MARTIN BUBER READS HERACLITUS: THE METAMORPHOSES OF THE "WE"

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Abstract This paper investigates Martin Buber's appraisal of Heraclitus' thinking. The main aim of this paper is to discuss the relation between cosmos and logos in the thought of the two philosophers, and to propose a Buberian informed alternative account to this relation which may be called "dialogical dwelling". The idea of dialogical dwelling is a direct consequence of Buber's theory of the *essential We,* in which the members of the community accept and confirm each other, thanks to a sort of reciprocal hospitality. As I will argue, Buber's theory of the *essential We* has been heavily influenced by the Heraclitean relation between cosmos and logos. My contribution might throw light on this particular manner of inhabiting the world together, under the heading of dialogical dwelling. The key relation between cosmos and logos rests solely on what Buber has called interhuman cooperation. Nonetheless, I will draw on phenomenological and hermeneutical sources to describe how this dialogical dwelling becomes operative in the case of the *essential We*.
Keywords Buber, Heraclitus, logos, cosmos, community, hospitality.

1. Introduction

Even though there have been several attempts to connect Martin Buber's thinking with those of his contemporaries, lesser attention has been paid to Buber's relation to the fragments of ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus. This paper proposes the notion of dialogical dwelling (in the world), based on Buber's theory of the *essential We.* As I will attempt to demonstrate, Buber's notion of the *essential We* was first and foremost conceived as a response to Heidegger's "They-self" (das Man). Only afterwards, thanks to the influence of the Heraclitean ideas on the relationship between cosmos and logos, did Buber expand on his notion, in an original attempt to rethink this very relation between our sojourn in the common world (cosmos) and the speech-with-meaning (logos). This article also addresses the issue of hospitality as the cornerstone of dialogical dwelling. Dialogical dwelling is a particular manner of being-in-the-world, in which openness, reciprocity and

hospitality prove themselves to be crucial components. The distinction between monological and dialogical existence was already thematized by Buber as such,[53] without proposing an umbrella concept under which these comportments towards the world could be subsumed. Buber has placed far more emphasis on the dialogical side of dwelling in the world, while the monological aspect of our being-in-the-world was labelled as inauthentic. Dialogical dwelling encompasses both I-Thou relations and the *essential We.* To dwell dialogically designates how one could address and respond openly to alterity, being available and hospitable, and also, holding oneself ready for change and transformation. Thus, Heideggerian solicitude towards others, as in the *Mitsein* structure, could be replaced by Buberian reciprocity.

Therefore, this article will be divided into several chapters, each investigating a key issue of the inquiry. I will first start with Buber's critique of the Heideggerian theory of sociality, then move towards Buber's appraisal of the Heraclitean relation between cosmos and logos, to conclude with an account of hospitality as dialogical dwelling, inspired by the overall thematization of the father of dialogue. Needless to say, my final remarks pertain mostly to the phenomenological and hermeneutical traditions of thinking.

2. For a dialogical theory of sociality

A full-fledged assessment of the Heideggerian theory of sociality can be found in Buber's text entitled *What is man?* which was first delivered as a course at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1938.[54] In this dense, yet insightful course, Buber engages with different thinkers who throughout the history of philosophy struggled with the question posed in the title of the course, namely what man actually is. Buber finds two possible contemporary responses in the works of Max Scheler and Martin Heidegger. Besides providing a development of Scheler's philosophical anthropology, Buber insists more on the critique of Heideggerian sociality, to be found in *Being and Time.*[55] As Patricia Meindl suggests,[56] Buber criticizes Heidegger's conception on different layers, his main claim being that the latter has overlooked the "human all too human" issue of reciprocity. Buber's argument starts from the fact that Heideggerian ontology discusses human sociality and being-together, but without a special emphasis on the notion of reciprocity. Therefore, we are left with the formal structure of being-with (Mitsein) of Heidegger's, but without any explicit reference to how this structure functions or becomes operative. Thus, Buber employs the notion of essential relations,[57] which pertain to what he will later call the *essential We,* in order to describe these interhuman relationships in which reciprocity becomes operative. Following Buber's thorough analysis, these relations involve action and reaction, so interaction, from both I

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[53] Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 22-25.

