, wisdom. But each one of us is capable of simply viewing the external beauty, and there is no need for any special systems to apprehend and to love this beauty.<sup>4</sup>

Two main sets of problems become apparent in connection with the initial understanding of the cosmos as a universal orderliness. The first one is concerned with the macrocosmic domain, and is represented by the classical cosmological teachings. Another one belongs to the microcosmic domain and is anthropologically orientated.

---

<sup>1</sup>Edmunds Huserls, Eiropēiskās cilvēces krīze un filozofija. – Buceniece, E. Saprāts nav ilūzija (Rietumu filozofija modernisma situācijā). (*Edmund Husserl. Crisis of European Humanity and Philosophy. in: Ella Buceniece, Reason is not an Illusion. Western Philosophy in the Situation of Modernism*) Rīga: Pētergailis, 1999, pp. 236. (*in Latvian*).

<sup>2</sup>Ibidem, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup>Hans-Georgs Gadamer, H.-G. Skaistā aktualitāte. Mākla kā spēle, simbols un svētki (*Hans-Georg Gadamer. H.-G. The topicality of the Beautiful (Art as Play, Symbol and Festival)*), R. 2002., p. 48. (*in Latvian*).

<sup>4</sup>Airisa Mērdoka, Vienradzis. (*Iris Murdoch, The Unicorn*) Rīga, Zvaigzne ABC, 2007, p. 106. (*in Latvian*).

Originally both domains – those of the macrocosmic and the microcosmic order – were viewed as structurally identical, and the distinctions between them were not sufficiently differentiated.

The essential link between macro- and microcosmic domains in a specific manner of articulation, is first undertaken in Kant's philosophy. Cosmic discourses in Kant's philosophy are introduced in a variety of ways. First of all, it is his cosmogonic hypothesis of the pre-critical period; the next stage is connected with the cosmological ideas of the critical period. In the works of the critical period Kant views the cosmos through the capacity of reason to perform a synthesis of the world in its universality. The transcendental cosmological ideas, according to Kant, are related to the "absolute fullness within the synthesis of appearances" that he designates as the concept of the world. But "the concept of the world itself is just an idea related to the appearance i.e. – the empirical synthesis, and is thus an unconditional wholeness. In the capacity of the absolute wholeness within the synthesis of all possible things, it leads to the ideal of pure reason, which – in turn – is completely different from the idea of the world, though being related to the latter".<sup>5</sup> And the antinomies of pure reason, the clashes taking place within the reason itself, reveal the transcendental basic regularities of seemingly pure (rational) cosmology. The presence of cosmological ideas, in distinction from transcendental paralogicality, produces one-sided appearances, and is concerned with our idea of the subject of thought. It places reason within its objective synthesis and offers possibility – according to Kant – for a completely new quality of reason – i.e. – the natural antithetics, which – naturally and inescapably – becomes the abode of reason, and is thus preserved from naked one-sided appearances, either succumbing to skeptical despondency, or sticking to dogmatic obstinacy, and refusing to listen to the arguments of the other side, and to evaluate its justifications. "Either of these positions – Kant considers – bespeak of the death of a wholesome philosophy, though the first one (i.e. – the skeptical despondency) at least could be called euthanasia of pure reason".<sup>6</sup> Thus, natural antithetics is a precondition of the existence of a wholesome philosophy. Thirdly, the "cosmic order" (A. T. Tymieniecka's term) appears in Kant's philosophy by way of providing a nexus between all three of his Critiques, while the last one – the Critique of Judgement – is positioned as a kind of synthesis, obtained with the help of the notions of "the beautiful" and "the noble": "Not only Kant's understanding of the subject, but also his Ideas of Reason belong to symptomatic matters, and are concerned with the "hysteric" aesthesis and its aesthetics". A similar subjectivising split is taking place within aesthetics itself – by the phenomenon of the lofty (sublime) and the experience of the split of the supra-sensitive Idea. On the other hand – a "softening" of this split takes place with the help of the beautiful and of teleology within the capacity of judgement – this is the view of Latvian philosopher Ansis

---

<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, I. Tīrā prāta kritika. (*Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason*), R. 1931., p. 292. (*in Latvian*).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 291.

