

Segreti (cfr. p. 14). Il fenomeno della testa parlante di Alberto Magno, caso esemplare dei «segreti della tecnica», viene ricondotto, per l'appunto, a meccanismi del tutto naturali, messi in atto dall'abilità del mago naturale. Così il mago dellaportiano, infaticabile scrutatore della natura per mezzo dell'esperienza, si rivela per molti aspetti simile alla nuova figura del filosofo empirico che si affermerà durante il XVII secolo, differenziandosene, tuttavia, per un atteggiamento ancipite: se, infatti, da un lato le sue ricerche si volgono con sicura convinzione al piano degli effetti, dall'altro, contemplanò ancora il sapere qualitativo, comune all'aristotelismo e all'astrologia.

¹ Cfr. Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, Cambridge (Mass.) & London, Harvard University Press, 1983; Charles H. Lohr, *The sixteenth-century transformation of the aristotelian natural philosophy*, in *Aristotelismus und Renaissance. In memoriam Charles B. Schmitt*, hrsg. von Eckhard Kessler, Charles H. Lohr und Walter Sparr, Wiesbaden, O. Harrassowitz, 1988, pp. 89-99.

² Cfr. Bernd Roling, *Aristotelische Naturphilosophie und christliche Kabbalah im Werk des Paulus Rittius*, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 2007.

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Marcus Willaschek, *Kant on the Sources of Metaphysics. The Dialectic of Pure Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

This book provides an extensive and insightful analysis of the Dialectic of Kant's first *Critique*. Willaschek's aim is to focus on the constructive side of the Transcendental Dialectic and, besides Kant's critique of speculative metaphysics, highlight the relevance of the Rational Sources Account (RSA), that is Kant's discovery that the sources of metaphysical thinking lie in reason itself. According to Willaschek, reason's metaphysical features follow from three main issues: 1) the discursive character of human thinking – for reason proceeds from elements to synthetic cognitive claims; 2) the iterative character of rational explanation – where every inquiry concerning reason-giving can be, in principle, always reiterated (if A is because of B, the question *why* B is always legitimate); 3) the rational need for completeness – for reason's satisfaction relies on answers which do not raise further questions.

Concerning its structure, the book is divided into two main parts. While in the first (chapters 1-5) Willaschek follows the path which brings reason towards metaphysical speculation, the second part mainly deals with the constitutive steps of the Transcendental Dialectic: the (inferential) derivation of the transcendental ideas, the paralogisms and the antinomies, the ideal of pure reason. Finally, in chapter 9 Willaschek argues for a possible rejection of Transcendental Realism (TR) – which is responsible for transcendental illusion – which does not compel us to accept Kant's Transcendental Idealism (TI). Concerning the RSA, the reader is strongly recommended to carefully look at section 0.3 in the Introduction, for there Willaschek points out very clearly that the RSA consists in a single complex argument which is articulated

into four levels. The first is the transition from the Logical Maxim (LM) to the Supreme Principle (SP). While the LM “requires us to find a condition for each conditioned cognition” (p. 6), the SP states that if something conditioned is given, then the unconditioned complete series of conditions is given as well. The concept of the unconditioned is, at the second level, described in terms of the system of the transcendental ideas – where these concepts follow from natural and necessary inferences of reason. The focus of the third level is on reason's dialectical inferences, as originating from human reason itself and, therefore, being compelling to every reader of Kant's first *Critique*. The fourth and final level deals with two alternative uses of transcendental principles and ideas. While their regulative use allows for the search of unity among all empirical laws, their being taken for true representations of objects, that is constitutively, unavoidably brings reason towards transcendental illusion. This latter level seems to have a more specific methodological status, for the transition from the logical to the real use of reason and, in a complementary way, from the regulative to the constitutive use of reason's ideas and principles, represents the distinctive mark of reason's natural tendency to metaphysical speculation. One last remark: Willaschek stresses the relevance of the constructive side of the Transcendental Dialectic – namely the RSA – in order to counterbalance and mitigate the reading according to which the Dialectic would merely consist in Kant's “demolition of traditional metaphysics” (p. 9). Such an approach is very welcomed; its outcomes are undoubtedly stimulating for every Kant scholar and fruitful for contemporary epistemologists.