[54] Ibid.*,* 193-215.

[55] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell, 1962), 149-63.

[56] Patricia Meindl, "From the Thou to the We: Rediscovering Martin Buber's Account of Communal Experiences," *Human Studies* 44 (2021): 413-431 (pp. 415-22).

[57] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 201-02.

and Thou. Pivotal for the essential relations would be the ones which are formed through bonds such as friendship, love or even the mother-infant relation. While Heidegger considered the *Mitsein* or the being-with to be already and always there as given and operative, Buber insists on explaining how these peculiar sorts of relations are a direct consequence of an effort to bond with the other, which for the father of dialogue involves mutuality. A first difference that can be highlighted between the two thematizations is that while Heidegger conceived *Mitsein* as an a priori of our being-in-the-world[58], Buber has placed far more emphasis on interhuman relations as an achievement of bonding, which takes place through mutuality. Needless to say, this sort of reciprocity involves hospitality, which can be designated in a Levinasian manner as the welcoming of the other.[59] Another French phenomenological author, Henri Maldiney has drawn attention to the peculiar mode of human possibility towards the event,[60] which could as well be an encounter with alterity, in the case of which the human being has to welcome this sort of event, in order that the encounter might unfold. Nevertheless, we will concern ourselves with the perspectives of Levinas and Maldiney later in our inquiry.

The first layer of Buber's critique towards Heidegger consists in the way the former suggests that the latter does not consider man's manifoldness, but rather solely his relation to Being as such. In Buber's conception, Heidegger overlooks the human being's relation to other people, and instead, focuses on Dasein's modes of being-in-the-world. From the very beginning, Buber does not disqualify Heidegger's project, but rather he is amazed, so to say, by the latter's failure to understand interhuman reciprocity. Anticipating Levinas' critique of Heidegger's being-toward-death, Buber also places emphasis on how Heidegger's notion of death does not take into consideration the relation with otherness.[61] As Heidegger would put it, death is always my death.[62] Hence, in Buber's view, Heidegger abstracts the true place of the interhuman human realm from the human being, by insisting on man's sole relation to himself.

Another crucial point in Buber's critique of Heidegger unpacks when the philosopher of dialogue takes into consideration Heidegger's account of guilt. Whereas for Buber, guilt is always an interhuman phenomenon, for Heidegger being-guilty refers always to man's relation to himself as always and already guilty.[63] Buber stresses the issue of ontic guilt, that is, guilt between I and Thou, while Heidegger considered Dasein to be guilty on the ground of his being. Buber even discusses the cry of conscience, wherein a human being desperately calls for the help of the other. If the other is unresponsive, then we are dealing with ontic guilt.[64] However, if the other answers the call, then there is laid the ground for the process of bonding between men. Henri Maldiney, the French phenomenological author mentioned above, somehow develops Buber's thinking

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[58] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 78-86.

[59] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), 197-201.

[60] Henri Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie* (Grenoble : Millon, 1991), 361-64.

[61] Emmanuel Levinas, *God, Death, and Time* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 16-22.

[62] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 279-304.

[63] Ibid,, 312-41.

[64] Martin Buber, *The Knowledge of Man* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965), 121-49.

further by insisting on the relation between the call of conscience and the interhuman relation.[65] If, for Maldiney, the call is answered, then there is a strong chance that I and Thou come to confirm each other and to bond in specific types of interhuman relations, such as friendship, love, or the mother-infant relationship. I will not dwell upon Maldiney's critique of Heidegger, because this is not the purpose of our paper, but I will limit myself to explain how the phenomenological author correctly expressed the nucleus of Buber's thought, by insisting on the tie between the "cry for help" and the possibility of bonding further with others.[66]

Returning to Buber's appraisal of Heidegger's account of sociality, in which we observed that reciprocity is lacking from the very outset, Buber places Heidegger's account of social phenomena in the sphere of solitude. As Patricia Meindl correctly explained, for Buber, the Heideggerian solicitude is not a sufficient condition for the possibility of interpersonal exchange, because it lacks mutuality.[67] Hence, Heidegger's *Mitsein* becomes only a formal structure of human existence, which does not explain how social relations are possible. Moreover, Buber considered the Heideggerian account of the relation between solicitude and *Mitsein* to be fallacious, because as Heidegger clearly states, human collectivity must be understood from the very beginning as a *They-self*, a sort of anonymous mass, wherein social exchanges are not actually primordial.