Zunde.<sup>7</sup> This is where the connotation of the cosmos as ornamentation and the visual experiencing of the beautiful becomes apparent in Kant's philosophy. Thus, Kant's notion of the wholeness of the world preserves both the objective and the subjective dimensions and the non-univocal tenuous connection between macro- and microcosmos.

The fourth type of the cosmos discourse enters Kant's philosophy through his anthropology and the cosmopolitical dimension; this accentuates the essential belongingness of humans to the two worlds, being two forms of expression of human being that has acquired (by now chrestomathic) designation, about two kinds of fullnesses and two universalities – the starry heaven above and the moral rule within.

The division between two cosmoses – the macro- and the micro- ones – finds its way into philosophy and makes its abode there in two ways. First of all – when the fullness of the world breaks up into the world of things and into the field of cogitation (Descartes); or alternatively – as in modern phenomenological conceptions – when the world enters into the human being through his/her mind, or when the world gets concentrated in the microcosmos, thus losing any differentiation between micro- and macrocosm. Lately, it is exactly the human body that has become the starting point of human existence, or – to put it in another way – when the world manifests itself in human being via corporal existence (M. Merleau-Ponty) as the temporal centre of the world.

The second of the above divisions is discernable as a point at which the theme of macrocosm as world's universality tends to drift away from the concern of philosophy altogether.

One of the few modern authors who keeps cherishing the macrocosmic theme as a significant naturally/metaphysical idea of the world is Alfred Whitehead, whose work "Adventures of Ideas" contains a whole chapter dedicated to "Cosmologies". Here the author follows through the development of the cosmological conceptions as from the Greek antiquity, and draws some very telling conclusions. The first one: "This unshakable belief in the order of the world with its variegated history – Plato, Epicurus, the Gnostics, Alexandrian theologians, the rationalists of Antiochy and Mopsutia Maniheans, Augustine, Calvin – at last passes into the first phase of the modern age, beginning in the seventeenth century by way of an unassailable premise about the existence of a certain natural order, being open in each of its parts to human understanding."<sup>8</sup> The author concludes that the end-seventeenth century cosmological conceptions of I. Newton, W. Leibnitz and J. Locke have left a profound influence on the contemporaneous thought and have kept influencing the subsequent two centuries. Leibnitz's particular position is specific in that his monadology started to approach the cosmological problematics from the point of

---

<sup>7</sup>A. Zunde, "Gaisma no tumsas dzilēm – filozofija "psihotiskā kosmosā". (Light from the abyss of Darkness – Philosophy within "Psychotic Cosmos": Philosopher between tradition and experience. In memoriam Pēteris Laizāns. Rīga, Zinātne p. 95 (in Latvian).

<sup>8</sup>Alfred Vaithed, *Izbrannije raboti po filosofii. (Alfred North Whitehead, Selected Philosophical Works)*, Moskva, 1990. p. 530. (in Russian).

view of the subject, not just by way of obtaining objective knowledge. “Leibnitz was the first among the most important philosophers, who accepted the modern conception, and at the same time was aware of the difficulties it raises. He courageously eliminated God from the framework of his teaching (by inquiring not what the world of atoms is like for the contemplating intellect, but by attempting to understand what does it mean to be an atom. – E. B.) God and each individual monad are bound together in perpetual interaction. Thus the indirect connection between monads is augmented by direct connection of each one of them with God.”<sup>9</sup> Whitehead’s review of the development of the cosmological ideas is crowned by a conventional interpretation of the Laws of Nature.

The cognitive principle concerning the natural cosmic order, for a prolonged time – up to the Copernican turn – has been based on the notion of the Earth being an unmovable centre, a preconceived point of departure; yet with the coming of the theory of relativity and the changing of the whole system of the departure-points, the whole comprehension of the cosmic order was following suit. However, in spite of the relativistic changes permeating the spatio-temporal understanding, the Earth-orientated intentionality of mind remained intact. This new state of affairs – the changed cosmic, cultural and human situation – has become a subject-matter of phenomenological reflection looking for a new Archimedian point of support. The human body has become such a leverage point.