One of the first most relevant argumentative steps of the book is introduced at p. 46. There Willaschek – after having shown that even the ordinary employment of reason leads to metaphysical speculation – distinguishes between the LM and the SP. Willaschek refers to *KrV*, A307-8/B364 and assigns the LM to the logical use of reason (as it only deals with cognitions), while the SP belongs to the real use of reason (as dealing with objects). Some questions arise. As it is clear from Kant's statements, it is more appropriate to consider the LM as becoming the SP, and not to firmly distinguish the former from the latter. It is true that Willaschek, several pages later, clarifies that he does not mean to argue for two properly different principles but, rather, that “the transition passage must be understood on the model of sentences such as ‘A bill can become a law only by an act of legislation’, or, more generally, ‘X can become Y only by way of Z,’ where X's becoming Y just consists in Z' taking place” (p. 122). The statement is clear: the LM becomes a principle of pure reason (A308/B365) by assuming the SP. This given, one could still wonder that another interpretative option remains available. While Willaschek correctly claims that there would be two, not three, principles at stake here, one could argue for one principle which takes different shapes. First, why may it not be the case that the LM becomes the SP in virtue of the fact that, otherwise, the unconditioned reason is in search of would not be really unconditioned? As Willaschek puts it, the LM deals with cognitions, while the SP deals with objects. In moving from LM to SP, Willaschek thus states

that LM presupposes SP; this is correct. However, it may still be possible that what the LM prescribes – namely the search for the unconditioned totality of the series of conditioned cognitions – cannot be fulfilled unless we move from cognitions to objects. There would be no truly meaningful logical employment of the logical maxim if we would not assume that the unconditioned is given, that is if we do not assume that the cognitions at stake are cognitions of objects. For sure, Willaschek’s analysis is far from being inconsistent. What may be suggested is that the LM and the SP are so closely linked that they are one and the same thing. Instead of arguing for a maxim to become a principle of pure reason by means of another (supreme) principle, it may be the case that Kant means that the LM can play the role of a principle of pure reason insofar as the logical regression of conditions is also taken for a real one. In these terms, the SP would just represent a different use of the LM and there would be no need to say that the LM becomes a principle of reason via the SP – for the latter implies a transition from mere (logical) thinking to reality. In short, when dealing with the unconditioned, reason cannot be satisfied with a merely logical unconditioned – intended as the totality of conditioned cognitions. Reason’s demand is higher: when taking into account the unconditioned, reason has to overcome the boundaries of logic – otherwise reason would be dealing with an unconditioned which would be limited, thus conditioned, by its not-being-real. Whatever may be the most appropriate reading, the main outcome remains unchanged: the dialectical inferences come from the transition from the logical to the transcendental (real) use of reason.

This transition is the key issue of chapters 4-5, which represent the core of Willaschek’s interpretation. A closer look at section 4.2.2 leads the reader to important clarifications. In particular, Willaschek distinguishes between 1) the regulative and the constitutive use of reason and its principles, 2) the logical and the real (transcendental) use of reason, 3) the subjective and objective validity of the principles at stake. Moreover, Willaschek warns against assuming a symmetrical correspondence between the regulative/constitutive and the logical/real (transcendental) distinction. His aim is to propose a different reading, according to which the hypothetical use of reason – though non-constitutive – allows for the search for the unity of cognitions. Additionally, this use does not imply that reason’s principles are false, but only that there is no warrant about them to be true. It follows that regulatively-used principles are assumed only problematically, for their prescriptive force is limited to reason’s demand to “investigate the hypotheses that follow from the principle” (p. 115). Willaschek draws a further conclusion. By distinguishing between logical prescriptive principles and regulatively used transcendental (descriptive) principles, we may employ the latter as devices for assuming hypotheses about objects without using them constitutively – namely without applying them in order to determine objects. This reading coherently clarifies how reason’s principles may refer to objects in two different ways: either regulatively, as heuristic devices for approximating systematic unity, or constitutively, thereby taking them to be objectively valid of nature itself. This picture is undoub-

tedly coherent. The only eventually missing argument here would be dealing with the following question: what are these principles meant to be constitutive of? It seems Willaschek takes for granted that in these pages of the *Dialectic constitutive* means *constitutive of experience*. In this case there would be obviously nothing to say, for reason’s principles and ideas cannot play this role. However, what if these ideas and principles would be meant to be constitutive of the systematic unity of reason itself? Their prescriptive – normative – role would be stronger and, most importantly, there would be a less sharp distinction between constitutive and regulative. These two terms may not be alternative as it seems, for even the regulative use of reason’s principles would be somehow constitutive of reason’s systematic unity.