As Buber emphatically notices, in solitude man remains essentially with himself, even when he feels pity towards the other. Even though in solitude man assists the other, the other does not experience the other side of the dialogical relation, therefore mutuality is hindered. This unique capacity of the human's being to experience what the other feels is called by Buber "imagining the real,"[68] a sort of bold swinging into otherness, which results in a moment of meeting between I and Thou. Furthermore, Buber compares Heidegger's *Dasein* with Kierkegaard category of the "single one,"[69] placing Heidegger in the descendance of the Kierkegaardian thesis. A certain difference must be highlighted though. While the Kierkegaardian single one could address the word Thou to God, Heidegger's Dasein seems to dwell in a sort of "closing reserve," to use the Kierkegaardian phrase, which is employed also by Buber. At this point, Buber reminds us of the essential relations, which are ultimately, as we have suggested, relations of bonding between people, such as friendship, love and the mother-infant scenario.[70] Nevertheless, Heidegger somehow even draws on Kierkegaard's notion of the crowd, in forging his theory of sociality as the *They-self*.

Buber calls his core concept which designates the authentic community of man the *essential We.* As Buber clearly states, the *essential We* is no mere collectivity, but rather it represents a sort of community in which independent and responsible people engage each other with a sort of ontic directness.[71] Buber's notion of the genuine community clearly opposes

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[65] Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie,* 400-405.

[66] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 197.

[67] Meindl, "From the Thou to the We", 422-25.

[68] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 81.

[69] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 57-67.

[70] We have borrowed the notion of bonding from the works of Patočka.

[71] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 208.

Heidegger's *They-self,* because in the case of Buber's, the faceless, formless and nameless many are not involved, but rather the ontic directness establishes contact between the host of men who form this sort of community. Buber's notion of ontic directness presents certain consequences for his theory of interhuman trust, because as the father of dialogue suggests, interhuman trust is acquired first and foremost through contact between man and man.[72] While in Heidegger, the proper term that can designate the *They-self* is that of the anonymous collectivity, in the case of Buber, each person recognizes the other people as Thou, thus forging the authentic community of individuals. The implicit notions that can be deduced from Buber's theory are that of participation, coexistence and cooperation. Whereas Heidegger's account is rather an ontological one, which expresses this structure of human sociality, Buber was very attentive to how these sorts of spontaneous meetings between people might emerge in certain sociological and historical contexts[73]. If in Heidegger, the nameless crows would incorporate *Dasein* into it, until *Dasein* assumes by virtue of the moment of resolution its being-toward-death and the being-guilty, in Buber's account, human beings are already separated and at a distance from one another, this rendering possible mutuality. Contra Heidegger, Buber suggests that the human being attains to existence only if his relation to others become essential ones.

3. The relational event between logos and cosmos

The second step in investigating Buber's notion of the *essential We* consists in an in-depth analysis of his reading of Heraclitus' sayings. In order to establish what exactly does the *essential We* mean for Buber, we have to dwell upon the relation between cosmos and logos, as it was proposed in the teachings of Heraclitus. Buber specifies that it is true that all man have a single world in common, while in sleep each turns towards his private sphere of existence, but this common world is essentially the world shape or order at which each individual, even when asleep, contributes.[74] One can already notice how Buber's notion of truth as participation in being becomes operative.[75] Here does the *essential We* intervene. Anticipating, each individual contributes to the shape of the world, to the ordered world so to say, only if he or she truly listens to the other in genuine dialogue. Recalling Buber's thesis, the *essential We* is not only a collectivity of I-Thou relations, but rather

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[72] Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951), 8.

[73] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 72-89.

[74] Judith Buber Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 89.