Husserl’s approach to the human body as to the absolute zero and unmovable centre of the kinesthetic space, is characterized by Paul Virilio as “an astonishingly abrupt severance of the philosophical and physical threads. The ancient geocentric view turns into Husserlian egocentricism. The centrality of the Earth – the chief point of coordinates of our ancestors – is substituted with a new central point: the living, here-and-now present being.”<sup>10</sup> I have discussed phenomenological comprehension of space in connection with body in an article “Thinking with the skin: the Problem of Space in modern Philosophy: E. Husserl and A-T. Tymieniecka.” – *Analecta Husserliana* LXXIX, Kluwer academic publishers.”

A turn is being performed in order to restore the ties between philosophy and physics: it is no longer a human being in the world, or a microcosm as a kind of reflection of the macrocosm; instead – the world enters the human being, penetrates his/her mind and body. Paul Virilio in his work “Open Sky” quotes Merleau-Ponty: “Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system”.<sup>11</sup>

One of the most fundamental theories incorporating the cosmic dimension into the field of philosophical cogitation has been worked out by A-T. Tymieniecka. The author tackles this theme within the context of a broad panorama of present-day philosophical, scientific and humanitarian views, because the development of philosophy is

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 533.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Virilio, “Un monde s’expose: fin de l’histoire, ou fin de la géographie?” – *Le monde diplomatique*, August 1997, p. 17.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Virilio, *Open sky*. London – N.Y.: Verso, 1997., p. 28.

always a response to the challenges of the age. Tymieniecka acknowledges that the crisis of present-day civilization is concerned with the scientific creativity being realized, as it is, by way of technological improvements, and this requires that philosophy provides for the implementation of previously non-existent solutions. This is the concern of the people of all geographical regions, regardless of the geo-cultural fragmentation. The fundamental relationships of humans and nature have become dislodged in the result of achievements of nuclear technologies, genetics, environmental crises, species extinction and other factors. Human being and nature have taken up a belligerent stance, and the very life as such is endangered. Philosophy is called upon to renew the balance, therefore the author proposes to re-formulate the very notion of “nature”, providing it with a new essence within a new contextual framework – within the framework of the philosophy of life and life-situation. In her work “Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason. Logos and Life”, Book 4 (First part, third sub-part) she proposes a new formulation of the concept of nature-life which is open to the cosmos and culture.<sup>12</sup> By revealing the individualization of the logos in life, she reveals the rationale of the cosmos, where the “cosmic order” occurs in all phases of individualizing life, as it is transcribed in different keys. Cosmic order is manifested not only within cosmic spacing and scanning, but also in the order of the circuits of the psyche with its “lower levels”, and the “higher” circuits of conscious life and intellect.<sup>13</sup> At the end of part 6 of the book Tymieniecka advances her “great vision of the all”, and enters into a search for the “golden measure” in the form of “a new enlightenment” concept, based as it is on the three interconnected lines of logos and life development. These are the following: the vital, the Dionysian, and the Apollonian logos. The last two are of Greek extraction, yet their semantics is not limited only with the ancient meaning. The author marks the difference: “But in contrast to those Ancients, our explanatory insights, sparks, hints, formulations do not come out of speculative thinking about principles and final causes. They are working out in a concrete investigation, in the scrutiny of the real-first, in its subterranean workings, and later on, in the further manifest expansion of its circuits.<sup>14</sup> A concept appears in this citation, which is evolved by Tymieniecka in the next investigation, i.e. – she offers the concept of “the real” by way of elaborating “visions of the real” as securing great advances in contemporary philosophy and science. The author maintains that the foundation for the disentanglement of the very nature of reality is to be found by way of considering the flux and stasis. Such a stance is to be found in the three significant differentiations made by the Greeks: “in consideration of the media of becoming, of the first generative elements, and of composition amid everlasting transformation”.<sup>15</sup> These roots – the author maintains – have nourished a whole lot of fascinating enigmas throughout the

---

<sup>12</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, A-T. *Impetus and equipose in the life-strategies of reason. Logos and Life.*, Book 4, *Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. LXX., Kluwer academic publishers, 2000., p. 97–104.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 64.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Inspirations of Heraclitus from Ephesus Fulfilled in Our New Enlightenment.* – *Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. CX/Part I, *Phenomenology/Ontopoiesis Retrieving Geo-cosmic Horizons of Antiquity.*, Springer, 2011., p. 3.