Moving to part II, two main points need to be discussed adequately. The first concerns the assumption of Transcendental Realism (TR) as responsible for transcendental illusion. The second consists in the rejection of TR without any complementary assumption of Transcendental Idealism (TI). To be precise, the topic of TR is first introduced in section 5.2.2, where Willaschek states that TR “is the key to understanding transcendental illusion in general, including the transcendental illusion involved in the transition from the regulative to the constitutive Supreme Principle” (p. 139). As already stated, the constitutive use of SP demands it to be valid of objects – far beyond the assumption of hypotheses. This real use of reason is responsible for all reason’s dialectical inferences, also including Kant’s arguments for the ideal of reason and God’s existence. Chapters 7-8 – especially sections 7.2, 7.3.2, 7.4.2 – aim to show clearly how TR is at work in every step of the Transcendental Dialectic: from the transcendental ideas to the paralogisms, the antinomies and reason’s ideal. If transcendental illusion follows from reason’s constitutive use, TR – quite complementarily – takes 1) “rational principles to be constitutive of nature” (p. 165) and 2) this constitutive role to be a metaphysical insight and not a mere subjective projection. In a few words, according to TR that rational principles are more than merely rational, for nature’s structure is assumed as completely corresponding to the principles at stake. The non-legitimacy of this use of reason is first evident in the paralogisms (section 7.2.2). At once, Willaschek reconstructs Kant’s arguments and shows that the paralogisms entail a transition from the logical to the real use of reason. More specifically, the problem is that we “take the necessary conditions under which we represent things to be conditions of those represented objects” (p. 198). This makes evident that Willaschek does not limit his work to exegesis, for the consistency of his arguments follows from a critical re-definition of Kant’s claims. In particular, concerning TR, Willaschek proposes the variation TR_{rep}:

If, to be represented at all (by finite beings like us), some object *o* must be represented as being *F*, then *o* is *F*.

Going ahead with the antinomies and the ideal of reason, the reader can easily recognize that TR_{rep} is always at work in reason’s dialectical inferences and how it leads to transcendental illusion. This said, it becomes thus relevant to reject transcendental realism in order to both avoid

transcendental illusion and – at the same time – allow for the hypothetical use of reason. Quite surprisingly, Willaschek adds to this rejection a complementary argument about the non-necessity to assume Transcendental Idealism (TI). As it is very well known, Kant's solution to the paralogisms and the antinomies precisely relies on TI. However, Willaschek thinks that the rejection of TR does not imply any assumption of TI. This argument is developed in chapter 9. The key *demonstrandum* is that TI and TR are not contradictory, so that it is possible to reject the latter without assuming the former. According to Willaschek, TI implies that the properties of cognizable objects (appearances) depend on the possibility of being represented by finite rational beings. Though this is true, it would have been of help to have some reference to Kant's texts, since Willaschek always takes care of this in the whole book. Willaschek also says that this claim is paradoxical, for our cognitions of these properties are not representation-dependent. In addition to this, since many contemporary philosophers outside Kant scholarship do not assume TI, it would be better not to rely on TI in order to leave Kant's critique of metaphysics more philosophically attractive for contemporary approaches (pp. 248-249). This raises some perplexity. How could one think to give up arguing for one of the main achievements of Kant's critical philosophy – according to Kant himself – in order to, allegedly, leave another relevant achievement attractive for contemporary inquirers? One could wonder whether this attractiveness is too good a reason. Willaschek's argument relies on the following steps: 1) TI implies the falsity of TR for TI denies that TR holds for things-in-themselves (TR is thus restricted to appearances, that is empirical objects); 2) TI implies the falsity of TR for TI states that empirical objects do not coincide with the objects of a merely rational order (noumena in the positive sense); 3) neither the first nor the second argument for TR's falsity proves the truth of TI. Thus TI and TR are non-contradictory, for TI is merely the contrary of TR. It follows that "we can deny that the necessary conditions of representing some object in all cases are necessarily conditions of that object [TR] without accepting that empirical objects are mere appearances [TI]" (pp. 250-251). In these terms, Willaschek's argument seems convincing. However, it may be the case that this perspective on TI is too simplified. The role of the pure forms of sensibility in allowing the receptivity of phenomena may require some additional discussion. Though it is true that TI holds for representation-dependent appearances, it is also true that the possibility of experience precisely relies on the fact that our representations can be valid of outer objects. Besides the perplexities of contemporary epistemologists and metaphysicians, Kant may still be right in claiming that it is impossible for us to represent anything outside space and time. Accordingly, by abstracting from the conditions which allow for an appearance to be represented *by us*, there would remain nothing but a mere (some)-thing *in itself*.