[75] Contra Heidegger's theory of truth as disclosure, Buber argues that truth signifies first and foremost participating in the world shape, alongside the collaboration entertained with others. The father of dialogue even discusses about the drive to create and compose, which plays a decisive role in the becoming of the world. As Buber argues, every human being wants to contribute to the being of the world, thus creativity becomes pivotal.

the genuine community, which establishes the paramount reality.[76] Therefore, we can deduce that only through genuine speech-with-meaning (logos) addressed between people, might it be established something like a world-shape (cosmos).[77] The *essential We* becomes the very middle term between experience of logos and the establishment of an ordered world, of the cosmos.

Buber further interprets Heraclitus' dichotomy between the sleeping and the awake as a sort of metaphor between the ones who are engaged in the world being and those who are alienated from it. As it has been stated above, Buber considers truth to be participation in being,[78] which involves a sort of co-existence between men, thereby the ones who are asleep are still workers, but rather in their private sphere of existence, while the ones who are awake are better geared in order to contribute to the ordered world of men, by a sort of collaboration at the level of humanity as a whole.

For Heraclitus, Buber notices, the cosmos does not designate an exchange of two states, but rather a rhythmical exchange between two spheres, the sum of both representing precisely the cosmos. Buber contrasts the thesis that would proclaim Heraclitus' saying about what is common to all to mean the mere fact of dwelling together in the common world. Instead, Buber argues that the cosmos or the ordered world is the sustaining factor that renders possible mutuality between men, and even the confirmation of each other, which results into togetherness.[79]

Logos is what is common to all. Likewise, Maldiney's interpretation of the harmonious logos from his book dedicated to ancient philosophy,[80] Buber also stresses that the logos should be understood as the living spoken intercourse between men, the genuine kind, which renders possible their common dwelling in the cosmos. Another crucial distinction is provided by Buber when he turns again to the Heraclitean fragment concerning the active workers and the passive workers of the world-shape. We can thus consider that each individual, as he or she exists between birth and death, is participating to the world shape, either awake or asleep. Whereas both types of participating designate a contribution to the world-shape, it is only when men are awake that they actively and genuinely give this world a shape. Therefore, only awake, does the cosmos receive the genuine human reality, and it becomes ordered, and we might add, humanized through speech.[81] As Buber states in another of his books, the human being has a sort of infinite aspiration to create,[82] either by synthesis or by analysis,[83] and this becomes the means through which the human being contributes

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[76] Alfred Schutz has argued, contrariwise Buber's reading of Heraclitus, that in sleep the human being does not work at all, but rather, the subject enters another "finite province of meaning" while he or she dreams, which does not pertain to the pragmatic everydayness.

[77] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 90.

[78] Martin Buber, *Pointing the Way* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1957), 80.

[79] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 90-91.

[80] Henri Maldiney, *Aîtres de la langue et demeures de la penseé* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1975), 308-69.

[81] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 92-93.

[82] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 100-101.

[83] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 19-20.

to the world. Even thou this originator instinct is not derived from another drive, it can be tied to the instinct for communion, and thus, cultural creativity is achieved.[84]

As Buber puts it, when men are awake, they are able to engage one another, and to help one another, through the power of logos, to grasp the world as an ordered world. Without the logos, the genuine addressed speech between men, the world would not be ordered anymore. Even though this was not Buber's main concern during his commentary of Heraclitus, he attempted to shed light on the very complicated relation between language and world, which was a lifetime concern for the hermeneutics of Gadamer, for example.[85] The dream world is rather illusory, yet the process of awakening to otherness means precisely responsibility, i.e. the response to the other. This process of awakening was heavily discussed by Levinas,[86] who explicitly acknowledged the influence of Buber upon him. Henceforth, in a Buberian framework of thought, we can depict the logos as a sort of two-way process of addressing and responding to the other, which is sustained by genuine speech. Henceforth, we can once again remember Maldiney's wording of harmonious logos. This harmony is represented precisely by the to-and-fro game of addressing and responding, wherein risk is always at stake, as Gadamer put it.[87] While Gadamer emphasized the risk of addressing a word and the responsibility involved in it, Buber rather focuses on the possible transformation which might occur between the I and the Thou that were to engage in dialogue.