history of Western philosophy up to the present day. One of the most salient examples of this kind of jigsaw-puzzle assembling is concerned with the manifold interpretations of the teaching of Heraclitus from Ephesus. Tymieniecka offers a very original interpretation of Heraclitus' thought, by formulating her conception of the New Enlightenment, designed to reach "the deepest level of the all-underlying unity of life, man and the cosmos".<sup>16</sup> The author accentuates a Heraclitean original approach – so different from his contemporaries – in that he singled out fire as the most fundamental element of cosmos, symbolizing – in one single wholeness – both the physical reality and the logos, for fire as an element is self-illuminative. Thus, logos is to be viewed as a "true account of the nature of things", but it also simultaneously reveals things, because "nature likes to hide itself". Only when in a state of enlightenment these two things come together, do we reach the complete sense of the logos.<sup>17</sup> The true nature is thus revealed as the relationship between the flux and the stasis, producing harmony within the disharmony of All. Flux remains an everlasting state of All, and the harmony perdures in its transformations. This is the deepest level of the recognition of things and nature. Heraclitus conceives of the logos, and of the illumination that it yields for the recognition of the deepest level of things and nature, as the underlying unity of the life of the cosmos and human life".<sup>18</sup> The author, by way of commenting on the Heraclitean idea about the correlation of the individual psyche's connection with the wider realm of the entire cosmos, concludes, that the human soul, growing without limits in its logos, is a microcosm interchangeable with the all-engulfing macrocosm.

Tymieniecka acknowledges, that it is exactly Heraclitus' teaching, that has provided the universal blue-print for her *mathesis universalis* of the phenomenology of life in continuing the search for the innermost depths of reality in logos.

I hereby offer a short insight into Tymieniecka's approach. Comprehension of reality requires understanding and recognition of the very phenomenon of reason, of reasoning, of cognizing. And, according to Tymieniecka, it envisages a new critique of reason in the new post-Kantian and post-Husserlian period, as a new Enlightenment of Reason – an Enlightenment allowing reason to emerge as all-illuminating logos: "In fact, the expression of scientific rationalities, and, in particular, their corroboration has imminently extended into a sphere of wonder and troublesomely dispersed queries carried on throughout centuries, a sphere that in our age has been recognized as existential counterpart of human reality, namely, the skies, that is, the heavens".<sup>19</sup>

However, the critique of reason as undertaken by Tymieniecka, in distinction from that of Descartes, Kant and Husserl, does not start with the initial approach to reason itself. Her point of departure is – "I live, therefore I am", because it is exactly the unique experience of life, inward/onward orientated as it is, that permits to encompass life in its ontopoietic process. Life is a flux within its various levels and forms of individuation ("unity of life, man and the cosmos"), that, corresponding to

---

<sup>16</sup>Ibidem, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup>Ibidem, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup>Ibidem.

<sup>19</sup>Ibidem, p. 7.

facts of subjective experience and observable to others, reaches the objective truth, the truth of things, the “naked truth”, or the logos of each and all.<sup>20</sup> The author rejects Husserlian intentional structure of the mind, for this prevents approaching the “things themselves”, while our cognition starts with the apprehension of the “vital order” of our existence and continues as recognition of the fullness of human experience in creative insights illuminated by reflection. Human life, being one of the realities alongside others – such as the Earth and the cosmic sphere, – the human condition as such, is the factor that produces the unity of everything-there-is-alive and its corollary – the cosmos. The stage for the acts of life is the human soul, encompassing the mind or consciousness as a kind of instrument for the projection onto and negotiation with life’s horizons: “We can say that in this way the self-prompted and self-oriented human soul reflects the universal ordering of the All: from her originary ties to the earth’s soil, to the congenital influences exerted on life on earth by the firmament”.<sup>21</sup>

By providing an original interpretation and accentuating of the Husserlian teaching about cosmos as logos, and also by encompassing it within present-day modes of thinking with the help of the conception of the New Enlightenment, A-T. Tymieniecka shows forth the possibility of renewal of the tenuous ties between philosophy and physics. She demonstrates a new comprehension of reality in opposition to the ever-growing chaos, now turning even into chaosm (U. Eco) and asserting, that unity (after all) is possible – both inwardly as the content of our souls, and outwardly as things visible and invisible.