Willaschek's reconstruction of the RSA is not only complete and coherent, but also open to further developments into the practical sphere. Kant's practical metaphysics (Postscript, pp. 270-275) – with its postulates, the moral law, the highest good – represents Kant's path to-

wards a non-dialectical and non-illusionary employment of purely rational principles. This perspective, though only sketched, is a significant legacy of *Kant on the Sources of Metaphysics* – together with the systematical reconstruction of Kant's RSA. Kant scholars may hardly avoid dealing with a book which has the merit of discussing a too often overlooked part of Kant's first *Critique*, presenting clear and insightful arguments for original views and accounting for reason's metaphysical drive.

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Diego S. Garrocho, *Sobre la nostalgia* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 2019).

Sobre la nostalgia è l'ultimo saggio pubblicato da Diego S. Garrocho, professore di Etica e Filosofia Politica presso l'Università Autonoma di Madrid. Pubblicato in Alianza Editorial nel 2019, la scrittura di Garrocho è in grado di coniugare la filosofia con le più diverse espressioni della cultura umanistica, dalla storia alla politica, dalla mitologia al cinema, dall'architettura alla sociologia. Il testo ruota intorno all'analisi della nostalgia, descritta in relazione alla dialettica tra memoria e oblio, dolore e piacere, assoluto e storia, fino a tracciarne i connotati contemporanei in chiave politica. La riflessione sulla nostalgia prende piede da un'interpretazione peculiare della *damnatio memoriae* - il sottotitolo al saggio -, che Garrocho non intende solo come provvedimento punitivo nei confronti della memoria di qualcosa (di una persona, di un evento, di un luogo), ma come dolore causato dalla facoltà della memoria stessa. La memoria genera dolore proprio in virtù del ricordo, a prescindere dal contenuto: non è solo il ricordo di un evento spiacevole che causa dolore (il trauma), ma, anzi e soprattutto, il ricordo di un evento piacevole, proprio perché si colloca in una dimensione che risulta inevitabilmente inaccessibile, quella del passato. Se la memoria si oppone all'oblio, e varie sono state le tecniche proposte dalla tradizione occidentale per ricordare, non sembra esistere una tecnica per dimenticare realmente efficace. Non esiste l'imposizione o l'educazione all'oblio ed è proprio questa impossibilità di dimenticare che rende in qualche modo la memoria una forma di condanna ineludibile. La configurazione della memoria come generatrice di dolore scaturisce da una particolare concezione del tempo che appartiene all'uomo, che Garrocho mutua dalla distinzione aristotelica tra memoria e reminiscenza: mentre la prima facoltà consente di trattenere nel presente un evento del passato (capacità di cui altri esseri viventi sono dotati in diversi gradi), la reminiscenza è quella capacità di sentire come proprio, da sempre, la conoscenza di un determinato evento, quasi come se fosse una forma, per utilizzare un lessico più contemporaneo e forse azzardato, di far emergere dall'inconscio qualcosa di cui non si aveva consapevolezza. In questo senso, si parla dell'associazione platonica tra conoscenza e ricordo, e proprio in quell'oscura mancanza, in quello stato di oblio inconsapevole in cui verte la condizione umana, si sviluppa l'esperienza nostalgica: la