Returning to the Heraclitean teaching, Buber argued that the phrase "what is common to all" can be properly understood only if we regard the logos and the cosmos as forming a community. Buber even uses the word tension, to express the intensity of the community between cosmos and logos, or between being awake and being asleep. This tension is something necessary, which should not be resolved, as Heraclitus' saying insists. Buber then asserts that dreams rather enter into the sphere of monologue[88], because even though we dream of others, otherness does not enter this particular type of sphere, thus transcendence becomes an impossibility for the dreamer.[89]

Understanding between men, which is rendered possible by the voice of logos, is the genuine possibility of establishing the *essential We.* Therefore, men become familiar with the cosmos, by cooperation with each other. Henceforth, the cosmos becomes that which we experience together. Linking his lifelong thought concerning human responsibility with Heraclitus' teaching, Buber considers that the main idea of Heraclitus' entire thought is that of the waking responsibility towards one another. There is no *genuine We* in the case of dreams, because our reality becomes illusory, and we cannot accomplish much for the other being only a passive worker. Through the unity of logos and cosmos, men come to have a reality in common, i.e. a humanized world.[90]

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[84] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 104.

[85] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 399-455.

[86] Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 77-91.

[87] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 56.

[88] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 204.

[89] Ibid., 96-99.

[90] Ibid., 106.

Concerning what we have called, following Maldiney, the harmonious logos, Buber stresses upon the tensions which render possible this harmony, contrasting, for example, the Taoist approach to the Greek one. I will not insist on the comparison between Heraclitus' teaching and that of the Taoists, or on Buber's critique of Huxley's experiences of the private sphere, but rather, I will move towards the final remarks of Buber's text. The Heraclitean understanding must be interpreted too as a sort of harmony, namely that of meaning and speech. Maldiney remarks that harmony meant at first, i.e. from the Greek standpoint, a mutual adjustment between contrasting features of existence.[91] Buber aligns to Heraclitus' lament that despite its commonality, the logos is rarely heard as such, perhaps because of man's inability to hear the other and to engage in dialogue.[92] With every man, the event of entrance of meaning into living speech is accomplished. As Buber has insisted in his book entitled *Between Man and Man,* thinking is always dialogical, because of the ever-renewed spoken intercourse of man between each other.[93] Moreover, in the same book, Buber addressed how the infant first comes to speak, and his approach draws on the philosophy of Scheler concerning the mythical element of speech (the initial fusion of imaginary and real). Thereby, whereas in his early work, Buber considered speech under the influence of Scheler, later he will accomplish another key step in the development of his thought, by considering logos as the event of the meeting between speech and meaning.[94]

Perhaps Buber's novelty in interpreting Heraclitus is best revealed when the former considers that the commonality of the logos, i.e. the fact that it is what is common to all, governs the rhythmical swinging between the two spheres of the cosmos. Without this rhythmical regulatory function of the logos, namely the harmonious feature, the cosmos would appear rather chaotic.[95] As Buber suggests, the shape of the world is provided by the human being who takes care of the logos. Only to our service to the logos, do we arrive at a common shared world. Coexistence, participation, and cooperation seem to be the words that fit Buber's description of the Heraclitean fragments. Drawing on Gadamer's observations of Heraclitus, for the human being who is asleep a private opinion about the world can be assigned, while when awake, the human being arrives at a shared opinion by virtue of the fusion of horizons.[96] The interpretation of both Buber and Gadamer seem to converge towards the same point, because the two of them acknowledge the metaphorical use of Heraclitus' sleep fragments, while Binswanger can be credited with the disclosure of the psychological aspects of Heraclitus' apparent dichotomy between the common world and the private sphere.[97]

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[91] Henri Maldiney, *Ouvrir le rien l'art nu* (La Versanne : Encre Marine, 2000), 218.

[92] Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 2.

[93] Buber, *Between Man and Man,* 30-33.

[94] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 104.

[95] Ibid., 105-06.

[96] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Beginning of Knowledge* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 33-82.

[97] Ludwig Binswanger, *Grundformen und Erkenntnis Menschlichen Daseins* (München: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1962), 392-436.