Latvian philosopher Konstantins Raudive, working in the philosophy-of-life manner, has also touched upon the theme of the Universe. K. Raudive (born in 1909 in Latvia, died – 1974 in Kronzingen, Germany) is a Latvian philosopher, essay-writer, translator (from Spanish) who has won international recognition on account of his novels, collections of essays, and especially due to his research on parapsychological phenomena. He has published 33 books in Latvian, German, English and Italian languages, among them a novel *Helligkeit und Zwielight* (1967), collection of essays *Der Chaosmensch und seine Überwindung* (1951), etc. His parapsychological investigations have been especially concerned with the audial sphere – the paranormal voices being interpreted as coming from the “beyond” and providing contact with the souls of the deceased. The term “Raudive Voices” has become stock-in-trade in the present-day esoteric literature. In 1969 K. Raudive was awarded the highest prize of the Parapsychological Society of Switzerland, he was also elected a member of Tiberian Academy of Rome and offered a seat of professorship in parapsychology. His name is cited in *Lexicon der Weltliteratur* and also in *Who’s Who* reference volumes in the USA. Raudive has discussed parapsychological phenomena in several books in German and in English (*Unhörbares wird hörbar*, 1968; *Überleben wir den Tod?*, 1971, *Breakthrough: An Amazing Experiment in Electronic Communication with the Dead*, 1971). These books have stimulated vigorous discussions and polemics up to the present time.

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 11.

Thematically Raudive's essays and investigations may be grouped around two concepts: the personal and the ultra-personal, (corresponding to the heading of one of his essays.) The personal is characterized by the author with the help of several notions – it is the “centre of life” and at the same time it “radiates onto the whole existential circuit”. Existence is a hermeneutically sealed circle containing thousands of cul-de-sacs, and cognition moves along by establishing the “I”, the personal by way of simultaneously apprehending and forming ties with the beyond”.<sup>22</sup> (Raudive K. *Divējādi dzīves ceļi*. Vesterosa: Dzintars, 1952: 26.). The personal for Raudive is the human personality of unmolested wholeness or of the total humanity; the number of such people is diminishing nowadays. Their place is taken by a type of human, whom Raudive designates as “people of despair”, or by using M. Unamuno's concept – *desperados*. We are used by now to such code-terms for the characterization of modern culture as resentment (F. Nietzsche) and spleen (Baudelaire); Raudive proposes to augment this list of designations with the soul-searching Spanish word of *desperados*. He discusses “the personal” both in individual mode, and also thematicizes it in an inter-subjective modality as friendship, love, loneliness.

The concept of the “ultra-personal” constitutes the next stage in K. Raudive's thought. It is marked by such notions as ultra-being, spirit, culture, humanity, God, death (as a metaphysical not a physical fact), life, universe. We notice that K. Raudive associates ultra-personal not only with the spiritual or with natural phenomena, but considers these spheres in a unified manner, recognizing both the existing distinctions, and also their amalgamation, confluence, in other words – he sees life as a way. Thus, for example, he does not consider life as a purely metaphysical category, instead – he amalgamates it with the mystery of life, and this is neither spiritism nor evolutionism. Rather – it is the general personal and universal, individual and cosmic “existence-together”. This may be inferred from Raudive's use of such a term as “culture of life”, or from his thesis that the origin of a personality does not mean severance from the wholeness, from the universal, from the cosmos, because “the human being by elevating into spiritual purity tends to get united with his original state – the ocean of humanity”.<sup>23</sup> Raudive does not consider God and belief in God in categories of absolute spirituality, but speaks about the “mystery of faith”, or “instinct of faith”: “After all, it is not so very important how this cosmic order is designated – as a universal law, or instinct, or Spirit or even God. It does exist within its unfathomable state of ultra-being, it is the foundation of the first movement and development”.<sup>24</sup> Life and death are connected in similar fashion, for there are two ways in cosmos – one of them leading upwards (life), another one – downwards (death). God is an invisible harmony well above the visible, perceptible harmony. Therefore ultra-personal, ultra-being is not being-in-itself; it is correlated with the personal, existential, with our capacity to reflect (or not to reflect) about these matters: “It is very often said that we do not understand things because our inner