Heraclitus' is acknowledged for arguing about the perpetual strife of the opposite forces. Buber notes that this strife is only apparent, because by listening to the logos, the highest tensions of the different spheres of existence might transform into the harmony of the lyre.[98] The Heraclitean imperative is to disengage from the satiety of being anyone, similar to Heidegger's They-self, and to recognize the uniqueness of oneself and of the other. Buber's teaching, derived from the Heraclitean fragments, is that each human being is unique because each human being contributes uniquely to the being of the common world, by participating and cooperating. Every human being can listen and respond to the logos, and act in the common world accordingly, but how he or she does that consists in his or her uniqueness. The common cosmos is transcendent, because it cannot be reduced to the sum of all private spheres of each and every human being.

Although Heraclitus does not mention the *essential We,* in the meaning that Buber has assigned to this particular notion, he nonetheless would agree that only by saying We again and again, can the human being follow the logos.[99] The *essential We* is enacted every time when people address and respond to each other, it is the realm of genuine living speech. For Buber, truth is related to this decision of engaging ever again into essential relations with others, and we can just remember his definition of truth as participation into being. Buber even argues that by virtue of genuine decisions, the human being comes to know the wholeness of his or her being. Decisions should be taken with our entire being, namely at the point when body and soul phenomena are not separated by an abstract analysis.[100] Only by being a whole can the human being decide to engage into the *essential We,* hence once again, the term *decision* seems to be pivotal.

Speech is always and has been already present in the intercourse of mutuality between I and Thou. As Buber argues, whenever one person showed the other person something that could really change his point of view, and his worldview more broadly, then genuine communication would be operative. This does not mean mere propaganda, as Buber stressed, but rather a reciprocal sharing in knowledge,[101] which even comes close to Gadamer's fusion of horizons. This reciprocal share in knowledge in the via regia thanks to which we can enter this essential dimension of community, by embracing each other. The genuine We does not have the constancy or even the identity of the I, but rather it is shaped and reshaped even gain by this living mutuality between men.

Buber compares further the I to the We. Therefore, while man experienced himself as I, or even encountered the other and the world, only by the saying of We, thus the genuine community of individuals come to develop a world out of his experiences. By world, in this specific scenario, Buber alludes to the Heraclitean cosmos, i.e. the ordered world. The *essential We* designates the passage out of the abyss of being to the common cosmos, the shaped world that grows and changes. The cosmos is preserved and guarded by its moulder, the human speech with meaning, the common logos.[102]

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[98] Agassi, *Martin Buber on Psychology and Psychotherapy,* 104-09.
[99] Ibid., 106.
[100] Ibid., 227-46.
[101] Ibid., 107.
[102] Ibid.*,* 108-109.

Man has always thought his thoughts as an I, but only by saying the fundamental word of the We, does he or she come to experience the *in-between,* the betweenness between human beings. This *in-between* cannot be reduced to either the psychical or the physical realms of experience, it transcends them by being something unitary. The Heraclitean fire, but also Plato's leaping fire from the epistles represents the dynamic between persons in the *essential We.* Buber ends his essay on Heraclitus by recalling the words of Hölderlin, who proposed that we are a dialogue as long as we can hear one another.[103] Therefore, for both Buber and Hölderlin, what is peculiar to humanity as a whole is that each human being can listen carefully to what the other persona has to say, and thus, respond accordingly with his or her entire being.

By the same token as Buber, Gadamer advocates for the perspective that states the metaphorical dimension of Heraclitus' teaching. For example, Gadamer alludes to Heraclitus' saying that whereas the logos is that which is common to all, human beings like to remain with their own opinions, just like when they are asleep. The activities of our sleep are inconsequential, while only being awake can we establish the common shape of the world, as Buber argued. Gadamer even labels these activities of our dreams under the heading of game, whereas the real and genuine game is that which takes place between man and man.[104] As Gadamer continues to strengthen his claim, for Heraclitus the dream is a symbol for incomprehension, hence we can deduce that genuine understanding takes place once again in the case of the dialogical game between man and man, or what Gadamer has called the fusion of horizons. The fusion of horizons might even resonate with Buber's mutual confirmation, because in both cases the tension between I and Thou is resolved by means of embracing, which still involves distance.[105]

4. Dwelling dialogically

We can now advance towards the final subchapter of this paper, in order to outline the basic tenets of the notion of dialogical dwelling. As we noticed in the first chapter of this paper, the Heidegger They-self is not enough to build a theory of reciprocity in the case of the genuine community of individuals. Therefore, we have moved towards Buber's assessment of the Heraclitean relation between logos and cosmos to prove how people come to live in a harmonized and humanized world. This was the very first step in establishing a notion of dwelling as involving mainly the dialogical I-Thou stance towards the world. We can now commence by drawing on certain theories from phenomenology and hermeneutics to describe how the *essential We* becomes operative.

Remembering Heraclitus' saying about the invisible harmony,[106] which is mightier than the visible and actual one, so it might be the case with the *essential We.* Even though between

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[103] Ibid., 109.

[104] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Knowledge,* 53.

[105] Buber has argued numerous times on how the self becomes a true self alongside the acceptance, affirmation and confirmation coming from other human beings, while Gadamer stressed the ethical aspect of the dialogical play, and its connection to openness and reciprocity.

[106] Heraclitus, *Fragments* (New York: Penguin, 2001), 46-48.

human beings exists an ontic directness and an openness to the other, these two features play the peculiar role of establishing the ground onto which dialogical intercourse might develop. We have already alluded to the fusion of horizons as the authentic manner in which understanding comes into being. The fusion of horizons becomes possible insofar as two or more human beings relate to each other while being awake. This wakefulness, which was interpreted both as a metaphor and as a matter of fact ought to be developed further. Therefore, for Levinas, the awakening towards the other represented a sort of triggering of an immemorial responsibility vis-à-vis alterity.[107] This process was rendered possible by virtue of the other's face, i.e. by the epiphany of the visage.[108] Even though Levinas' thesis might resemble that of Martin Buber, the former insisted numerous times on how the genuine community of individuals can be established via the essential relations enumerated in the first section of this paper. Therefore, friendship, love and care (as in the mother-infant relation), not only trigger the responsibility towards the other, but also, they represent an opportunity for interhuman bonding,[109] which results in the *essential We.* Thus, whereas for Levinas the wakefulness of responsibility designated also a metaphor for acknowledging the other's uniqueness, Buber on the other hand, takes this metaphor in its concreteness, namely as the possibility of giving the world shape by mutual interaction and cooperation.

Moreover, both Levinas and Maldiney, the abovementioned phenomenologists, insisted on the possibility of welcoming the other as a sort of first ethical gesture. By this sort of welcome, the I initiates the relation with the Thou, by acknowledging his or her uniqueness and irreplaceability.[110] Welcoming becomes thus the first ethical gesture thanks to which the *essential We* can be established, and so, hospitability is addressed.[111] Levinas has discussed numerous times about hospitability in relation to the actual home of one person, and about the possibility of welcoming the stranger into our own home.[112] This should not be considered once again a metaphor, but rather, the first step into mutual bonding. Buber himself has argued that welcoming and confirming the neighbour,[113] in the literal and metaphorical sense becomes peculiar to establishing the authentic community of individuals.[114]

Returning to Buber's appraisal of Heraclitus's thinking, it ought to be argued further that speech-with-meaning, the logos becomes pivotal for welcoming the other, because when saluting the other for example, we not only lance a gesture, but also initiate the dialogical intercourse. Only by virtue of the harmonious relation between logos and cosmos, do the human beings come to

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[107] Levinas, *Entre Nous,* 57-59.

[108] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* 187-220.

[109] Jan Patočka, *The Natural World as a Philosophical Problem* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016), 166.

[110] Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie,* 400-405.

[111] Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 75-157.

[112] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity,* 157-68.

[113] The relation between the affirmation of which Nietzsche was talking in his later books and Buberian confirmation ought to be developed further in another research, so this paper will not concern itself with this task for now.