---

<sup>22</sup> Konstantins Raudive, *Divējādi dzīves veidi: filozofiska apcere*. (*Konstantin Raudive, Twofold Life Styles: Philosophical Reflections*). Upsala: Dzintars, 1952, p. 26. (in Latvian).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

senses with regard to the immaterial being are coarse, numb, as hard as glass. One should not resist the train of thought that exceeds the limits of human understanding; a person who dares to think more than our ordinary reason and logical cognition allows, is justified in seeking an answer from the One, who is the Creator of man and of all things”.<sup>25</sup> Thus, we notice that Raudive’s world-view contains elements of mysticism, esoterics and also certain facets of scientific thinking. Such an approach led him subsequently to parapsychological investigations that ensured his reputation within a certain sphere of scholarly culture.<sup>26</sup>

Tymieniecka has carried on Heraclitus’ “torch” by elaborating the problem of the illumination of the invisible – the cosmos as “things that tend to hide”, and their “logos”. At the same time – consideration of the harmonious as the visible, permits us to postulate the beautiful – the concept spoken of earlier on in the present essay – as a manifestation of a distinctive feature of the cosmos. Up to the end of the Renaissance, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century, when special prominence was given to the fine arts, the beautiful was considered not so much as an aesthetical category, but as an ontological and a metaphysical one, apprehending the world as beautiful. Because the beautiful is not only man-made, but is given, and the discourse of the beautiful reveals nature and the natural.

Contrary to the aforementioned I. Murdoch’s assertion to the effect that no teaching is necessary to learn to comprehend and to love the beautiful, thinkers and artists have exerted themselves in attempts to formulate systematic principles allowing to explain the phenomenon of the beautiful. It was in the ancient Greece that artists and thinkers evolved strict canons of art including also the subjective assessment. In particular, Socrates and Plato address the theme of the beautiful. Plato’s sophisticated understanding of the beautiful gives birth to “two most important conceptions of the beautiful, undergoing subsequent development throughout the centuries: the beautiful as a harmony and proportionality of parts (borrowed from Pythagoras and developed in *Timaeus*) and the beautiful as brightness (understood as blessedness – an idea evolved in *Phaedrus*). The beautiful, for Plato, obtains of autonomous existence, separated from the physical vehicle, thus being independent of the concrete sense-perceptible object, but radiating its brightness all-around.”<sup>27</sup>

Understanding of the beautiful as cosmos, and the idea of the beauty of cosmos is precisely delineated by St. Thomas Aquinas. He characterizes the beautiful with the help of three traits. First – with integrity (wholeness) or totality, for anything that lacks something is formless. Second – appropriate proportionality, or agreement (*consonantia*); and thirdly – clarity; this is why bright colour is called beautiful....<sup>28</sup> St. Thomas uses two concepts for the understanding of the beautiful – the

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 298.

<sup>26</sup> Gills N. “Raudives balsis”. Konstantins Raudive un parapsiholoģijas pasaule. (“Voices of Raudive”. Raudive and the World of Parapsychology, Filosofija. Year-book. Rīga, FSI, 2002, p. 98.

<sup>27</sup> Umberto Eco, Skaistuma vēsture. (*Umberto Eco, History of the Beautiful*) R.: Jāņa Rozes apgāds, 2009., p. 48. (in Latvian).

<sup>28</sup> Akvīnas Toms. Teoloģijas summa, (*Thomas Aquinas. Summa Theologiae*) I, qu. 39, a. 8. – Istorija estētiki. Pamjātņiki mirovoi estetičeskoj mislji, tom I, Antičnost, srednije veka, vorroždenije. (*History of Aesthetics*) Moskva, 1962, p. 290. (in Russian).

beautiful as the excellent (*pulchrum*), and the beautiful as ornamentation (*decorum*). God as absolute harmony and absolute clarity is characterized by a collation of both of these terms. It is a tragical story of the present-day situation that the beautiful has turned into mere *decorum*, thus losing other traditionally characteristic facets, including the givenness of the natural order. The narrowing down of the concept of the beautiful and even complete relinquishing of it, started by the aesthetics and philosophy of the modern era, that was initially justified (by way opening new alleys for unbridled contemplation of the “sublime”, but actually robbing the world of self-creativity and ontopoietic power) has turned the world into an unpalatable construction. Art has been denied referential relations with the natural, and, consequently, it has lost the power of the beautiful and has turned into feeble beauty with completely marginal promise of beatitude (see: Adorno’s interpretation of the Odyssean myth).