[114] Martin Buber, *A Believing Humanism* (New York: Humanity Books, 1999), 87-96.

live in an ordered and humanized world, worthy of being inhabited. Therefore, and paraphrasing Heidegger, dwelling would not be first and foremost merely poetical, but rather dialogical dwelling of the world becomes the condition of possibility for any other sort of inhabiting the world.[115]

Concerning the hermeneutical side of our inquiry, we have recalled Gadamer's use of the Heraclitean sayings, and his notion of fusion of horizons[116] to designate this interhuman embrace, in which both I and Thou are open and direct to each other, by virtue of the friendly welcoming of otherness. Not only is the fusion of horizons an ethical gesture, but it also represents a mutual enrichment between I and Thou.[117] This mutual enrichment can be related to what Buber has called the mutual share in knowledge, which takes place due to the community between logos and cosmos. As we have stressed before, this fusion of horizons does not mean a "confusion", but rather it always involves distance, because only thanks to this interhuman distance can the mutual enrichment take place. Moreover, and concerning the interhuman side of dialogical dwelling, acceptance, affirmation and confirmation[118] become of utmost importance for living dialogically together in the world.

Summing up our discussion so far, confirmation and the welcoming of the other seem to indicate the possibility of dwelling dialogically, keeping always in mind the model proposed by Buber concerning the I-Thou relation, and Levinas' approach of otherness. Furthermore, Maldiney's well-known notions of transpassibility and transpossibility were meant to designate the encounter with the unexpected, which can designate otherness.[119] These two capacities were meant to explain how we can cope with the event, which can also be an interhuman encounter. Therefore, the first element reveals the receptive side of the encounter with the other, and the second, the responsive side. The harmonious interrelation between transpassibility and transpossibility results in a genuine decision towards the other.[120] Recalling Maldiney's distinction, the encounter with alterity can often seem rather overwhelming, and thus transforming itself into a genuine event, wherein the becoming of the human subject is at stake. Transpassibility was employed by Maldiney to designate this sort of radical openness, which represents also receptivity, towards what transcends our prior horizons of experience. Transpossibility, on the other hand, entails the possibility of welcoming the other by virtue of a genuine response with our whole being. The two components, the receptive and the responsive one, enable us to cope with the overwhelming encounter of otherness, and therefore, they render possible hospitality and common dwelling in the world.[121]

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[115] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 111-20.

[116] Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* 382-415.

[117] Monica Vilhauer, *Gadamer's Ethics of Play* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 73-129.

[118] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 71.

[119] Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie,* 361-425.

[120] Henri Maldiney, *Existence: crise et création* (La Versanne: Encre Marine, 2001), 103-04.

[121] Samuel Thoma, "Into the Open: On Henri Maldiney's Philosophy of Psychosis," *Philosophy, Psychiatry & Psychology* 26 (2019): 281-293 (pp. 283-87).

5. Conclusions and perspectives

The aim of this paper was threefold, yet each subsection was related to the others. First, we argued for a Buberian inspired theory of sociality, wherein the Heideggerian account of the They-self proved itself insufficient for a theory of dialogical dwelling, in which hospitality was pivotal. Next, we have inquired into the relation of logos and cosmos, as it was revealed through Buber's reading of Heraclitus. There, we found out the peculiar role played by the human being in the economy of the cosmos, and in his or her relation to the other. The Heraclitean relation between logos and cosmos was first and foremost describes as a sort of continuation of Buber's argument for the *essential We,* wherein the mutual spoken intercourse between men was addressed. Finally, we attempted to underline the basic package which could constitute a theory of dialogical dwelling as one of hospitality towards the others. Buber has outlined numerous times the insufficiency of the Heideggerian theory of sociality, as it was presented in *Being and Time,* while the former's reading of Heraclitus might prove itself to be the bedrock of a theory of sociality, in which men humanize the world together by virtue of their living spoken intercourse. The theme, which was described in this paper, i.e. that of dialogical dwelling ought to be developed further in subsequent research. For the moment, we have limited ourselves to announcing some basic tenets of this peculiar mode of being-in-the-world-with-others. As we have just alluded to, the relation between the works of Heidegger and those of Buber might prove itself to be decisive for building up the theory of dialogical dwelling. While in this paper, Heidegger was mainly criticized, there are some basic motifs of his later work which seem to resonate with Buber's overall thematization of interhuman encounter, such as the concept of dwelling, but also the remarks on language. Moreover, it could prove itself to be useful to trace back Buber's steps to Nietzsche, concerning the latter's theory of affirmation, because we consider it to have influenced heavily the former, and thus, an account of dialogical dwelling can be developed further, alongside a background pertaining to the history of philosophy.