However, there is lately a noticeable, though a rather timid movement towards rehabilitation of the beautiful. Aesthetics is leaving behind its sojourn along the abysmal elevations of the sublime, and is slowly returning – not without resistance – to the “beautiful”. Here is what Nicolas Bourriaud has to say in this connection: “Among the reactionary enticements in the present-day sphere of culture, first and foremost one notices the project of the rehabilitation of the beautiful. This notion may pass under different designations – art critic Dave Hickey proposes to return to the normativity, he speaks about an arrangement that produces visual pleasure in the viewer, and maintains that any theory of picture that is not based on the pleasure of the viewer, poses a question about its tenability, and is likely to remain insignificant.”<sup>29</sup>

Even so, Bourriaud calls the return to normativity and to arrangement a reactionary, insufficient enticement, for, according to him, such a tactic is being justified by the pleasure of the viewer. In my view, the feeling of the beautiful based on pleasurable emotions enhances the quality of one’s appreciation of the natural, of the perfection (totality, completeness). It was Kant who spoke of “non-meaningful beauty”, basing such a thesis on the beautiful to be found in nature – that is: in the experience of the beautiful, and not in the pure concept of it, or in art alone. Kant did not equate the experience of the beautiful with the general regularities of nature, neither did he consider this kind of experience to be of subjectively significant import only. H. G. Gadamer has this to say about Kant’s position: “If I consider something to be beautiful, I think that this is beautiful. To use Kant’s expression – “I demand everybody’s acceptance of this”; which means, that anybody’s senses have to be cultivated to recognize the beautiful, so as to develop a sense of discretion between the beautiful and the less beautiful”.<sup>30</sup> This is what makes me take issue with Bourriaud’s assertion about the beautiful as a reactionary enticement. Because anchoring of the beautiful in the pleasure of the viewer (observer), and returning to normativity should not be

---

<sup>29</sup>Nikolā Burjo, *Attiecību estētika. (Nicolas. Bourriaud, Aesthetics of the Relationships)* R.: Laikmetīgās mākslas centrs, 2009., pp. 61–62. (in Latvian).

<sup>30</sup>Hanss-Georgs Gadamer, *Skaistā aktualitāte. Māksla kā spēle, simbols un svētki.*, R., 2002, p. 53. (in Latvian).

taken to mean the annihilation of the differences, or the extinguishing of discernment. Indeed, the evaluation of *the art of the present time* by using the standards of beauty could really be a reactionary temptation. However, Gadamer reminds us that “the concept of the beautiful even today obtains of various connotations, all of which to a greater, or lesser degree draw on the *kalon* notion of the ancient Greeks”.<sup>31</sup> And the beautiful is not to be associated exclusively with art; to-day it regains its original meaning as the “harmony of celestial spheres” and as the visible manifestation of the invisible, and as a sense of wholeness of being, obtained through experience of subjective involvement.

Summing up, the changes produced by the human activities and the technological innovations in the environment, ecology, values and thinking demand a re-assessment of the “human placement in the cosmos” and our fundamental engagement in it. It requires a specific re-turning to the natural order of things, to the cosmic justice, based not only on moral principles, but anchored also in reality (from *res* – thing), in the manner undertaken by the ancient philosophers. We have to acknowledge that by attempting to be ourselves, we exceed ourselves. And regardless of all the fascinating visions about other possible worlds, created by scientific and artistic endeavours, we after all live in this one – the only possible world for us, for the upkeep of which we bear joint responsibility. One can only fully agree with the dictum of M. Merleau-Ponty: “There is no other world possible in the sense in which mine is, not because mine is necessary as Spinoza thought, but because any other world, that I might conceive would set limits to this one, would be found on its boundaries, and would consequently merely fuse with it”.<sup>32</sup>

This is why it is impossible to-day not to think about the cosmic order in its various manifestations, for it marks the horizon of my vision solidified with the help of the visible things, that existed before my seeing them and will last much longer.

---

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 47.

<sup>32</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. London and New York, Routledge, 1996., p. 505.